Christian-Muslim Relations. A Bibliographical History

Volume 24. South Asia (1800-1914)



Edited by

David Thomas and John Chesworth

With

Alan M. Guenther
Gordon Nickel
Douglas Pratt
Charles M. Ramsey
Peter G. Riddell

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Christian-Muslim Relations
A Bibliographical History

History of Christian-Muslim Relations

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FOREWORD

South Asia in the 19th century was the setting for encounters that in their variety and directness rivalled any others in the history of Christian-Muslim relations. In many respects, this setting parallels the Arab empires in the early centuries of Islam. In both, a major concern of rulers, who represented one faith, was the extraction of economic resources from their subjects, who came from the other; local governors were foreigners in the areas under their responsibility, and frequently knew little about them or spoke the local languages; many members of the client culture tended to be attracted towards the culture of their rulers; and religious representatives of the two traditions accentuated the distinctions between them more strongly than their similarities. But, of course, South Asia under British rule differed in significant respects from the Umayyad and ʿAbbāsid empires of a thousand years earlier, because, in South Asia, Muslims were ruled by Christians – Europeans with the inheritance of Enlightenment ideology and north-European Protestantism seeking to introduce foreign technologies that overturned revered conventions, and eager evangelicals attempting to persuade Muslims to seek salvation by conversion to their faith.

Muslims from Central Asia first penetrated into the northern parts of South Asia in significant numbers in the 12th and 13th centuries, when sultanates came into existence and lasted for varying lengths of time. Under the Mughal dynasty (1526-1858), an enduring Muslim empire was established, introducing features of Persian culture and society based on laws derived from classical Muslim sources. Under its three greatest rulers, Humāyūn (r. 1530-56), Akbar (r. 1556-1605) and Jahāngīr (r. 1605-27), the Mughal Empire developed a distinctive Muslim civilisation that produced enduring and inspiring achievements in law, poetry and architecture.

While European traders had known South Asia from ancient times and the routes that led there down through the Arabian Gulf were long established (there are traditions of Christ's disciple Thomas preaching in southern parts as early as the mid-first century), European seafarers first reached it in the late 15th century. The Portuguese adventurer Vasco da Gama (1460s-1524) landed in Kerala in 1498, and he was followed by other Western Europeans in the 16th century. Besides exploration, their main interest was trade, which intensified greatly through the century. London merchants were granted permission to send ships into the Indian Ocean

by Queen Elizabeth I (r. 1558-1603) in 1591 and, in 1600, a corporation known as the Governor and Company of Merchants of London trading into the East Indies was granted a charter that gave them a monopoly on trade throughout the Indian Ocean and into the Pacific.

From the mid-18th century onwards, the Company progressively acquired vast territorial possessions. These yielded taxes and also gave access to spoils that were stripped from palaces and shipped to England. The Company was able to act in this predatory way because it had set up an army with infantry that gave it superiority over the mounted forces favoured by Indian rulers. Following the Battle of Plassey in 1757, the Company gained power over Bengal and, after the Second Anglo-Maratha War of 1803-5, it was ceded extensive territories around Delhi and elsewhere. It was also recognised as protector of the new Mughal emperor it had installed, and it became effective ruler of the Mughal Empire. This situation continued through the first half of the 19th century.

While the Company was a powerful presence in South Asia until the middle of the century, other European states maintained footholds there as well. The Danes held Serampore on the Ganges north of Calcutta, and also Tranquebar and other minor settlements in the south until 1845; the Portuguese retained their enclave of Goa on the south-west coast throughout the century; the French similarly retained their bases of Mahé on the south-west coast, Pondichéry, Karikal and Yanaon on the south-east coast and Chandernagor in Bengal throughout the century; the Dutch, through the Dutch East India Company, controlled Ceylon and some enclaves in India until 1825. In addition, numerous Indian rulers continued to control their own historical domains, though with increasing political and financial dependence on the British. While the Princely States, as they were known, remained formally distinct from British India, in reality they enjoyed little autonomy and the Company continually schemed to depose princely rulers and absorb their lands into its own possessions.

As the East India Company consolidated its influence and control in South Asia, it introduced British political structures and systems of education that were largely alien to local people. Warren Hastings (1732-1818), in the time he was Governor-General of Bengal from 1773 to 1785, was particularly energetic in this work. He introduced a postal service, restructured the tax and customs systems, fixed land revenue, built granaries against famine and, among other reforms, oversaw the composition of digests of Muslim law books. Regarded as necessary to maintain the work of the Company, these changes had profound effects on the everyday life of Indians. Some individuals of Hindu and Muslim backgrounds

were attracted to what they heard and saw, while others were repelled. An indication of what was happening to Muslims is that their religious authorities were called on to decide whether it was permitted to eat food prepared by non-Muslims and share meals with them. Clearly, some wanted to be like their British employers and superiors and to share with them, but many more were suspicious of this incursion into their lives and reacted by retreating into traditional Muslim teachings and ways.

A major problem faced by Muslims living under Company rule was how they could advance through the employment structures that had been set up while they still retained their historical identity. Employment by the Company required qualifications that could only be obtained by the education system established on English principles and using the medium of English language, but a full Muslim education included instruction in the Qur'an and Muslim texts and used Persian and Urdu. While following this traditional system afforded recognition within the Muslim community, it effectively barred Muslims from Company employment and marginalised them in a society that was adapting to new ways.

In addition to this, the growing presence of missionaries, challenging Muslim beliefs directly and often with forthright accusations levelled against the integrity of Muḥammad, was received as a provocation. Openair preaching that was intended directly to question Muslim beliefs, and heated confrontations over the main issues about which Muslims and Christians had disagreed for more than a thousand years added to the sense that a way of life was being peremptorily supplanted.

The unease and indignation that was felt came to a head in 1857, when a number of Muslim and Hindu garrisons in north India rose against their Company officers. The widespread violence that ensued and the excessive cruelty shown by both sides caused shock among the many Indians who had not joined the uprising and produced strong reactions in Britain. The result was that the East India Company was nationalised in 1858 and the country brought under direct rule from London, while the last Mughal emperor was deposed and exiled. Indians were placed in positions of responsibility for the first time and were brought into closer consultation. The army was placed under British control and the drive to introduce change without regard for what already existed was drastically reduced.

Many European Christians living in India would have known few details about the lives and faiths of the Indian Muslims and Hindus among whom they lived and by whom they were served: there are instances of commanding officers not able to speak the languages of their men. Most Europeans must have been able to communicate basic domestic requirements to

their servants but, as well as the barrier of language, the perceived difference in class and race will have impeded much intimacy. Of course, a number gained enviable proficiency in the spoken and written forms of the languages they encountered – not only European academics and, it seems, Company officials impartially dedicated to uncovering the Islamic heritage that was preserved in India, but also Indians wishing to advance professionally, culturally and socially. There were close friendships and intimacies, while marriages between Muslim men and British women and also between some British men and Muslim women (often involving conversion to Islam because of qur'anic laws), were known. Christians and Muslims would often have had opportunities to experience the other's faith as it was practised in daily living.

Christian missions to South Asia had begun hundreds of years before the East India Company began stripping the Mughal emperors of power. The visit of three Jesuits to the court of the Emperor Akbar (r. 1556-1605) in the late 16th century is one well-known instance. Mission societies began to send missionaries in the late 18th century and, through the 19th century, the number of societies involved in South Asia from both Britain and the United States multiplied. Strategies varied, from direct appeals to Muslims (and Hindus) through street preaching and organised debates before seated audiences – the confrontation between Karl Gottlieb Pfander and Raḥmatullāh Kairānavī in Agra in 1854 is the best known instance – to the kind of written apologies and polemics that had appeared for centuries, focused on such topics as the womanising and belligerency of Muḥammad and his followers, the incoherence and derivative character of the Qur'an, Islamic law as no longer suited to society but resistant to change, and the inferior status of women. There was not much new in the subject-matter of Christian arguments, but the directness and sometimes vehemence of approach exceeded what appeared elsewhere. Some of the most pointed arguments were actually put forward by Indian converts from Islam, turning on their old faith and using their former experiences to fuel their attacks.

However, antagonism was not all. Some Europeans serving in the army, the education system or the government and, more surprisingly, one or two converts to Christianity, made scholarly translations of Muslim religious, historical and literary works, including the Qur'an, composed grammars of the languages used by Muslims and wrote about Islam in South Asia with insight and admiration. Over the course of the 19th century, a great variety of approaches towards Islam can be seen, though there were few departures from the sense that it was deficient and restrictive,

particularly against women, and essentially unsuited to the needs of the modern world. It was usual to regard Islam in India, just as in the rest of the world, as suffering irreversible decline despite signs to the contrary, such as the alarming spread of fundamentalist Wahhābism and the progressive liberalism of Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān (1817-98; *CMR* 24, 424-47) and his followers. Indeed, some percipient observers rejected the accepted view and foresaw the day when Islam might take over the world.

While Muslims in South Asia did touch on the range of issues that had always lain between Islam and Christianity, there is a pronounced emphasis among 19th-century writers on the question of the status of the Bible. It was generally held among them that Christians and Jews had corrupted the text of their scriptures and also that the biblical books had been abrogated by the Qur'an. The former allegation was based on what was known about the different versions of the Bible and came to be corroborated by what Indian Muslims read about 19th-century European criticism of the text of the Bible, while the latter stemmed from the Qur'an-based theological principle that, as the last of the eternal utterances from God, the Qur'an replaced all earlier forms.

This dismissal of the Bible appears to have been regarded as enough to show that Christianity could not be accepted. Among Muslims in India, there are few of the sophisticated theological refutations of the doctrine of the Trinity that were developed in other parts of the Islamic world or of the belief that Christ was the world's Saviour and of the atonement accomplished through him.

Muslims often judged that the Christians they encountered were morally lax. In addition, they thought they were unfairly committed to indoctrinating the Muslim children who came to their schools with distorted ideas and to introducing regulations and forms of technology that would interfere with the ways that had been followed for centuries. The decline and demise of the Mughal Empire in the first half of the century was a reality many could not allow, because it meant that the form of Islam that had always been victorious in the past had ceased to exist. At the beginning of the 20th century, the novelist Flora Annie Steel (1847-1929; *CMR* 24, 913-20) in her popular work *India* (London, 1905) draws a poignant picture of Mughal nobles attempting to preserve the vanished splendour of former times but haunted by 'a certain sadness of decay, a clinging to past traditions, a feeling that they have come down in the world', so that when you went to visit them, 'even the gold-tissue tunic in which the head of the clan turns out to receive you, is frayed and worn' (p. 75). They have not faced up to the reality in which they now live, with the cheerless

result that, 'hard at work, some patriarchal household may be seen busy stitching away at caps or embroidering shoes. Such work is the refuge of the decayed Mahommedan courtier' (p. 76). Despite efforts by Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān and others like him to reconcile Indian Islam with change, or the various attempts of traditionalists to revive Sunnī forms of the faith, Indian Islam in the 19th century was mainly on the defensive from presumptuous European officials and self-assured missionaries.

The volumes in the *CMR* series aim to provide full analytical accounts of the works known to have been written by Christians and Muslims about and against the other, and also of works containing evidence, direct and indirect, of attitudes towards the other. Like this one, the recent volumes cover particular geographical regions, and together the series surveys the whole world in the period 600-1914. Its aim is to be comprehensive, and here, as much as in earlier volumes, there has been generous help from both well-established and new scholars, some responding to the challenge to explore interfaith elements in works that have not previously been studied for this purpose. As with the other volumes completed in the last few years, the work on this has been particularly challenging because of the restrictions imposed by Covid 19 – some contributors sent in their entries years ago but have had to wait until now to see them published. For this and other reasons, prominent among them the inaccessibility of works that are known to have been written, fullness of coverage cannot be claimed, so this volume is presented as an extensive but not entirely complete account of works that appeared in South Asia in the century leading up to 1914 (and in some cases afterwards). Determined efforts have been made to ensure that all the major works written in this time on relations between Christians and Muslims have been included, though further research may show that the few that are known but could not be discussed prove to be equally fascinating and important.

Like all its predecessors, *CMR* 24 starts with introductory essays that outline the historical, political, intellectual and social background in South Asia. Following these come the entries that make up the bulk of the volume. The principle has been to choose works largely about or against the other faith or containing significant information or judgements that cast light on respective attitudes. Apologetic and polemical works are naturally included, while letters, official reports and works of travel and history also frequently qualify for inclusion. The reason why a work appears may sometimes not seem obvious because its direct references to the other faith are few, though initially unpromising works are repeatedly seen to attest to distinct attitudes by such features as the way they are structured

or how their authors have selected and shaped information or have revealed their partiality by occasional comments. Everything is included that has been judged to contribute in any significant way towards conveying the information about the religious other that circulated among people in this part of the world in the 19th century, and towards creating the impressions about the religious other that they generally took to be true. This principle is easily applied in most cases, though in some instances it proves difficult. The approach has therefore been inclusive, especially regarding works that contain very slight though insightful details or that appear to touch only obliquely on relations.

Another principle is that inclusion of works has been decided according to the date of their author's death, not the date when the works themselves appeared (though the date of publication is used where no other information is available). The adoption of this approach has led to evident anomalies at the beginning, where authors may have died in the years just after 1800 but were mainly or almost entirely active in the 18th century. Other criteria could have been adopted, such as an author's most active period, though, while this might have worked for some, it would not have helped for others whose lives and activities are less well documented. When it comes to the end-date of the volume, the year 1914, this principle has been relaxed. There is no plan at present to continue the *CMR* series beyond the early 20th century and so, for the sake of completeness, authors who died after 1914 have been included provided their major period of activity started well before this limit.

The majority of entries are divided into two main parts. The first part is concerned with the author: it contains biographical details, an outline account of their intellectual activities and writings, the chief primary sources of information about them, and the main scholarly studies on them from the mid-20th century onwards. Some entries are concerned with organisations or clusters of authors who were active at roughly the same time and wrote on the same theme, in which case they are situated in the sequence of entries as appropriate. Without aiming to be exhaustive in biographical detail or scholarly study, this section contains enough information to enable readers to pursue further points about the authors and their general activities that bear on their writings about Islam.

The second part of the entry is concerned with the works of the author that are particularly devoted to the other faith. Here, the aim as far as possible is comprehensiveness. The work is named and dated, and then, in two important sections, its contents are described with emphasis on

what it says about the other faith and the author's attitude towards it, and its significance in the history of Christian-Muslim relations is appraised, including any innovative features within it and any influence it exerted on later works. The sections that follow list publication details (manuscripts, where known, and then editions and translations) and studies from roughly the middle of the 20th century onwards. Both these sections are intended to be fully up to date at the time of going to press.

Like preceding volumes in the series, *CMR* 24 provides sufficient information to enable a work to be identified, its importance appreciated, and manuscripts, editions and translations and the latest studies located. Each work is also placed as far as possible in chronological order of completion or publication alongside other works from the same location that were written at the same time, though this grouping should be regarded as more a matter of organisational convenience than anything else. Proximity between entries does not necessarily indicate any direct relationship between the works about which they were written, let alone influence between them (though this may sometimes be stated by an author or be discernible in the work). In the period covered in this volume, as in any other, it is as likely that an author was influenced by a work written in another country or century as by a work from their immediate locality or time.

The task of producing *CMR* 24 has involved numerous contributors, and it is pleasing to note how many have readily agreed to write entries and have sometimes produced contributions that will remain authoritative. Under the direction of David Thomas, the work for this volume was led by John Chesworth (Research Officer), Douglas Pratt (preliminary editing of entries), Alan Guenther, Gordon Nickel, Charles Ramsey, Peter Riddell (South Asia) and Charles Tieszen (essays). They are members of a much larger team of 25 specialists covering all parts of the world. Several other scholars gave assistance in particular ways and without them the task of assembling the material in this volume could not have been completed. Special gratitude goes to Clinton Bennett, Katherine Laura Jennings, Anthony McRoy, James Harry Morris, Ruth J. Nicholls and Rachel Riddell. In addition, Charles Ramsey took responsibility for the transliteration of Urdu, which turned out to be a more complicated task than anticipated (we have ended up with a simplified form of the Library of Congress system), Carol Rowe copy-edited the entire volume with her unfailingly keen eye for detail, Phyllis Chesworth carefully compiled the indexes and Louise Bouglass prepared the map. We are deeply indebted to everyone

who has contributed to bringing this volume into being, not least our colleagues at Brill, Leiden, who produced it with their usual accuracy, speed and efficiency.

Extensive efforts have been made to ensure the contents of the volume are both accurate and as complete as they can be, though it would be unrealistic to think there are no omissions or mistakes. Details must surely have escaped the checks, contributors may have withdrawn and been replaced at the last minute, authors may have been ignored, new interpretations of works may have been proposed, and new editions, translations and studies (in particular) published. For these reasons, corrections, additions and updates are warmly invited. They will be incorporated into the online version of *CMR* and into any further print editions that may appear. Please send details to David Thomas at d.r.thomas.1@bham.ac.uk.

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1 Watercolour by Orlando Norie (1832-1901), 'The 93rd Highlanders at the storming of the Secundra Bagh, Lucknow, 1857', painted in 1858. Courtesy of the National Army Museum, Study collection, London. NAM. 1987-06-12-1, Image number: 72891 40

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12 First page of Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān, *The Mohamedan commentary on the Holy Bible. Genesis I-XI*, Aligarh: author's private press, 1865, p. 37 431
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14 Portrait of 'Imad-ud-din, Convert from Mohammedanism; ordained 1868; Author of many works on the Mohammedan Controversy', in E. Stock, *The history of the Church Missionary Society*, London, 1899, vol. 3, facing p. 460 507
15 Engraving by Francis William Topham (1808-77), 'Festival of the Mohurram', in W. Ellis (ed.), *The Christian keepsake and missionary annual 1837*, London, 1837, facing p. 27 598
16 'Surat ul Fatihat', J. Murdoch, *Selections from the Koran. With an introduction, copious explanatory notes, and a review of the whole*, London, 1896, p. 1 663
17 Photograph, 'Sir William Muir', in John Burke (c. 1843-1900) and William Baker (1829-80), *Afghanistan, 1879-80*, p. 2. World Digital Library 11445, courtesy of Library of Congress 666
18 'Passages revealed at Mecca that refer to the Bible', in W. Muir, *The Corân. Its composition and teaching; and the testimony it bears to the Holy Scriptures*, London, 1878, p. 72 681
19 Drawing, 'Mission work at Sonepur mela', in G.H. Rouse (ed.), *Indian and Singhalese missionary pictures*, London, 1894, p. 100 716
20 Photograph, 'Woman patient in her long white purdah garment', in S. Armstrong-Hopkins, *Within the purdah;* [...] *Being the personal observations of a medical missionary in India*, New York, 1898, p. 35 735
21 Photograph, 'Mirza Ghulam Ahmad', c. 1897, photographer unknown. PD-India 749
22 Title page, Ṣafdar ʿAlī, *Nīyāz nāmah*, Allahabad, 1867 769
23 Bromide print, 'Saiyid Ameer Ali', by Walter Stoneman (1849-1928), 1917. NPG x67935 © National Portrait Gallery, London 863
24 Photograph, 'Ethel Ward and Jaywerbee', in E.F. Ward and P.E. Ward, *Echoes from Bharatkhand*, Chicago IL, 1908, facing page 77 911
25 Watercolour by Mortimer Menpes (1855-1938), 'A learned man of Peshawur', in M. Menpes and F.A. Steel, *India*, London, 1905, plate 44, facing page 114 916

26 Photograph, 'Dr. Pennell travelling as a Sadhu or mendicant pilgrim', in T.L. Pennell, *Among the wild tribes of the Afghan frontier. A record of sixteen years' close intercourse with the natives of the Indian marches*, London, 1909, frontispiece 927

27 Photograph, 'A group of out-patients at the Mission Hospital, Bannu', in T.L. Pennell, *Among the wild tribes of the Afghan frontier. A record of sixteen years' close intercourse with the natives of the Indian marches*, London, 1909, facing page 94 ... 931

28 Engraving, 'A Mufti', in 'Abraham Matchett, 'Missionary labour in Sindh', *Church Missionary Intelligencer* (April 1859) 89-95, p. 91 1003

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Map of South Asia

Essays

Introduction: South Asia in the 19th century

Gordon Nickel

The abundant works from 19th-century South Asia written by Christians and Muslims about and against one another's beliefs present an enthralling challenge to any scholar who seeks to explore them. The century began with large parts of the Indian subcontinent in the control of the East India Company and ended with the British Crown exerting direct rule. This main political architecture of British colonialism has led scholars to portray the period mainly as one of foreign domination, a picture that has proved remarkably influential in scholarly circles in the West. But to permit the politics of the period and this scholarly characterisation to dominate everything else would mean the wilful neglect of what may be termed a *Golconda* of literary gems (recalling the Indian source of the Koh-i-noor and other priceless diamonds). Among these, the most prized specimens include: the first translation into a European language of the *Mishkāt al-maṣābīḥ*, the important collection of the most authoritative Hadiths;[1] the first Christian evangelistic appeal to Indian Muslims in their own languages;[2] the first Muslim challenge to Christian beliefs employing historical criticism of the Bible developed in Europe;[3] the first responses by Indian Christians themselves to Indian Muslim polemic against the Bible;[4] the first extensive accounts in English and German of the life of Muḥammad and the origins of Islam based on the earliest Arabic chronicles in manuscripts preserved in Indian libraries; modernist formulations of Islam in response to Western ideas that introduced Islam into creative dialogue with Christian teachings and the Bible; and vigorous and sometimes controversialist interaction in essays, books and correspondence.

An example that is arguably just as precious as these, though it may be less spectacular, is the *Journal of a voyage up the Ganges, from Calcutta to*

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[1] A.N. Matthews, trans., *Mishcàt-ul-maśábìh or a collection of the most authentic traditions, regarding the actions and sayings of Muhammed; exhibiting the origin of the manners and customs; the civil, religious and military policy of the Muslemàns*, Calcutta, 1809, 1810. See G. Nickel, 'Arnold Nesbit Matthews', in *CMR* 24, 97-101.

[2] K.G. Pfander, *Mīzān ul-ḥaqq*, Calcutta, 1839.

[3] Raḥmatullāh Kairānavī, *Iʿjāz-i Īsavī*, Agra, 1854-5.

[4] Ṣafdar ʿAlī, *Nīyāz nāmah*, Allahabad, 1867; ʿImāduddīn, *Hidāyat al-Muslimīn*, Lahore, 1868.

Agra by the convert to Christianity ʿAbdulmasīḥ (1776-1827),[5] who came to international notice in 1813, the same year that the British Parliament passed the East India Company Act, also known as the Charter Act, that allowed Christian missionaries to settle and work in India. Before this year, the Company had refused to allow missionaries into the territory it controlled but, after a period of remarkable grassroots agitation in Britain, Parliament specified that missionaries were permitted to enter India and also established the Bishopric of Calcutta.[6]

The story of ʿAbdulmasīḥ began with his religious search and conversion in 1810-11 through the influence of a Company chaplain, Henry Martyn (1781-1812).[7] As Avril Powell notes, this marked the start of a new chapter in Christian-Muslim relations in north India, before they were officially permitted.[8] ʿAbdulmasīḥ became widely known through an article written about him in 1813 for a new British publication, *The Missionary Register*, and, in the years that followed, the *Register* carried excerpts from his journals and letters translated by Daniel Corrie (1777-1835), another Company chaplain, who later became Archdeacon of Calcutta and eventually Bishop of Madras.

The region of South Asia includes present-day India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. Under the political canopy of the *Pax Britannica* and enabled in part by the technology it brought, Christian-Muslim written exchanges were free to flourish. The laws passed in Britain in 1813 and particularly in 1833 led to an influx of Christian missionaries intent on engaging South Asian Muslims on matters of faith, many of them sent by missionary societies that were being established in Europe and North America and by Protestant denominations. The tone of the ensuing engagements was influenced by the 18th- and 19th-century revival movements among both Indian Muslims and European and North American Christians. Interactions between them included efforts to learn about the faith, culture and history of the other and, for some, this meant involvement in close encounters over competing and contradictory truth claims. The challenges of interfaith give-and-take in South Asia, and the characterisation of this activity in modern Western scholarship, combine to render the subject both rich and complex. In many ways, South Asia in

[5] See G. Nickel, "Abdulmasīḥ', in *CMR* 24, 136-47.

[6] East India Company Act 1813, Thomas Middleton (Bishop of Calcutta 1814-22).

[7] See R. Pourjavady and S. Ayler, 'Henry Martyn', in *CMR* 20, 88-111.

[8] A.A. Powell, *Muslims and missionaries in pre-Mutiny India*, Richmond, Surrey, 1993, p. 113.

the 19th century was a unique locale of Christian-Muslim relations. The writings that emerged are still published and prove beneficial today.

Ceylon (known as Sri Lanka from 1972), at the southern tip of India, was colonised by the Portuguese between 1505 and 1658, and then the Dutch between 1658 and 1796, when the British East India Company took control during the Napoleonic wars. The British government realised the strategic value of the island and made it a British Crown colony in 1802. Initially, they only controlled the coastal areas but they gained full control in 1815-19.[9] The majority of the people were Sinhalese Buddhists, with a significant Tamil Hindu minority. Islam had been present since the 8th century, brought by Arab traders, whilst Christianity, which was claimed to have been first brought by the Apostle Thomas, had been present in strength from the time of the Portuguese and Dutch.[10] Several British authors in Ceylon in the 19th century wrote about Muslims and Christians on the island, most notably James Emerson Tennent (1804-69), whose *Christianity in Ceylon* (1850) and *Ceylon. An account of the island* (1859) tell of the origins of Islam and Christianity there.[11]

'Interests and happiness' of the inhabitants

The relationship of the East India Company to Christian mission, and thus to close religious encounter between Christians and Muslims in 19th-century South Asia is much debated. Before 1813, the Company frowned upon the wider preaching of Henry Martyn, the chaplain whose Sunday afternoon public explanations of the Ten Commandments first attracted ʿAbdulmasīḥ to the Bible.[12] William Muir (1819-1905), a company employee who documented the early writings connected with Christian-Muslim

[9] For more detail See K.M. de Silva, *A history of Sri Lanka*, London, 2005, especially parts 3 and 4.

[10] On Christianity, see K.M. de Silva, *Social policy and missionary organizations in Ceylon 1840-1855*, London, 1965, especially 'Introduction', 1-17. On Islam, see D. McGilvray and M. Raheem, 'History, culture, and geography. The sources of Muslim identity', in D. McGilvray and M. Raheem, *Muslim perspectives on the Sri Lankan conflict*, Washington DC, 2007, 3-32, especially pp. 3-14.

[11] On James Emerson Tennent and other British authors on Sri Lanka, see J.H. Morris, 'Works from British Ceylon (Sri Lanka)', in *CMR* 24, 464-71.

[12] A.A. Powell, 'Processes of conversion to Christianity in nineteenth-century north-western India', in G. Oddie (ed.), *Religious conversion movements in South Asia. Continuities and change, 1800-1900*, London, 1997, 15-55, p. 32; D. Corrie, 'Some account of Abdool Messee, a converted Mahometan, now employed in Hindoostan as a catechist or reader, by the Church Missionary Society for Africa and the East', *The Missionary Register* 1 (1813) 261-6, p. 263.

encounters in India, wrote in 1845 that, far from being the 'champion' of Christianity, the Company presented an argument in favour of Islam in 'the conduct and manners of [the Muslims'] apparently infidel conquerors',[13] suggesting the indifference to Christianity generally exhibited within the Company. Barbara Metcalf tells the story of how, in a public debate in Shahjahanpur in 1876, the Revd Thomas Jefferson Scott (1835-1920)[14] tried to argue that a proof of the superiority of Christianity was the peace and order brought by the British to India, though Muḥammad Qāsim Nānautavī (1832-80) countered that the British had come only for trade and their presence in India had nothing to do with religion.[15] But other Muslims came to believe that the Company's aim was to 'Christianise' India.[16] After the British seized Delhi in 1803, Shāh ʿAbdulʿazīz (1746-1824)[17] issued a *fatwā* that judged that India was no longer *dār al-Islām* but rather *dār al-ḥarb*,[18] and famously declared, 'From here to Calcutta the Christians are in complete control.'[19] More recently, Penelope Carson suggests differently that some officials considered the Company 'Christian' in the way it sought to preserve Indian religious traditions and opposed those who wanted to transmit Christianity to Indians.[20]

Stephen Neill writes that the attitude of the Company was 'curiously inconsistent and self-contradictory'.[21] Influential figures such as Charles Grant (1746-1823), chairman of the East India Company and Member of Parliament, and Charles Marsh (c. 1774-1835), also a Member of Parliament, who had practised as a barrister in Madras, respectively took up strong positions for and against Christian mission, and permission for it came only in the Charter Act of 1813, after a considerable struggle by its advocates. In fact, a petition in 1793 urging the Company to permit Christian mission failed as a result of lobbying by the directors of the Company, who feared that their commercial interests would be damaged.[22] 'The

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13 W. Muir, 'The Mahommedan controversy', *Calcutta Review* 4/8 (1845) 418-75, pp. 421-2.

14 See K.L. Jennings, 'Thomas Scott Jefferson', in *CMR* 24, 319-24.

15 B.D. Metcalf, *Islamic revival in British India*, Princeton NJ, 1982, p. 228.

16 A. Ahmad, *Islamic modernism in India and Pakistan 1857-1964*, London, 1967, p. 25; cf. Metcalf, *Islamic revival in British India*, p. 75.

17 See C.M. Ramsey, 'Shāh 'Abdul'azīz', in *CMR* 24, 127-35.

18 K.W. Jones, *Socio-religious reform movements in British India*, Cambridge, 1989, p. 52.

19 Metcalf, *Islamic revival in British India*, p. 46.

20 P. Carson, *The East India Company and religion, 1698-1858*, Woodbridge, Suffolk, 2012, pp. 21-2.

21 S. Neill, *A history of Christianity in India 1707-1858*, Cambridge, 1985, p. 149.

22 Powell, *Muslims and missionaries*, pp. 79-80; W. Hague, *William Wilberforce. The life of the great anti-slave trade campaigner*, London, 2007, pp. 221, 408; S. Tomkins, *William Wilberforce. A biography*, Oxford, 2007, pp. 115-16; cf. G. Viswanathan, *Masks of conquest.*

arguments, repeated endlessly, really revolve all the time about the same point – the maintenance of British power in India for the sake of British aggrandizement and enrichment.'[23] When the 1813 Act was passed, it was the result of a popular groundswell of support for missionary work and a steady stream of petitions to the ministers responsible.[24] Leading the push was William Wilberforce (1759-1833), another Member of Parliament who also led the campaign against the British slave trade for 20 years until the passage of the Slave Trade Act of 1807, and supported the campaign for the complete abolition of slavery that led to the Slavery Abolition Act of 1833. Wilberforce was an evangelical Christian who combined a strong personal faith with social activism against perceived moral evils within British society and also among British representatives in India.

Whatever one may conclude about the Company's approach to religion, its prohibition of Christian missionary presence until 1813 (what Powell calls 'enforced inactivity'), 'hostility' to British Christians who advocated mission in India, and 'ridicule' of missionaries once they arrived,[25] were certainly antithetical to Christian-Muslim relations.

Section 33, Resolution 13, of the Charter Act of 1813, known as 'the pious clause', states:

> And Whereas it is the Duty of this country, to promote the interests and happiness of the native inhabitants of the British dominions in India, and that such measures ought to be adopted as may tend to the introduction among them of useful knowledge, and of religious and moral improvement. That in the furtherance of the above objects, sufficient facilities shall be afforded by law, to persons desirous of going to, and remaining in India, for the purpose of accomplishing those benevolent designs.[26]

As a result of this Act, the East India Company gave permission for missionaries to live and work in India but it offered no official patronage to Christian mission. In contrast to the Act's supporters in Britain, many administrators within the Company considered it a mistake and did nothing to facilitate the activity of missionaries, and indeed 'impeded' their

Literary study and British rule in India, New Delhi, 1989, p. 36; A.B. Keith, *A constitutional history of India, 1600-1935*, London, 1936, p. 160.

[23] S. Neill, *Colonialism and Christian missions*, London, 1966, p. 86.

[24] Carson, *East India Company and religion*, pp. 130-50. Neill, *History of Christianity in India*, p. 153.

[25] Powell, *Muslims and missionaries*, pp. 78-81.

[26] Carson, *East India Company and religion*, p. 250; E. Stock, *The history of the Church Missionary Society*, London, 1899, vol. 1, p. 103.

work.[27] 'Government after government did its very utmost to prevent any dangerous infiltration of Christian teaching into the Indian dominions,' writes Neill. 'Never at any time or in any way did any British government identify itself with the missionary cause.'[28] Company employees were instructed to show impartiality towards religions in their business for the Company, though some workers, while following the Company's requirement of 'a strict neutrality in religious matters' when conducting the Company's business, took the liberty on their own time to encourage missionaries in a private capacity.[29] The civil government also began to give protection to Christian missionaries just as it had protected Hindu priests and Muslim mosque officials before 1813.[30] 'Under British rule, so long as he acts with Christian wisdom and consistency, the Christian minister is free to labour, and is protected in these labours.'[31]

The 20-year period of deliberations in Britain preceding the opening of India to Christian missionary activity through the Charter Act coincided with the birth of missionary societies in Europe and North America. In Britain alone before the 19th century, the Baptist Missionary Society had been established in 1792, the London Missionary Society in 1795, the Scottish Missionary Society in 1796, and the Church Missionary Society in 1799. Soon afterwards, the British and Foreign Bible Society was formed in 1804, the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society in 1813 and the General Baptist Missionary Society in 1816. Elsewhere, the New York Missionary Society was formed in 1800, the Netherlands Missionary Society in 1801, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions in 1810, the Basel Missionary Society in 1815, and the Berlin Mission Society in 1824.

Only a minority of the missionaries who entered India after 1813 came with the intention of engaging with Muslims in particular. Some Christian-Muslim interactions took place in parts of south India, such as the regions now known as Tamil Nadu[32] and Telangana, but the main activities were in a broad swath of the north from Bengal to Punjab. In his survey of Christian witness to Muslims in India during the 19th century,

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27 Powell, *Muslims and missionaries*, p. 80.

28 Neill, *Colonialism and Christian mission*, p. 93.

29 Powell, *Muslims and missionaries*, p. 80; Muir, 'Mahommedan controversy', p. 446; Stock, *History of the Church Missionary Society*, vol. 2, p. 210.

30 Stock, *History of the Church Missionary Society*, vol. 2, p. 210, describing a speech of Herbert Edwardes in Peshawar around 1853.

31 'The late Rev. Charles Gottlieb Pfander, D.D.', *Church Missionary Intelligencer* 2 (1866) 97-102, p. 100.

32 See entries by A. Samuel, 'Gnanasigamony Munishi', and 'Nineteenth-century Tamil writings', in *CMR* 24, 183-7 and 267-73.

Lyle van der Werff highlights three main Protestant groups and what he considers their distinctive emphases: Anglicans and apologetic; Scottish Presbyterians and education; and American Presbyterians and the establishment of indigenous churches, especially in the Punjab.[33] He adds that many Christian groups began medical ministries in the 1860s and, around the same time, many started to cooperate through missionary conferences that he suggests led towards an ecumenical Christian approach to Muslims.[34]

The CMS sent its first seven missionaries to India in 1814, but it took until 1820 to start sending workers to the heavily Muslim-populated areas of the north, and even then there was little contact with Muslims until the 1830s.[35] Eventually, however, the presence of missionaries facilitated a century of vigorous Christian-Muslim engagement that resulted in a large number of written works about Islam by Christians and a corresponding though not equivalent number about Christianity by Muslims. This volume includes accounts of authors such as ʿAbdulmasīḥ and their writings related to Christian-Muslim relations.[36]

Revival impulses

The rise of Christian mission societies meant that, following the 1813 Act and throughout the 19th century, many of those who participated in Christian-Muslim engagement in South Asia were evangelical Christians from a variety of Protestant communities. Characteristics shared by many of these participants included an emphasis on salvation by God's grace alone through faith in the atonement accomplished in the death of Jesus;[37] acceptance of the Bible as God's unique revelation to humankind; belief in conversion or being spiritually 'born again'; and the impulse to spread the gospel within and outside their own societies. Behind these characteristics were 17th- and 18th-century German Pietism (from which indeed some of the earliest Protestant missionaries to India came), the Moravian movement that had begun centuries earlier, the British Quakers and Methodists, and American Congregationalists and Presbyterians,

[33] L.L. van der Werff, *Christian mission to Muslims. The record. Anglican and Reformed approaches in India and the Near East, 1800-1939*, Pasadena CA, 1977, pp. 27-96.

[34] Van der Werff, *Christian mission to Muslims*, p. 30.

[35] Powell, *Muslims and missionaries*, p. 81.

[36] See G. Nickel, "Abdulmasīḥ', in *CMR* 24, 136-47.

[37] D.W. Bebbington, 'Atonement, sin, and empire, 1880-1914', in A. Porter (ed.), *The imperial horizons of British Protestant missions, 1880-1914*, Cambridge, 2003, 14-31, pp. 16-18.

as well as leaders and revivalist preachers such as Nicolaus Zinzendorf, George Fox, Jonathan Edwards,[38] George Whitefield, and John Wesley. Evangelicalism has often been described as a phenomenon of the 18th century, but evangelicals would have described themselves as striving for 'the primitive, apostolic purity and zeal of the early Christian church',[39] and in many ways evangelicalism is the Christianity of the Anglican Book of Common Prayer. By 1800, British evangelicals were a small but influential minority in the Church of England, distinguished by their social activism against the slave trade and what they considered immoral behaviour in British society. William Wilberforce was a member of a group known as the Clapham Sect, which successfully campaigned for the abolition of slavery.[40]

Some Christians went to India explicitly for mission while others worked as administrators of the East India Company and later of direct British rule. Some were from Britain, but by no means all. For example, during the first 50 years of the CMS, one half of the missionaries it sent out were Germans trained at the Basel Missionary Seminary, including 42 missionaries to India.[41] Paul Jenkins describes the revival taking place all over Protestant Europe in the decades on either side of 1800 as a kind of '*International* of Protestant activists' (on the model of the Communist International, set up to make the whole world Communist), who 'looked for concrete and innovative ways of carrying out what they saw as the will of God in the face of the evil existing in the world'.[42] Alongside their leadership in the anti-slavery movement these activists were committed to Christian missions, writes Jenkins, 'motivated by a concern to show the love of God to all humanity, even – or especially – where that contact had been degraded by slavery'.[43]

While Western Christians entered India in order to do missionary work or to work for the East India Company, Indian Muslims at the beginning of the 19th century were living under awareness of the increasing weakness and ineffectiveness of the Muslim Mughal dynasty. Some Christians, including converts, took a special interest in engaging with Muslims and

[38] See R.A. Leo, 'Jonathan Edwards', in *CMR* 12, 830-42.

[39] Carson, *East India Company and religion*, p. 26.

[40] D.W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in modern Britain. A history from the 1730s to the 1980s*, London, 1989, pp. 71-3.

[41] P. Jenkins, 'The Church Missionary Society and the Basel Mission. An early experiment in inter-European cooperation', in K. Ward and B. Stanley (eds), *The Church Mission Society and world Christianity 1799-1999*, London, 2019, 43-65, p. 45.

[42] Jenkins, 'Church Missionary Society', p. 50.

[43] Jenkins, 'Church Missionary Society', p. 50.

Islam, but Muslims initially showed no particular interest in reacting to Christians,[44] and Muslim leaders did not begin to consider the missionary presence a 'threat' until about 1850.[45] A possible reason for this is given in ʿAbdulmasīḥ's *Journal*, where he makes it clear that Indian Muslims in the early 19th century did not generally recognise that the British were interested in faith and piety. His Muslim interlocutors frequently criticised the lifestyles of the British administrators they had seen or heard about, calling them 'unclean',[46] criticising their dress and grooming,[47] and often assuming that they were utterly irreligious.[48] Reports of the Company's lack of religion reached England as well, and were part of the reason for the activism behind the Charter Act of 1813.[49]

Inaugurated in 1526 with conquest of northern India by the Emperor Bābur (r. 1526-30), the Mughal Empire reached its greatest extent in the 17th century under the Emperor Aurangzeb (r. 1658-1707).[50] During the 18th century, Mughal fortunes waned steadily under attack from the Marathas and later the British East India Company. The Company eventually annexed Delhi and became the 'protectors' of the Mughal dynasty in 1803, maintaining the fiction of serving the Mughal rulers until 1857.[51] After the British suppression of the Indian Uprising of 1857, in which the last emperor, Bahādur Shāh Ẓafar (r. 1837-57), had been involved in Delhi, the British Crown assumed direct control of the Company-held territories in India. The period of the British Raj thus began on 28 June 1858 and lasted until 1947. Queen Victoria of the United Kingdom became Empress of India in 1876, reigning until she died in 1901.

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44 A.A. Powell, 'Christian-Muslim relations in the Indian subcontinent', in *EI3*.

45 M.J. Kuiper, *Daʿwa and other religions. Indian Muslims and the modern resurgence of global Islamic activism*, London, 2018, p. 119.

46 [D. Corrie],'Journal of a voyage up the Ganges, from Calcutta to Agra, made by ABDOOL MESSEE, one of the readers supported in India by the Church Missionary Society: written by one of the chaplains of the honourable East-India Company', *The Missionary Register* 2 (1814) 149-57, 359-71, pp. 150, 362, 366.

47 ['Abdulmasīḥ, trans. D. Corrie], 'Journal of Abdool Messee, one of the readers supported in India by the Church Missionary Society: written by one of the chaplains of the honourable East-India Company', *The Missionary Register* 2 (1814) 187-98, 224-37, pp. 195, 227; [Corrie], 'Journal of a voyage up the Ganges', p. 365.

48 ['Abdulmasīḥ], 'Journal of Abdool Messee', pp. 192, 195, 234; [Corrie], 'Journal of a voyage up the Ganges', p. 368.

49 Carson, *East India Company and religion*, pp. 7-21.

50 See M. Frederiks, 'Introduction: Christians, Muslims and empires in the 16th century', in *CMR* 7, 1-14, pp. 13-14; P. Riddell, 'Introduction: Christian-Muslim relations in the 17th century (Asia, Africa and the Americas)', in *CMR* 11, 1-14; D. Pratt, 'Introduction: South Asia, South East Asia and China. 18th century contexts', in *CMR* 12, 469-79, pp. 469-73.

51 Metcalf, *Islamic revival in British India*, p. 10.

During the late 18th and into the 19th century, Islam in India was also passing through important internal developments. Many of these, as well as the writings that came out of them, concerned disagreements within and among the main Muslim communities.[52] The Muslim revival or reform movements in South Asia in the 19th century did not at first regard contact with Christians as important, with the result that Muslim works about Christianity did not begin to appear until the widespread distribution of Christian works in Persian and Urdu drew a response in the 1840s. In much of what then appeared, the general outlines of the medieval Islamic critique of Christianity that Indian Muslims had appropriated many centuries earlier is evident.

During the period of Mughal decline, one of the most significant and influential Indian Muslim scholars, Shāh Walī Allāh Dihlavī (1703-62), wrote many works that would be used and debated throughout the 19th century.[53] Recognising the centrality of the Qur'an in any Indian intellectual endeavours, he translated it into Persian, while two of his sons produced translations in Urdu: a literal translation by Rafiʿuddīn (1749-1817) and a more idiomatic translation by ʿAbdulqādir (1753-1827). Shāh Walī Allāh also wrote a treatise on the principles of qur'anic exegesis titled *Al-fauz al-kabīr* ('The great achievement').[54] Both he and his two sons believed that familiarity with the contents of the Qur'an among Muslims would reinvigorate Islam in India.[55] His legacy was continued through the activities and writings of another son, ʿAbdulʿazīz (1746-1824).

Some specialists on the period have detected the influence of Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb (1703-87), the Arab founder of the fundamentalist Wahhābī movement, on many early 19th-century Indian Muslim reformers,[56] though this is not entirely true. The leader of the first Indian revival movement, Sayyid Aḥmad of Rae Bareilly in Oudh (1786-1831), who

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[52] S. Tareen, *Defending Muhammad in modernity*, Notre Dame IN, 2020, esp. 'Reforming religion in the shadow of colonial power', 167-78, and 'Intercessory wars', 122-163; S.K. Tareen, 'Competing political theologies. Intra-Muslim polemics on the limits of prophetic intercession', *Political Theology* 12/3 (2001) 18-43; B.B. Lawrence, 'Islam in South Asia', *Oxford Encyclopedia of the modern Islamic world*, Oxford, 1995, vol. 2, 277-84, p. 283.

[53] C.M. Ramsey, 'Shāh Walī Allāh', in *CMR* 12, 525-33.

[54] G. Nickel, '"The Grand Opening". Shah Wali Allah's principles of exegesis', London, 1987 (MA Diss. SOAS). See K.A. Khan, 'The Qur'an. The translation of Maulvī 'Abdulqādir', in *CMR* 24, 173-7.

[55] Metcalf, *Islamic revival in British India*, p. 204.

[56] For example, M.T. Titus, *Islam in India and Pakistan. A religious history of Islam in India and Pakistan*, Calcutta, 1959, pp. 186-8. See also R.A. Leo, 'Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb', in *CMR* 12, 214-20.

was a disciple of Shāh Walī Allāh's son ʿAbdulʿazīz,[57] advocated a simple and 'pure' form of Islam centred on the Qur'an and denounced religious practices that he considered gratuitous and un-Islamic. After returning from a pilgrimage to Mecca in 1824, he began to make preparations for a jihad against the Sikhs, which he started in 1826.[58] He envisioned his movement to be a society of preachers, who could be transformed into a military force with the aim of bringing in a perfect Islamic theocratic state. He was killed in battle in 1831, five years after the start of his jihad. Ḥajjī Shariʿatullāh (1781-1840) led another scripturalist movement influenced strongly by Wahhābism to oppose popular Sufism in East Bengal.[59]

The second half of the 19th century saw the emergence of the Deobandīs and Barelvīs, two other Sunnī movements that still remain central in the life of Indian Islam. At a time of rule by non-Muslims and also of considerable social change, the School at Deoband, 90 miles northeast of Delhi, was established in 1867 with the aim of preserving the teachings of Islam by calling Muslims to adhere to a standard of correct practice. For this the School needed and set out to raise a class of formally trained and popularly supported *'ulamā'*. Some Deobandīs wrote responses to initiatives from Christian missionaries and met them in public debates.[60] The Barelvīs, also called the Ahl-i Ḥadīth and the Ahl-i Sunnat wa-Jamāʿat, are associated with the writings of Aḥmad Riẓā Khān (1856-1921) of Bareilly and are distinctive for their elaborate veneration of Muḥammad. During the same period, other Muslim leaders developed modernist forms of Islam and, towards the end of the century, the sect of the Aḥmadiyya emerged.[61] In spite of earlier reformers who opposed Sufism, membership of Sufi orders among Indian Muslims remained strong, as well as many popular practices such as worshipping at shrines and consulting *pīr*s.

The reform movements of Indian Islam in the 19th century bear some interesting resemblances to the evangelicalism of many missionaries and British civil servants. The revival movements tended to be 'scripturalist' rather than guardians of accumulated customary practices, 'returning to the written records of the Qur'an and the traditions of the Prophet'[62] and sweeping aside the buildup of *bidʿa* ('religious innovation'). Clinton Bennett describes the evangelical participants in Christian-Muslim

57 P. Hardy, *The Muslims of British India*, Cambridge, 1972, pp. 51-60.
58 Metcalf, *Islamic revival in British India*, pp. 52-63.
59 Metcalf, *Islamic revival in British India*, p. 68.
60 Metcalf, *Islamic revival in British India*, pp. 210-29.
61 See C. Bennett, 'Mīrzā Ghulām Aḥmad', in *CMR* 24, 748-53.
62 Metcalf, *Islamic revival in British India*, pp. 5-6.

encounter in this period as matching the Muslim participants in this regard: 'They shared Islam's view of revelation but applied this to the Bible, not to the Qur'an.'[63] The Muslim reformers were stimulated in part by the example of Christian missionaries to preach widely.[64] As Metcalf says of the Deobandīs, they 'had no doubts whatsoever about the truth' of their tradition. 'They lived in the company of the Prophet and the great Muslims of the past.'[65] This set up the two sides for basic theological, and especially Christological, disagreements that would come to be described by a number of observers as 'controversy'.

Close encounters over truth claims

Many entries in this volume open windows onto a form of religious engagement that is not familiar to many in the West and – where familiar – is often indifferently characterised and seldom looked upon with favour. In the case of ʿAbdulmasīḥ and his 1812 *Journal of a voyage up the Ganges, from Calcutta to Agra*,[66] for example, the people he meets on the riverbank, whether Muslim, Hindu or Roman Catholic, old or young, wealthy or poor, seem continually ready to talk about religion. When he settled in Agra, a steady stream of Muslims visited him and probably engaged in conversations that lasted hours, while, on one occasion, he invited five men to stay with him in his Agra rooms for several days of 'spiritual entertainment'.[67] It is questionable whether 21st-century Western readers would understand and appreciate what he meant by this.

A major aim of *Christian-Muslim relations. A bibliographical history* is to describe these authors and their writings in their historical and social context and in their own terms. 'The historian is not a myth-maker,' wrote Stephen Neill in his account of this period in India.

> It is his business to project himself, as far as that is possible, into the minds of men and women of a different generation, to record temperately and accurately what they did, to assess as far as that is possible the motives by

[63] C. Bennett, 'Victorian images of Islam', *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 15/3 (1991) 116-19, p. 119.
[64] Metcalf, *Islamic revival in British India*, p. 64.
[65] Metcalf, *Islamic revival in British India*, p. 15.
[66] Corrie, 'Journal of a voyage up the Ganges', pp. 359-71.
[67] Entry for 2 April 1826, in 'Journal of the Rev. Abdool Messeeh', *Missionary Register* 14 (1826) 392-8, p. 397.

> which they were actuated and to note the consequences of the decisions that they made. He is primarily an interpreter and not a judge.[68]

One of the key challenges of recording and interpreting 19th-century Christian-Muslim relations in India is the basic activity of describing the form of theological disagreement that many of its most representative writings display. Observers came to use the term 'controversy' for this, apparently following *Controversial tracts on Christianity and Mohammedanism* (1824)[69] by Samuel Lee (1783-18), who used the term to describe the written exchange of conflicting concepts of religious truth between two Persian Muslim writers and Henry Martyn.[70] Muir advanced the use of the term in 1845 in an essay written in India entitled 'The Mahommedan controversy'.[71] It was used later in the century by a prolific Indian author and convert to Christianity, ʿImāduddīn (1830-1900),[72] and in the title of a survey of Christian literature at the beginning of the 20th century by E.M. Wherry (1843-1927).[73] To CMS missionaries, 'controversy' meant the defence and explanation of Christianity in Muslim contexts where '[i]ts case has been prejudged, and on false testimony it has been condemned',[74] a part of their work they considered unavoidable. Others assumed that the term signified an impolite, aggressive and combative manner of presentation and, in response, J. Ridgeway, the editorial secretary of the CMS, wrote,

> By controversy we understand, not acrimonious and irritating recriminations, which, well aware how unbecoming and injurious they are, the missionaries have always eschewed, but that calm investigation of conflicting religious systems that is indispensable to the decision of the important question – Which is true and which is false?[75]

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[68] Neill, *History of Christianity in India*, p. 134.

[69] S. Lee, *Controversial tracts on Christianity and Mohammedanism*, Cambridge, 1824.

[70] C. Bennett, 'Samuel Lee', in *CMR* online; see also Reza Pourjavady's analysis of Henry Martyn's three 'treatises', in *CMR* 20, pp. 91-101.

[71] Muir, 'Mahommedan controversy'; see also A. Powell and G. Nickel, 'William Muir', in *CMR* 24, 666-96.

[72] ʿImāduddīn, 'The results of the controversy in north India with Mohammedans', *Church Missionary Intelligencer* 11 (1875) 276-80; A.A. Powell, '"Pillar of a new faith". Christianity in late nineteenth-century Punjab from the perspective of a convert from Islam', in R.E. Frykenberg (ed.), *Christians and missionaries in India. Cross-cultural communication since 1500, with special reference to caste, conversion, and colonialism*, London, 2003, 223-55, pp. 230-4.

[73] E.M. Wherry, *The Muslim controversy, being a review of Christian literature written in the Urdu language for the propagation of the Christian religion and the refutation of Islam*, Madras, 1905.

[74] J. Ridgeway, 'Missionary work, as regards Mohammedans, impossible, if controversy be interdicted', *Church Missionary Intelligencer* 15 (1864) 220-2, p. 221.

[75] Ridgeway, 'Missionary work', p. 220.

Advocates of 'controversy' in this understanding, including Muir and Robert Clark (1825-1900), conceived it as a careful and reasonable *written* exchange on matters of truth, warned against 'harsh epithets' and 'gratuitous severity', and asserted that a commitment to the criteria of the Gospel could go together quite appropriately 'with prudence, with kindness, with love'.[76] They were not oblivious to personal religious feelings and the response of the human heart.[77]

Though expressions of sensitivity about such 'investigation' of religious systems tend to appear mainly in present-day non-Muslim writings, both Muslims and Christians participated vigorously in this area of interaction in South Asia. In ʿAbdulmasīḥ's experience up to 1826, the main challenges came from Muslims.[78] During the 1830s, a polemic in Persian titled *Saulat uz-zaigham* ('Assault of the lion') became the most popular work against Christianity in the North Western Provinces.[79] The Persian and Urdu books of Karl Gottlieb Pfander (1803-65), questioning Muslim claims and also affirming Christian beliefs, circulated widely in the 1840s.[80] Publication of Muslim apologetic and polemical responses to him and other Christians began in 1845 and continued for more than two decades, notably the books by Raḥmatullāh Kairānavī (1818-91).[81] Muir's reporting from the earliest Muslim narratives in *The life of Mahomet*, and including his own judgements on the story, were influential in the 1860s and after. From 1866, ʿImāduddīn attempted to answer the written attacks on Pfander, and then engaged with other writers such as Sayyid Aḥmad Khān (1817-98) and Mīrzā Ghulām Aḥmad (1839-1908) into the 1880s.[82]

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[76] A. Guenther, 'Controversy as a "necessary evil"? Perspectives on missions to Muslims in India in the late nineteenth Century', NAMP Position Paper 82, Cambridge, 1998, 1-20, pp. 6-12. Quotations from Muir are from 'Mahommedan controversy', p. 455. See also ʿImāduddīn, 'Results of the controversy', p. 280: '[L]et us pray to God for those who curse us, and stretch out our hands to receive them with the same love with which Christ has loved us; never avenging their hatred and scorn, but treating them with all Christian kindness and loving forbearance. If we seek to lead them, let it only be in the deepest humility, and with tenderest sympathy and love.'

[77] Muir, 'Mahommedan controversy', pp. 454-5.

[78] G. Nickel, '"A religion whose author was meek and lowly". The polity of an Indian Christian convert from Islam', *International Journal of Asian Christianity* 5 (2022) 180-94, pp. 185-8, 190-2; see also 'Abdulmasīḥ's *Journal*, G. Nickel, 'Journal and letters', in *CMR* 24, pp. 141-7.

[79] Muir, 'Mahommedan controversy', pp. 450-2, Urdu abridgment *Khulāṣah-i ṣaulat uz-zaigham*, Lahore, 1842; Powell, *Missionaries and Muslims*, pp. 169.

[80] See G. Nickel and Waseem Raza, 'Karl Gottlieb Pfander', in *CMR* 24, 188-236.

[81] See Naeem Mushtaq and C.M. Ramsey, 'Raḥmatullāh Kairānavī', in *CMR* 24, 253-60.

[82] ʿImāduddīn, 'Results of the controversy', p. 276; Powell, '"Pillar of a new faith"', pp. 249-53. See also C. Troll, C. Ramsey and D. Thomas, 'Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān', in *CMR* 24, 424-47, C. Bennett, 'Mīrzā Ghulām Aḥmad', 748-53.

Straightforward accounts of these works of Christian-Muslim 'controversy' are hampered not only by the trend in secondary literature to characterise the era and region entirely in political terms, but also by the tendency by some leading scholars to portray the subject matter of the writings themselves as somehow inappropriate or distasteful, irritating,[83] antagonistic[84] or even sterile.[85] But a more positive approach to deeply-felt differences between committed people of faith is certainly possible and is arguably preferable. Lamin Sanneh, for example, wrote the following while reflecting on Muslim-Christian relations in a similar era but in the different arena of West Africa, 'In religion genuine difference, which is constitutive of particularity, safeguards genuine identity, and genuine identity promotes pluralism as well as mutual trust.'[86] Interestingly, Sanneh suggests that it is often exactly at the points of alleged similarity between faiths that the greatest suspicion and contention may occur. The thought that Muslim leaders in South Asia could take a sanguine view of a clash of truth claims may be surprising to many in the modern West, but this is exactly what Metcalf indicates among the Deobandī *'ulamā'* of the late 19th century. These scholars, she writes, found that 'the arena of public religious debate was one turf on which the Christians [...] could be fought on relatively equal terms with the others.'[87]

New windows on history and culture

The close engagement of Christians and Muslims in discussions about their respective beliefs was only one genre of writing related to Christian-Muslim relations in 19th-century South Asia. From India, Western scholars produced editions and translations of Islamic primary sources and wrote academic studies based on them. This kind of writing began early in the century with the publication of Arnold Nesbit Matthews's (d. 1820) translation of the important medieval Hadith collection *Mishkāt al-maṣābīḥ*, which gathered together the most authoritative Hadiths from the acknowledged trustworthy compilations.[88] He wrote at the time (1809-

[83] Kuiper, *Da'wa and other religions*, p. 120.
[84] Powell, *Missionaries and Muslims*, pp. 139, 144.
[85] J. Cox, *Imperial fault lines. Christianity and colonial power in India, 1818-1940*, Stanford CA, 2002, p. 59.
[86] Lamin Sanneh, *Piety and power. Muslims and Christians in West Africa*, Maryknoll NY, 1996, p. 7.
[87] Metcalf, *Islamic revival in British India*, p. 219.
[88] A.N. Matthews (trans.), *Mishcàt-ul-maśábìh*; see Nickel, 'Arnold Nesbit Matthews', in *CMR* 24, 97-101.

10) that no complete body of Muslim traditions had previously appeared in translation into any European language.[89] His translation was probably first used for an academic study in Pfander's *Remarks on the nature of Muhammadanism*.[90] It was still the only significant English Hadith translation available a century later[91] and remained the standard translation of the *Mishkāt* until James Robson's translation, begun in 1960.[92]

Some of the academic work was even based on newly discovered manuscripts. For example, the text of the first part of al-Wāqidī's (d. 823) *Kitāb al-maghāzī* was published in Calcutta in 1856 after the German scholar Alfred von Kremer (1828-89) discovered the manuscript in Damascus in 1851, at the time the only copy of the work known to exist.[93] Von Kremer explained that this completed the quartet of the earliest Muslim accounts of the origins of Islam, the other three being Ibn Isḥāq's (d. 767) *Al-sīra l-nabawiyya* in Ibn Hishām's (d. 833) edition, Ibn Saʿd's (d. 845) *Ṭabaqāt*, and al-Ṭabarī's (d. 923) *Taʾrīkh al-rusul wa-l-mulūk*.

Von Kremer described Aloys Sprenger (1813-93), who was working in India at the time, as the only European scholar of the origins of Islam who was writing on the basis of these 'earliest Arabic historians'.[94] Sprenger himself had discovered a manuscript of the *Ṭabaqāt* in a Muslim *nawāb*'s library at Cawnpore, and thus was able to use these four primary sources for his *Das Leben und die Lehre des Moḥammad nach bisher grösstentheils unbenutzten Quellen*.[95] Also from India, Muir was able to review Sprenger's work and query his opinions on the historical reliability of the Muslim primary sources for Muḥammad's life.[96] Muir also used the early Muslim sources for his own *Life of Mahomet*.[97] In the middle of the century, he exulted in Sprenger's discovery of the *Ṭabaqāt* and in the resources

[89] A.N. Matthews (trans.), *Mishcàt-ul-maśábìh*, vol. 1, p. ii.

[90] K.G. Pfander, *Remarks on the nature of Muhammadanism*, Calcutta, 1840, p. 6; see G. Nickel, '*Remarks on the nature of Muhammadanism*', in *CMR* 24, pp. 213-16.

[91] Wherry, *Muslim controversy*, viii-ix.

[92] J. Robson, *Mishkat al-masabih, English translation with explanatory notes*, 2 vols, Lahore, 1970, vol. 1, pp. xv-xvi.

[93] A. von Kremer (ed.), *History of Muhammad's campaigns, by Aboo 'Abd Ollah Mohammad 'bin Omar al-Wákidy*, Calcutta, 1856, p. 5. Even today there are only three known manuscripts of the *Maghāzī*, including von Kremer's discovery, and only a single complete copy, 'one that is error-ridden and a significant challenge to use'; R. Faizer (ed.), *The life of Muḥammad. Al-Wāqidī's Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, London, 2011, p. xiii.

[94] Von Kremer, *History of Muhammad's campaigns*, p. 1.

[95] A. Sprenger, *Das Leben und die Lehre des Moḥammad nach bisher grösstentheils unbenutzten Quellen*, 3 vols, Berlin, 1861-5; see G. Nickel and N.P. Franke, 'Aloys Sprenger', in *CMR* 24, 472-95.

[96] Muir, 'Value of early Mahometan historical sources', *Calcutta Review* 46 (1868) 349-90.

[97] W. Muir, *Life of Mahomet*, 4 vols, London, 1857-61.

available to scholars for the 'dispassionate' study of the rise of Islam. He estimated that these resources were 'greater in India, than in any other part of the world'.[98]

On the Muslim side, the same years saw the emergence of a type of Islam that is often called 'modernist', which was at many points opposed to the major 'traditionalist' movements such as the Deobandīs. Islamic modernism is often linked to the figure of Sayyid Aḥmad Khān,[99] who composed many works on interactions with Christianity. He received his early theological training in the school of Shāh Walī Allāh, but eventually took Muslim education in quite a different direction with his founding of the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College at Aligarh in 1875. He was loyal to the British colonial administration and worked as a civil servant in the British judicial system. He was sensitive to the European Enlightenment critique of Islam that he found in Western scholarship, and answered it. Not only this, but he also wrote on Christianity, particularly in his *Mohomedan commentary on the Holy Bible* (1862). According to Hafeez Malik, he was 'the only Muslim scholar ever to have ventured a commentary on the Old and New Testaments'.[100]

A second Indian Muslim who wrote from a modernist perspective was Syed Ameer Ali (1849-1928), a barrister-at-law and a member of the Royal Asiatic Society. Like Aḥmad Khān, he wrote responses to Muir on Islam, publishing his *Critical examination of the life and teachings of Muhammad* (London, 1873) in rebuttal to Muir's *Life of Mahomet*.[101] Ameer Ali appealed to his British readers to accept Islam on the basis of his argument that Muḥammad was a powerful religious and political leader in contrast to what he called Christianity's 'feeble and incompetent founder'.[102] He presented Muḥammad as a messenger of moral humanism and progress who was entirely in tune with the modern age.[103] His interaction with Western

98 W. Muir, 'Biographies of Mohammed for India, and the Mohammedan controversy', *Calcutta Review* 17 (1852) 387-421, p. 387.

99 Ahmad, *Islamic modernism*, pp. 31-56; see Troll and Ramsey, 'Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān'.

100 Hafeez Malik, 'Aḥmad Khān, Sayyid', in J.L. Esposito (ed.), *The Oxford encyclopedia of the Islamic world*, Oxford, 2009, vol. 1, 85-7, p. 86; see J.H. Morris, 'Syed Ameer Ali', in *CMR* 24, 863-79.

101 A.A. Powell, 'Modernist Muslim responses to Christian critiques of Islamic culture, civilization, and history in northern India', in J.M. Brown and R.E. Frykenberg (eds), *Christians, cultural interactions, and India's religious traditions*, London, 2002, 61-91, pp. 67-71.

102 Syed Ameer Ali, *Critical examination of the life and teachings of Muhammad*, London, 1872, p. 276.

103 G. Minault, 'Ameer Ali, Syed', in J.L. Esposito (ed.), *The Oxford encyclopedia of the Islamic world*, Oxford, 2009, vol. 1, 136-7, p. 136. *Critical examination* was re-released in 1891 with the subtitle *The spirit of Islam*, by which the book has been mainly known.

writings on Islam in turn drew responses from such Christian writers as Robert Durie Osborn (1835-89).[104]

A window of a slightly different kind was opened by the little-known Agra physician Muḥammad Wazīr Khān,[105] who sought to oppose the writings of Pfander in the 1850s. He found and studied works by European scholars on the Bible, which were available in libraries in Agra and Delhi, in order to support a Muslim accusation of 'corruption' against the Bible and thus to limit its use in Christian-Muslim engagement. Powell suggests that he was the first Muslim in the world 'to possess the linguistic skills, as well as the inclination, to challenge Christianity' by using critical literature in European languages.[106] His research and arguments ended up in the publications of Raḥmatullāh Kairānavī and in a vigorous exchange of letters with Pfander in 1854.[107]

Challenges of engagement

These explorations in the world of the other could be pursued purely for the sake of knowledge, but they were usually motivated by other goals. Matthews translated the Hadiths partly to help prevent Christian writers from showing their ignorance about the 'dogmas they undertake to impugn'.[108] Pfander and Muir presented the story of Muḥammad from earliest Muslim chronicles on the assumption that a clear judgement would appear in the light of Gospel criteria. The resulting interactions could be very robust indeed. Pfander concluded his *Mīzān ul-ḥaqq* with a classic evangelistic appeal to Muslim readers. Ameer Ali, like a number of Muslim writers since, urged his British readers to abandon Christ in favour of the 'more powerful' Muḥammad, and Muḥammad Qāsim Nānautavī personally invited Christian missionaries to Islam.[109] In fact, conversion did occur. Matthews is rumoured to have converted to Islam,

104 See D.E. Singh, 'Robert Durie Osborn', in *CMR* 24, 368-78.

105 See G. Nickel, 'Muḥammad Wazīr Khān', in *CMR* 24, 237-45.

106 A.A. Powell, 'Muslim-Christian confrontation. Dr. Wazir Khan in nineteenth-century Agra', in K. Jones (ed.), *Religious controversy in British India. Dialogues in South Asian languages*, Albany NY, 1992, 77-92, pp. 78-9.

107 G. Nickel and W. Raza, 'Ikhtitām dīnī *mubāḥasah* kā', *CMR* 24, 222-36; G. Nickel, 'Higher criticism. III. Islam', *Encyclopedia of the Bible and its reception*, Berlin, 2015, vol. 11, cols. 1067-70, cols. 1067-8; G. Nickel, 'Qur'anic and Islamic interpretation of the Bible', in S.L. McKenzie (ed.), *The Oxford encyclopedia of biblical interpretation*, New York, 2013, vol. 2, 167-76, p. 174.

108 Matthews (trans.), *Mishcàt-ul-maśábìh*, vol. 1, p. ii.

109 S. Tareen, 'The polemic of Shahjahanpur. Religion, miracles and history', *Islamic Studies* 51 (2012) 49-67, p. 54.

thus explaining for some his interest in the Hadith,[110] while ʿAbdulmasīḥ was joined in his move to Christianity later in the century by Ṣafdar ʿAlī (1830-99), ʿImāduddīn[111] and Aḥmad Shāh (1840-1926) among others.

Participants in debates often invested great efforts in arguing with their opponents. Muslim writers such as Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān, Ameer Ali and Chirāgh ʿAlī (1844-95)[112] were conversant with the writings of Muir, Robert Durie Osborn (1835-89), Thomas Patrick Hughes (1838-1911) and Edward Sell (1839-1932)[113] and 'actively confronted their ideas with creative arguments that had the effect of transforming Muslim discourse in India'.[114] Further, the language of exchanges could sometimes depart from the polite conventions of later interfaith dialogue. The letters of Wazīr Khān, writes Powell, show a freedom to use 'ridicule, sarcasm, and insinuations of a personal nature in order to cast a very unflattering light on Pfander's character and motives'.[115] Muslims wrote against Christianity and the Bible, and Christians wrote against Islam and the Qur'an. Christians questioned Muslim claims for Muḥammad, and Muslims denied fundamental Christian beliefs about Jesus. Offence was both given and taken. Whatever one may think of these developments, they are simply facts of written Christian-Muslim engagement in South Asia during the 19th century.

Characterisation of the legacy

Since its publication in 1978, many scholars have chosen to use Edward Said's *Orientalism* as the framework through which to view and characterise the writings of Christian-Muslim relations in 19th-century South Asia. In Said's analysis, the approach to the writings of Western Christians in India becomes one of seeing the majority of them as entwined inextricably with British imperial dominion and serving its aims. He mentions Muir in particular, arguing that, though his studies on Islam 'are still considered

110 C. Bennett, 'Chronology', in C. Bennett (ed.), *The Bloomsbury companion to Islamic studies*, London, 2013, 283-310, p. 291.

111 In 1893, 'Imāduddīn listed 117 names of 'some of the more notable' Christian converts from Islam; 'Imāduddīn, *Mohammedan converts to Christianity in India*, trans. H.M. Clark, London, 1910, pp. 9, 13-16; see W. Raza and G. Nickel, 'Ṣafdar ʿAlī', Kamil and Nickel, "Imāduddīn Lāhiẓ', and N. John, 'Aḥmad Shāh', in *CMR* 24, 765-80, 506-41 and 1039-45.

112 See J. Luis Dizon, 'Chirāgh ʿAlī', in *CMR* 24, 625-36.

113 See Singh, 'Robert Durie Osborn'; A.M. Guenther, 'Thomas Patrick Hughes', in *CMR* 16, 311-19; A. Simnowitz, 'Edward Sell', in *CMR* 24, 781-803.

114 A.M. Guenther, 'The ḥadīth in Christian-Muslim dialogue in 19th century India', in D. Pratt et al. (eds), *The character of Christian-Muslim encounter. Essays in honour of David Thomas*, Leiden, 2015, 264-87, p. 277.

115 Powell, 'Muslim-Christian confrontation', p. 80.

reliable monuments of scholarship', his judgements about the material on which he was working were expressions of the 'inequality' of Occident and Orient.[116] Another example, among many, is Powell's careful identification of Pfander's Pietist writings in Persian as both 'Eurocentric' and 'Orientalist'.[117] However, there are other possible approaches to those writings, proposed both before and after Said's influential book,[118] that may be applied to the period and region. An interesting example from a non-European perspective is Lamin Sanneh's reading of the East India Company's prohibition of Christian mission prior to 1813, especially in relation to the translation of the Bible into Indian languages:

> The authorities argued that mission was a threat to British rule by inciting a spirit of religious animosity, which, by some inexplicable chemistry, undermined the basis of colonial rule. The diagnosis was correct, but in an oblique way: Christian mission, by furnishing a systematic account of the indigenous heritage, tacitly encouraged pride and confidence in the people, and in time this must prevail against the unstated logic of colonial overlordship.[119]

Sanneh documents in particular the efforts made by the Nonconformist William Carey (1761-1834) and Pietist Christian Friedrich Schwartz (1726-98) to study the languages and religions of India in a manner that actually stimulated local cultures and encouraged trust. 'Colonial high-handedness rather than missionary Jacobinism proved a far more fertile source of popular disaffection.'[120]

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116 E.W. Said, *Orientalism*, New York, 1979, p. 151.

117 Powell, *Muslims and missionaries*, p. 144.

118 G.A. Oddie, *Missionaries, rebellion and proto-nationalism. James Long of Bengal 1814-87*, Richmond, Surrey, 1999, pp. 180-97; Cox, *Imperial fault lines*, pp. 9-19; A. Porter, *Religion versus empire? British Protestant missionaries and overseas expansion, 1700-1914*, Manchester, 2004, pp. 316-30; J. Samson, 'The problem of colonialism in the Western historiography of Christian missions', *Religious Studies and Theology* 23/2 (2004) 3-25; Ibn Warraq, *Defending the West. A critique of Edward Said's* Orientalism, Amherst NY, 2007, pp. 167-244; M. Daneshgar, *Studying the Qur'an in the Muslim academy*, Oxford, 2020, pp. 96-123; M. Daneshgar, 'I want to become an Orientalist not a colonizer or a "decolonizer"', *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion* 33 (2021) 173-85.

119 L. Sanneh, *Translating the message. The missionary impact on culture*, Maryknoll NY, 1996, p. 102; see J.H. Morris, 'William Carey', in *CMR* 24, 154-62.

120 Sanneh, *Translating the message*, p. 103; see also Cox, *Imperial fault lines*, pp. 221-49, ch. 8, 'Embracing India, missionaries and Indian Christians confront imperial fault lines'. This analysis brings to mind the comment of Carson that, in the late 1780s, the administrators of the East India Company opposed giving permission for the spreading of Christianity in the West Indies because 'there were growing concerns about the impact of the egalitarian tenets of Christianity on social relations with the slaves, who were becoming increasingly restive' (Carson, *East India Company and religion*, p. 22).

British rule over India certainly affected Christian-Muslim relations in both positive and negative ways. The association of Christianity with colonialism, in the eyes of many, is certainly a negative result of the British political presence.[121] But the freedom for Christians and Muslims to write openly about their faith and deliberate over their differences and similarities under the *Pax Britannica* is a positive consequence. In terms of Christian-Muslim relations, writes Metcalf, Muslim scholars do not appear to have been intimidated: 'The Muslims felt not only intellectually but morally superior to their Christian opponents.'[122] Muir, in the mid-1840s, wrote profusely about the possibilities for what he called the 'fourth grand era of the connection of Christianity with Mahommedanism',[123] and in 1868 he wrote that 'the right of private judgment and of discussion is here in India as free as the air we breathe'.[124]

Almost as categorical, if maybe not so sanguine about Christian evangelism, is the comment of Aziz Ahmad that 'Through British rule, the association of Muslim India with the West has been more intimate and of longer duration than that of any other Muslim people.'[125] Powell writes in a similar vein about 'a new phase of cultural interaction between Islam and Christianity' through the period.[126] And even the close encounters of religious 'controversy' had a positive aspect for Muslims that is rarely indicated in the Western scholarly characterisation of the subject: '... that very competition helped create a familiarity with religious issues that was unprecedented in Indian history', including a substantial increase in the audience of such religious leaders as *'ulamā'*.[127] Alan Guenther notes that, 'While the temptation to interpret the history of Christian-Muslim relations in light of current political tensions tends to result in an over-simplification of the encounter either in terms of confrontation or conciliation depending on one's ideological orientation, the reality is more complex and variegated.'[128]

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121 Powell, 'Christian-Muslim relations in the Indian subcontinent', in *EI3*.

122 Metcalf, *Islamic revival in British India*, pp. 220-1.

123 Muir, 'Mahommedan controversy', p. 421.

124 Muir, 'Value of early Mahometan historical sources', p. 389; echoed later in 'Imāduddīn, 'Dr. Imad-ud-din's paper for Chicago', trans. H.M. Clark, *Church Missionary Intelligencer* 44 (1893) 579-86, p. 583.

125 Ahmad, *Islamic modernism*, p. 260.

126 Powell, 'Modernist Muslim responses', p. 61.

127 Metcalf, *Islamic revival in British India*, pp. 233-4.

128 A.M. Guenther, 'Christians and Muslims in Mughal India', in D. Thomas (ed.), *Routledge handbook on Christian-Muslim relations*, Abingdon, 2018, 227-38, p. 228.

Out of the cupboard

Two curious stories related to ʿAbdulmasīḥ point to the dimensions of the possible neglect of the writings of Christian-Muslim relations in South Asia during the 19th century when they are dismissed by reigning ideologies of a later age. During the early 1800s, many British Christians in India greatly admired ʿAbdulmasīḥ from what they had learned of him over the course of seven years, and they arranged for a portrait of him to be painted in Calcutta in 1820 and to be sent to Church Mission House in London. After publishing a report from May 1820 to this effect by Corrie in *The Missionary Register* for September 1821, the editor adds the following postscript:

> We are sorry to learn that the "Bulmer", [the ship] by which the Portrait of Abdool Messeeh was forwarded, has been nearly wrecked, and was to be abandoned at Sadras. What remained of the cargo, was to be sent on in another ship. Nothing has yet been heard of the Portrait of Abdool.[129]

The second story is of the discovery of a different portrait of ʿAbdulmasīḥ in a cupboard in the principal's lodge in Ridley Hall theological college, Cambridge, in 1993.[130] Graham Kings, the then principal, wrote that he could find no information on the portrait either at Ridley or in the CMS archives, and finally concluded that '[i]ts provenance and history remain a mystery'.[131] He placed the unidentified portrait above the mantlepiece of his study in Cambridge in 1999, and a different oil painting of ʿAbdulmasīḥ does indeed hang in the London CMS headquarters. But questions remain. Eugene Stock simply wrote that Thomas Thomason had a portrait of Abdul painted and sent it 'home' to Charles Simeon in 1814.[132] But which portrait? Without realistic portraits of the authors of works of Christian-Muslim relations in 19th-century South Asia, based on the writings of the authors themselves, in their own terms and according to their historical and cultural contexts, we may be left with only caricatures created largely out of the shifting ideologies of our time. The entries in this volume attempt to take these authors and their writings out of the 'cupboard' of sometimes wilful neglect in order to inform Christian-Muslim interaction in what is now a distant century.

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129 'Proceedings of Abdool Messeeh', *Missionary Register* 9 (1821) 381-3, p. 383.

130 G. Kings, 'Abd ul-Masīḥ. Icon of indigeneity', *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 23/2 (1999) 66-9, p. 66. See Illustration 3. ʿAbdulmasīḥ, below p. 138.

131 Kings, 'Icon of indigeneity', p. 68.

132 Stock, *History of the Church Missionary Society*, vol. 1, p. 183.

Despite determined efforts to take account of all the works connected with Christian-Muslim relations in 19th-century South Asia, this has not been fully realised because some works could not be found and too little is known about them. These include: *Al-furqān* ('Proof' or 'The Qur'an') by Ghulām Masīḥ; *Mir'āt al-Qur'ān* ('Mirror to the Qur'an') and *Tanbīh al-ghāfilīn* ('Advice to the heedless') by Maḥbūb Masīḥ; *Al-Ḥakam* ('The Arbitrator') by Yaʿqūb ʿAlī ʿIrfānī; and *Ḍarūrāt* ('Constraints') by John Mill. If information about them comes to light, entries on them will be posted in the online *CMR*.

Wahhābīs in India in the 19th century

Chandra Mallampalli

During the course of the 19th century, new developments brought fresh pressures to bear on religious communities in British India. Printing presses, missionary preaching and education, colonial policies, movements towards socio-religious reform and the political aspirations of Indian elites resulted in more direct contacts between members of different faiths. In consequence, religious communities became more self-aware and also more committed to internal reform and renewal, especially as they responded to social changes prompted by British rule.[1]

Arab Muslims formed commercial links along India's western Malabar coast as early as the 8th century and successive Turkic and Turko-Mongol dynasties ruled north India in the centuries that followed. Itinerant Sufi Muslims made converts of their own, chiefly among peasants, leading to a distinctive form of populist Islam which blended Muslim beliefs with already existing indigenous practices and traditions. The fabric of this populist faith was characterised by the the veneration of Sufi saints and their tombs, pilgrimage to holy sites and belief in magic and astrology, which mirrored practices of local Hindu traditions. The 'purer' Islam to which reformers called Indian Muslims sought to disentangle them from many of these everyday practices. The stronger emphasis they laid on the Qur'an and the Hadiths provided India's Muslims with an ideological anchor in the midst of rapid changes.

During the early 19th century, many Indo-Afghan Muslim reformers came to be referred to as 'Wahhabis' though, strictly speaking, Wahhābīs were followers of the Arab Muslim reformer Ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb (1703-92)[2] and, as numerous scholars have pointed out, the reformers who were most active in India at the time were not connected with him but were followers of the Indian reformer, Sayyid Aḥmad Barelvī (1786-1831). They called themselves the Ṭarīqah-i Muḥammadiyyah ('Order of Muḥammad'), though colonial officials and Muslim opponents of the movement

[1] Portions of this essay are drawn from C. Mallampalli, *A Muslim conspiracy in British India? Politics and paranoia in the early nineteenth-century Deccan*, Cambridge, 2017.

[2] See R.A. Leo, 'Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb', in *CMR* 12, 214-20.

inaccurately and pejoratively labelled them 'Wahhabis'.[3] Whereas some officials were aware of the distinction, at times of political crisis in particular they often applied the term very broadly to any group of Muslims who followed radical, reformist teachings or more loosely to any Muslim suspected of political treason.

Studies of India's so-called 'Wahhabis' tend to focus on the period following the Great Rebellion or Uprising of 1857. A vast literature devoted to the events of 1857 assigns to Muslims a key role in plotting the Rebellion and describes growing colonial Islamophobia in the aftermath.[4] It was in this context that the civil servant William Wilson Hunter (1840-1900) asked whether Muslims were obligated to rebel against their British rulers by the nature of their faith itself because he was convinced that it was the 'fanatical' Wahhabi sect who, having designated British India as *dār ul-ḥarb* ('the abode of war'), considered it their religious duty to wage war against their rulers, whereas more enlightened Muslims, while 'sorrowfully accepting the fact' [of British rule], did not regard it as a setting for rebellion.[5] During the 1860s and 1870s, sentiments such as these led officials to charge a number of Muslims with aiding the jihadist activities of extremists, either during or after the Rebellion. Colonial fears of a pervasive threat posed by radicalised Muslims became concentrated in the form of a 'phantom Wahhabi', who used his ties to a global *umma* to orchestrate anti-British activities. Merging 'a kernel of reality with overblown paranoia', this figure became the subject of the well-publicised 'Wahhabi trials' in 1864 and 1865 in Patna and Ambala,[6] which provide insights into ideological currents in the decades following the Rebellion. Overemphasis on the situation in north India after 1857, however, has led scholars largely to ignore an earlier situation in which Wahhabi fear-mongering was equally prevalent.

[3] A. Jalal, *Partisans of Allah. Jihad in South Asia*, Cambridge, 2008, p. 64. In South Asia and elsewhere, other reform movements calling for a return to the 'path of the Prophet Muḥammad' also referred to themselves as Ṭarīqah-i Muḥammadiyyah, including, for instance, the organisation founded in the 18th century by Khwaja Muḥammad Nāṣir of Delhi. This movement functioned as a Sufi sect, with Nāṣir maintaining intimate ties with notable *pirs*, writing important mystical works, and claiming divine inspiration for himself. See Saiyid Athar Abbas Rizvi, *Shah Wali-Allah and his times*, Canberra, 1980, pp. 344-5.

[4] For an excellent compilation of English-language sources, see R. Sorsky, *The Sepoy mutiny: 1857. An annotated checklist of English language books*, Fresno CA, 2007.

[5] W.W. Hunter, *The Indian Musalmans*, London, 1872[2], p. 143.

[6] J. Stephens, 'The phantom Wahhabi. Liberalism and the Muslim fanatic in mid-Victorian India', *Modern Asian Studies* 47/1 (2013) 22-52, pp. 24, 48.

A context of Christian-Muslim encounter

During the 1820s and 1830s, Protestant missionary societies played an active role in drawing attention to the 'backward' or 'barbaric' practices of Indian society and the need for colonial intervention. Through open-air preaching and the dissemination of printed tracts, missionaries tried to expose the deficiencies of Islam and Hinduism. Their activities did not in themselves necessarily trigger the impulse for Muslim reform but were an important part of the historical context that gave rise to it, because their confrontational approach eventually elicited spirited responses from Muslim elites. The timing and proximity of missionary propaganda and Muslim reform movements warrants some discussion of Christian-Muslim exchanges in the early 19th century.

One of the earliest missionaries to Muslims, Henry Martyn (1781-1812),[7] who served as a chaplain to the British army in the north Indian cities of Dinapore and Kanpur, was responsible for translating the Bible into Urdu, Persian and Arabic, three languages central to Islamic learning and religious practice. In 1807, he established a school in Patna, which enrolled many Muslim students, though he abandoned it when rumours of students converting to Christianity provoked opposition from their families.[8] Martyn was less successful as a bazaar preacher than as an author and translator. Whether because of his own temperament or the constraints of his military chaplaincy, he rarely succeeded in drawing learned Muslims into debate about religious matters. His chief accomplishments, according to Avril Powell, lay in his translations of the Bible and his authorship of a number of controversial tracts refuting Muslim claims about the Qur'an and the prophethood of Muḥammad. The emphasis he placed on evidence and proof, Powell notes, was a fusion of his evangelical convictions and rationalism.[9] His publications passed into the hands of members of the *'ulamā'* and opened the way for formal debates between Christians and Muslims in the following decades.

One of the ironies of Martyn's early career was his own lack of knowledge about Islam, despite his commitment to working among Muslims. Perhaps even more than the earlier Baptist missionaries who had established a mission post at Serampore, north of Calcutta, for his translations of the Bible he relied extensively on the assistance of Muslim *munshī*s

[7] See S. Ayler and R. Pourjavady, 'Henry Martyn', in *CMR* 20, 89-111.

[8] H. Pearson, *Islamic reform and revival in nineteenth-century India. The Tariqah-i Muhammadiyah*, New Delhi, 2008, p. 133.

[9] A. Powell, *Muslims and missionaries in pre-Mutiny India*, Richmond, Surrey, 1993, p. 98.

(language teachers or clerks), who placed themselves at considerable risk in doing this because they could easily be branded as heretics and shunned by Muslim society.[10] A similar fate awaited them if they converted to Christianity. One such convert, an Arab named Nathaniel Sabat (originally Jawād ibn Ibrāhīm Sābāṭ),[11] had aided missionaries in Calcutta and also Martyn in Patna in their Bible translations. For a time, missionaries held great hopes in employing him, because as an insider to elite Muslim society, he would be more effective than foreigners, who struggled to gain interested audiences among Muslims. As a Christian, Sabat wrote several evangelistic tracts aimed at converting Muslims to Christ, but Martyn would eventually complain about his erratic temperament, even lamenting in his journal that he had become 'the keeper of a lunatic'.[12]

The volatile Sabat eventually renounced Christianity and published a refutation in Arabic entitled *Al-barāhīn al-Sābāṭiyya fīmā tastaqīmu bihī daʿāʾim al-milla l-Muḥammadiyya wa-tatahaddamu bihi asaṭīn al-sharīʿa l-mansūkha l-ʿĪsawiyya* ('The Sabatian proofs that support the pillars of the Muḥammadan community and subvert the columns of the abrogated Christian faith'), arguably the first formal reply of a Muslim to missionaries. Years later, the *'ulamā'* in Lucknow referred to this work in their response to another of Martyn's converts, ʿAbdulmasīḥ.[13] In Agra, ʿAbdulmasīḥ preached about the divinity of Christ to prominent Muslim scholars, who at first responded with openness but then rejected him. His conversion raised anxieties among them that others would follow his example, and some even feared that his preaching signified a more pervasive demise of Islam under British rule.

Polemical encounters between Muslims and Protestant missionaries intensified into the 1840s and 1850s. The 'Muhammadan controversy', in which the Church Missionary Society missionary Karl Gottlieb Pfander[14] was concerned, involved an exchange of published statements and, in 1854, a formal debate at Agra that became one of the best-known polemical encounters in Christian-Muslim history.

10 Powell, *Muslims and missionaries*, p. 95.
11 See N. Green, 'Jawād ibn Ibrāhīm Sābāṭ', in *CMR* 18, 489-94.
12 Powell, *Muslims and missionaries*, p. 96.
13 See G. Nickel, "Abdulmasīḥ', in *CMR* 24, 136-47.
14 See G. Nickel and Waseem Raza, 'Karl Gottlieb Pfander', in *CMR* 24, 188-236.

The Ṭarīqah-i Muḥammadiyyah and jihad

In response to missionary attacks, Muslims called for religious reform and revival. During the 1820s, large numbers of Muslims attended meetings of the Ṭarīqah-i Muḥammadiyyah in north Indian cities. While there is little evidence that reformers of the organisation developed their vision as a response to Protestant missionaries, key aspects of their theology and practice mirrored the Protestant emphasis on a sacred book, organisation along lines similar to those of the missionaries, and the rejection of local practices and customs absorbed into Islam from Indian surroundings,[15] including worship before the tombs or shrines of Sufi saints and excessive prostration before religious teachers.[16] Reformers decried such practices as innovations or polytheism and in breach of scripture-based Islam.[17]

In contrast to the message of the Arabian Wahhābīs, which was critical of the mystical practices of Sufism, Sayyid Aḥmad Barelvī's reformist form of Islam embraced many aspects of Sufism. Sayyid Aḥmad himself was initiated into multiple Sufi orders,[18] though he did oppose what he considered to be abuses of Sufism, including practices surrounding the veneration of dead or living saints and assigning 'excessive authority to one's *murshid*' [spiritual guide].[19]

This reformist critique of Indian Islam did not mean that the Ṭarīqah-i Muḥammadiyyah sought a restoration of the former Mughal Empire, since they tended to associate Mughal rule with compromises with local culture, imperial decadence and a climate of indifference and ignorance

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[15] T.P. Hughes, 'The Wahhabis of Najd and India', *Church Missionary Intelligencer and Record* 3 (1878) 98-100, 160-5. On T.P. Hughes, see *CMR* 16, 311-19; *CMR* 24, pp. 1004-6.

[16] Pearson, *Islamic reform and revival*, pp. 65-6.

[17] The renewal (*tajdīd*) of Muslim societies was expressed differently in different contexts and was led by different kinds of leaders. The movement begun by Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb responded to the perceived apathy and decadence of Muslim society under Ottoman rule. Later calls for *tajdīd* responded to unique pressures arising from European domination. These could be led by Westernised Muslim elites calling for a more modernised form of Islam, or by '*ulama*' or Sufi leaders prompted by more rural calls for renewal among farmers, tribal groups and merchants. See I. Lapidus, *A history of Islamic societies*, Cambridge, 2002^2, p. 457.

[18] Arabian Wahhābīs adhered to Ḥanbalī law, which promoted a highly literalist interpretation of the Qur'an. As a result, they were quite hostile towards visions, trances or claims to miraculous powers professed by Sufi *pirs*. See Mohiuddin Ahmad, *Saiyid Ahmad Shahid. His life and mission,* Lucknow, 1975, pp. 100-1; Jalal, *Partisans of Allah*, p. 71.

[19] M. Gaborieau, 'Sufism in the first Indian Wahhabi manifesto. *Siratu'l mustaqim* by Isma'il Shahid and 'Abdu'l Hayy', in M. Alam, F. 'Nalini' Delvoye and M. Gaborieau (eds), *The making of Indo-Persian culture. Indian and French studies*, New Delhi, 2000, 149-64, pp. 158-9.

concerning the Qur'an.[20] According to Harlan Pearson, their calls for *tajdīd* are best seen as facilitating the transition of Indian Muslims from Mughal rule to the rising power of the British East India Company.[21] Given the profound influence of Sufism upon localised practices of Indian Muslims, the message preached by Muḥammadī reformers often provoked sharp opposition from members of the '*ulama*' and other supporters of traditional local Islam.

The reformist call for *tajdīd* was not limited to matters of personal piety; it also envisioned the reshaping of Indian political culture along Muslim lines. This vision can be traced back to the teaching of the Delhi-based Naqshbandī reformer Shāh Walī Allāh (1703-62),[22] whose comprehensive theology offered guidance to Muslims amidst the decline of Mughal power. It combined exhortations to personal piety with a call to transform political culture, if necessary by means of jihad. However, the goal of reversing the internal decay of Muslim society in India in the 19th century could not be achieved without confronting the rule of non-Muslims. But what shape would such confrontation assume?

Shāh 'Abdul'azīz (1746-1824), Shāh Walī Allāh's son, carried on his father's work of assisting Muslims to make the transition to a post-Mughal India, this time in the context of rising British power. In Delhi, he and his younger brother, Shāh 'Abdulqādir, took Sayyid Aḥmad under their wings and instructed him in the mystical traditions of the Chishtī, Qādirī and Naqshbandī orders of Sufism,[23] and also in political ideas according to Muslim principles. During the occupation of Delhi by British forces in 1803, Shāh 'Abdul'azīz had issued a *fatwā* declaring that India was now a *dār ul-ḥarb* (an 'abode of war') in which Muslims were no longer under Muslim rule. Even before the Uprising of 1857, which brought a formal end to the Mughal Empire in India, the East India Company had come to dominate much of India commercially and politically.

Whereas commentators have disagreed over how to interpret this *fatwā*, especially after the events of 1857, a consensus seems to have emerged that it was not an unambiguous call to jihad against the British.[24] The *fatwā* is best viewed as Shāh 'Abdul'azīz's attempt simply to describe the political

[20] Mohiuddin Ahmad, *Saiyid Ahmad Shahid*, Lucknow, 1975, pp. 10-13.

[21] Pearson, *Islamic reform and revival*, p. 59.

[22] See C.M. Ramsey, 'Shāh Walī Allāh', in *CMR* 12, 525-33.

[23] Mohiuddin Ahmad, *Saiyid Ahmad Shahid*, p. 36.

[24] Pearson, *Islamic reform and revival*, p. 34. According to Barbara Metcalf (*Islamic revival in British India. Deoband, 1860-1900*, Princeton NJ, 1982, p. 51), the *fatwā* suggested that, in the absence of Muslim rule, the scholarly '*ulamā*' would have to play a more prominent rule in guiding the faithful in civil and religious matters. According to Jalal (*Partisans*

realities of his day while offering Muslims guidance in addressing various social and economic challenges under a non-Muslim regime. How the young protégé Sayyid Aḥmad interpreted the place of jihad is another matter. Marc Gaborieau makes a compelling case that he departed from the position of his mentor by more clearly advocating jihad against opposing regimes.[25]

Sayyid Aḥmad's jihad against the Sikh regime of Ranjīt Singh in northwest India may be viewed as the culmination of his reformist campaign. He perceived Ranjīt Singh's kingdom as inhibiting Muslim subjects (who were mostly Afghans) from practising their religion.[26] To wage his jihad, he drew heavily upon the services of Afghan warriors, though this proved to be a fragile alliance since his reformist ideals often conflicted with the customary practices and short-term interests of Afghan clans. The historian Ayesha Jalal's account of this particular jihad reveals a consistent tension between Sayyid Aḥmad's ethical, *sharīʿa*-based ideals and the practical politics needed to wage a successful war.[27] She describes divisions between the Afghan clans and also the resistance of many to Sayyid Aḥmad's religious reforms.[28] In the end, Durrānī soldiers recruited for

of Allah, p. 68), when Shāh ʿAbdulʿazīz described India as *dār ul-ḥarb*, he was addressing questions pertaining to earning interest on money.

[25] Mohiuddin Ahmad's perspectives are confirmed by the observations of Marc Gaborieau, who distinguishes three phases in the approach to jihad by South Asian Muslims: 1. a medieval phase, which enjoined Muslims to extend *dār ul-islām* by waging jihad against infidels; 2. a post-1857 phase, which responded to colonial caricatures of Muslims as fanatically committed to jihad (e.g. W.W. Hunter, *Indian Musalmans*), in which they either reinterpreted jihad as strictly defensive or viewed it as altogether abrogated; and 3. a nationalist phase, in which Muslims reaffirmed the centrality of jihad as an armed struggle, in the context of anti-colonial nationalism. Gaborieau contends that Sayyid Aḥmad's teachings returned to the perspective of the medieval phase by advocating armed struggle against the Sikhs and the British. In this respect, Gaborieau observes ('The "forgotten obligation". A reinterpretation of Sayyid Ahmad Barelwi's jihad in the North-Western Frontier, 1826-1831', in J. Assayag [ed.], *The resources of history. Tradition, narration and nation in South Asia*, Pondichéry, 1999, 295-306, pp. 295-6), Sayyid Aḥmad departed from the views of his teacher, Shāh ʿAbdulʿazīz, who, in his *fatwā* of 1803, did not advocate jihad against the British, but simply tried to interpret the practical implications for Muslims of living under British rule.

[26] In a speech delivered to Muslim leaders along the Frontier, he enumerated the alleged crimes of the Sikh regime: 'Ranjit Sing's men, I was told, burnt mosques, destroyed the crops, relieved the local population of all they had and even took away women and children to be sold as serfs. In the Punjab itself, I was told, the Sikhs did not allow Muslims to give call for prayers and turned the mosques into stables. Kine [cow]-slaughter was completely banned; rather a Muslim suspected of killing a kine was done to death' (Mohiuddin Ahmad, *Saiyid Ahmad Shahid*, p. 120).

[27] Jalal, *Partisans of Allah*, p. 87.

[28] Laws pertaining to prayer and fasting, family matters, marriage, alcohol consumption and the tax on the land (*ʿushr*) were strictly enforced in ways that violated local customs

the jihad betrayed Sayyid Aḥmad, setting in motion events leading to his martyrdom and the deaths of thousands of his *mujāhidīn*. The unsuccessful jihad both made a martyr of him and gave rise to a myth concerning his return as the *mahdī*.[29] After his martyrdom a number of his followers launched a missionary campaign in Hyderabad, Arcot, Madras and other regions of south India.

The meanings of 'Wahhābī'

During the late 1830s, areas once controlled by the Nawabs of Arcot became important venues of Muslim reformist activity. Muḥammad ʿAlī Rāmpūrī, an immediate disciple of Shāh Ismāʿīl, the reformer and spiritual guide who had authored influential pamphlets, and (by extension) Sayyid Aḥmad, was largely responsible for extending Muḥammadī influence into south India.[30] During his visit to Madras in 1829, Muḥammad ʿAlī used his skills as an orator to inspire reformist zeal among his audiences. 'Members of the royal family and a range of common folk were among those who took a vow of allegiance (*baiʿat*) to him. It was during his second visit to Madras in 1836, however, that he encountered sharp resistance to his reformist message from some of the Madras '*ulamā*'. Drawing on the teachings of his guide, Shāh Ismāʿīl, he had condemned many of the popular practices associated with Sufi shrines. This led the Nawab of Arcot to denounce him as a *kāfir* (unbeliever) and insist that any *murīd* ('follower') of his should renounce all allegiance to him. The Madras '*ulamā*' pressurised Muḥammad ʿAlī into signing an oath disavowing all belief in the teachings of his guide.[31]

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and sensibilities. This resulted in massive defections from the cause. Some Pashtun fighters who were motivated by the reward of booty or high wages could not reconcile themselves to fighting purely for Allāh (Jalal, *Partisans of Allah*, p. 94).

[29] The term *mahdī* refers to the spiritual guide who will appear at the end of the world to defeat the forces of evil in the world and establish the reign of justice. Upon Sayyid Aḥmad's death, *maulvī*s in Patna spread rumours that he had merely disappeared as a result of God's displeasure with fainthearted Indian Muslims. God had withdrawn their Imam and hidden him in a mountain cave in Kashmir. When his followers were properly united and assembled with conviction for a true jihad, he would reappear and lead them to victory. In the following decade, this myth continued to inspire some of his followers as they circulated to various parts of the Deccan (M. Gaborieau, *Le Mahdi incompris. Sayyid Ahmad Barelwi (1786-1831) et le millenarisme en Inde*, Paris, 2010, pp. 21-3, 27-30).

[30] Rāmpūrī belonged to Sayyid Aḥmad's original movement. He was one of the editors of the first Wahhābī text printed in Bengal in 1822, Shāh Ismāʿīl's Persian *Ṣirāṭ ul-mustaqīm* (Gaborieau, *Le Mahdi incompris*, p. 155).

[31] The pamphlet that seems to have evoked the greatest opposition from the '*ulamā*' was Shāh Ismāʿīl's *Taqwiyat al-īmān* ('Strengthening of faith'). In a sworn statement,

Such exchanges illustrate how reformist teachings had fractured the Muslim community along doctrinal lines. East India Company officials, however, were far less concerned with doctrinal aspects of 'Wahhabi' preaching than with its potential to foment rebellion. To ensure Muslim loyalty, they attempted to incorporate Muslims into the fabric of their rule through various forms of patronage, including land grants, titles, military rank and various kinds of employment. They were particularly concerned that Muslim *sūbadārs* (military officials) or other salaried employees of the Company would defy this system of patronage by embracing Wahhābism and turning against the state. Even under British rule, to become Wahhābī was, through the eyes of some Muslims, to be rendered *namak ḥarām* (literally, 'unclean salt', signifying treachery or disloyalty) and to violate the bond between ruler and ruled.

Several contrasts between this pre-1857 focus on the dreaded Wahhābīs and what transpired after 1857 are worth noting. First, before the events of 1857, Company officials seemed more aware of the distinction between the 'spiritual' agenda of the Indian reformers and their political commitment to waging jihad. The Government's equation of Wahhābism with anti-British jihad was not as automatic as it became in the aftermath of the Great Rebellion (that is, in the days of W.W. Hunter and his tract). This is understandable, since officials at this stage could not attribute to Wahhābism (legitimately or not) any concrete acts of rebellion against the Company, as they could with respect to the Great Rebellion.

Second, the legal apparatus for trying suspects of sedition in general, and Wahhābīs in particular, was much less formal and more open-ended in the years preceding the Rebellion. Arrests of Wahhābīs in Hyderabad and the more lengthy trial of a preacher in Vellore occurred well before the Company had passed the Indian Penal Code (1860) and the Code of Criminal Procedure (1861).[32] These acts were passed at a time when the Company's focus was largely centred on violence occurring near the Afghan frontier. The Company had constituted the 'fanatic' as a legal category in order to warrant speedy trials and extreme punishments for Afghans who committed violent acts against Europeans, and officers who presided over

Muḥammad 'Alī Rāmpūrī was asked to reject its teachings; see Mallampalli, *Muslim conspiracy*, p. 183.

[32] E. Kolsky, 'The colonial rule of law and the legal regime of exception. Frontier "fanaticism" and state violence in British India', *American Historical Review* 120/4 (2015) 1218-46. The normative categorisation of Afghan fighters as 'fanatics' is traceable to a much earlier period, as Benjamin Hopkins has shown (*The making of modern Afghanistan*, New York, 2008, p. 77).

their trials often lacked formal training in the law, invited no legal arguments and did not record the proceedings. As a movement that originated among Afghan warriors, Sayyid Aḥmad's Ṭarīqah-i Muḥammadiyyah was inextricably tied to the politics of this region. The meanings assigned to the term 'Wahhābī' inherited stereotypes associated with Afghan fighters and were projected onto subversive elements in other parts of British India.

That such a variety of people could be designated as Wahhābīs has led some scholars to treat the term more as a slippery and pejorative label than as any literal reference to Ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb's reform movement. Marcia Hermansen, for instance, notes that the term 'Wahhābī' evolved amidst mutual perceptions of British rulers and their Muslim subjects. The British associated the label with 'Muslim concepts of *jihad*, *dar al-harb* (abode of war), and conspiracy'.[33] The term evoked fears of 'pan-Islamic sedition' and the fanatical zeal referred to by officials such as W.W. Hunter. Muslims, in turn, treated the term as one that designated them as being disloyal to the British and linked them to the literalism of the original Arabian movement.[34]

Hermansen effectively locates the term 'Wahhābī' among the shifting and reciprocal perceptions of colonial rulers and Muslims. Her reference to pan-Islamism, however, more appropriately applies to late 19th- and early 20th-century calls for transnational Muslim solidarity. In the early 19th century, the British were no doubt concerned about the ties of Indian Muslims to other parts of the world, but this related more to their quest for political control and stability in India than to a concern about Muslim solidarity in itself.[35] The concern was not that Muslims of Arab, Turkic, Persian and Indian origins would be empowered by a seamless ideological unity, but that they could exploit their global links to subvert British power in India.

During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Sayyid Aḥmad's Muḥammadiyyah movement was succeeded by the Deobandīs, the Ahl-i Ḥadīth and the Barelvīs. In contrast to Muslims who embraced the path to

[33] M. Hermansen, 'Wahhabis, fakirs and others. Reciprocal classifications and the transformation of intellectual categories', in J. Malik (ed.), *Perspectives of mutual encounters in South Asian history*, Leiden, 2000, 23-48, p. 31.

[34] Muslim perceptions of the term gradually shifted from one that signified 'genealogical or initiatory category implying direct connection of individuals to a source and to each other, to an ideological one, bearing less and less relationship to a specific collectivity' (Hermansen, 'Wahhabis, fakirs and others', p. 34).

[35] On this point, I have greatly benefitted from conversations with Nile Green about Indian Wahhābism as it relates to pan-Islamism.

modernity, these reformist movements were keen to preserve what they considered to be the essentials of Islam from the corrupting influences of a changing world. They distinguished themselves from one another by their different interpretations of Islamic law and approaches to how to revitalise the Muslim community through radical reforms.[36] As much as they may have differed in their interpretations of *sharīʿa* law vis-à-vis local customs and the role of hierarchy, they shared a common interest in preserving Islam from the corruptions and compromises associated with life under British rule.

[36] Metcalf, *Islamic revival*, pp. 265-9.

The Uprising of 1857 and Christian-Muslim relations in South Asia

Charles M. Ramsey

Introduction

The Uprising of 1857 was a decisive time for Muslim communities in British India. Also referred to as 'the mutiny', 'the great rebellion', 'the sepoy revolt' and 'the first war of Indian independence', the events that took place in that year produced a sea change in British policy and lasting reverberations in relations between Muslims and Christians in the subcontinent.[1] Shock waves from the war itself and from the punitive retribution exacted by colonial forces further destabilised the Muslim political leadership, necessitating a serious reappraisal of economic, educational and religious priorities. This caused an increase in social distance between the British and Indians in general, and Muslims in particular. One consequence of lasting importance was the emergence of two main differing attitudes among Muslims to education in the wake of the war, one favouring a modernist approach, exemplified in the Aligarh Movement, which adopted European methods of learning, and the other preferring a traditionalist approach, exemplified in the Dār ul-'Ulūm, Deoband, which maintained the traditional madrasa curriculum and was wary of integration into the systems of the British Raj. These two attitudes, which became more pronounced over time, represent two distinct responses not only to colonial rule but also to Christian-Muslim relations.

A standing army: The Uprising in context

By 1857, the Mughal Empire was in terminal decline. The modest capitulations that had been granted to the East India Company in 1609 had steadily increased as the Company opened new trade markets and expanded their military forces by employing and training Indian soldiers. Victories at Plassey in 1757 and at Buxar in 1764 opened the way for them to take

[1] R. Eaton, *India in the Persianate age. 1000-1765*, Sacramento CA, 2019; S. Malik, 'Nineteenth century approaches to the Indian "mutiny"', *Journal of Asian History* 7 (1973) 95-127.

control of some of the most lucrative regions that still had some degree of loyalty to the Mughals. The Company gradually extended their control over the administration and taxation of much of the Gangetic plain and, once they overcame the Maratha Confederacy in 1818, they secured influence across the Indian subcontinent.[2] In Britain, there was heated debate about the moral standing of Company rule in India, focused on the question: By what authority did a commercial venture rule a nation? The treaty with the Mughals functioned as the mechanism to justify this arrangement. Four times a year, the British resident in Delhi, who functioned as an ambassador for the Company, would appear before the Mughal emperor to present tribute in a somewhat theatrical formality as a public demonstration of loyalty to the emperor and a legitimisation of the British position. Local elites profited from this arrangement, particularly in Bengal and Punjab, but it was not without its discontents. The East India Company relied upon its army, which consisted of some 260,000 soldiers, to enforce financial and diplomatic agreements and to sustain colonial control. The Mughal Empire was made up of many princely states, and the Company systematically brought these under their own control. This often necessitated shows of force, as was required in 1856 with the annexation of the kingdom of Awadh (Oudh), a large area ruled from Lucknow by Nawab Wājid ʻAlī Shāh.[3] The troubles were such that the Company required a standing army, and this professional army was comprised primarily of Indian soldiers, or sepoys (*sipāhī*), who ensured the policy had teeth.

The standing army provided leverage, but the Company's rule was sustained by its entrenchment in society rather than by the overt use of force. The power of the Company army, as Seema Alavi argues, was not ultimately due to superior military force but rather to the opportunities it afforded to Indians. The army was an institution, a 'major guarantee of social and political stability' in a land torn apart by two centuries of political and social turmoil.[4] The Company had become an institution in Indian society, and membership in the army, as in other parts of the bureaucracy, was a mark of distinction and a means to advancement and social mobility. But there were limits. Many in the regional aristocracy who benefitted by the stability and market access provided by the East India Company were wearied by its overreach. By the 1840s, the Company was applying

[2] P. Spear, *Twilight of the Mughuls. Studies in late Mughul Delhi*, New Delhi, 1969.

[3] R. Mukherjee, *Awadh in revolt, 1857-1858. A study of popular resistance*, London, 2002.

[4] S. Alavi, *Sepoys and the Company. Tradition and transition in northern India 1770-1830*, Delhi, 2006, pp. 4-7.

hawkish techniques to seize direct control of princely states and to consolidate its power over the affairs of India. The British could not maintain their outsized grip upon the region without military strength, and so a threat to the army was an existential threat to the Company's domination. It had confronted localised revolts and skirmishes with princely states, and even mutinies in its own ranks, but nothing remotely comparable to the extent and severity of the fighting that broke out in Meerut, about 50 miles north-east of Delhi, on 10 May 1857.[5]

Care must be given not to interpret the 1857 Uprising with hindsight coloured by anachronistic assumptions.[6] Though the grievances were numerous, the immediate cause was the army's procurement of rifle cartridges that were rumoured to be greased with animal fat, according to some accounts both pork (offensive to Muslims) and beef (offensive to Hindus). Some soldiers interpreted this as an egregious affront that inevitably required a choice of allegiance between the army and their community of faith. But the larger issue, as Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān (1817-98) explained at length, was the failure to allow 'admittance of the people to a share in the Government under which they live'.[7] Alavi holds a similar view and argues that as self-assurance increased among Indians so did the desire for a greater share of the resources that were available. In a culture permeated with religion, it is no surprise to see divine support enlisted. Both jihadis and Hindu rebel leaders and sepoys employed religious idioms and symbols to stir up anti-British feeling, Alavi argues, but it would be an error to confuse religion as credal conformity with religion as ethno-cultural identity.[8] The original complaint came from Hindu sepoys, and the disgruntlement was not eased despite evidence that the cartridges were produced by a Hindu manufacturer in Calcutta. Efforts were made to allay concerns about the matter, but these could not reverse the rising tide of antipathy towards East India Company policy.

Irrespective of the causes, the mutiny quickly spread to the garrisons in Agra, Kanpur, Lucknow and Delhi, where complete chaos was caused. Indeed, it led to the largest uprising the British Empire ever faced. The Company's response was swift: Kanpur was retaken by mid-July 1857 and

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[5] N. Green, *Islam and the army in colonial India. Sepoy religion in the service of empire*, Cambridge, 2009, pp. x-xi.

[6] M. Carter and C. Bates, 'Religion and retribution in the Indian rebellion of 1857', *Leidschrift* 24 (2009) 51-68.

[7] Syed Ahmed Khan Bahadur, *The causes of the Indian revolt*, Karachi, 2000, pp. 16-18 (written in Urdu in 1858 and translated into English in 1873). On Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān, see C. Troll, C. Ramsey and D. Thomas, 'Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān', in *CMR* 24, 424-47.

[8] Alavi, *Sepoys and the Company*, pp. 9, 48.



Illustration 1. The 93rd Highlanders at the storming of the Secundra Bagh, Lucknow, 1857

Delhi by the end of September, though it took the remainder of 1857 and the better part of 1858 for the rebellion to be suppressed in Jhansi (about 200 miles south of Delhi), Lucknow and the region of Awadh. Fortunately for the British, other regions under Company control, such as Bengal, the Bombay and Madras Presidencies, and the princely states of Hyderabad, Mysore and Kashmir, remained largely undisturbed. Muslim Rohilla (originating from Afghanistan) and Afghan soldiers, many recruited through Eurasians such as James Skinner (1778-1841), served as a militia to defend Company positions, and both Sikh and Muslim rulers in the Punjab provided necessary soldiers and support to restore order and put down pockets of rebellion.[9]

The hostilities were protracted, lasting approximately 18 months, but the reprisals continued significantly longer. In fact, distant reverberations are still felt today. A late-20th-century account provides an example of the long shadow of the time:

> The entry of the victorious British forces in Delhi degenerated into a holocaust, which pales into insignificance the massacres of Hulagu and Genghis Khan. Mosques and holy places were desecrated, innocent men, women and children were dragged out of their houses and subjected to the most heinous brutalities. The holy books were profaned in the name of Christianity and burnt by their sacrilegious hands [...] amidst the deep and silent curses

[9] W. Dalrymple, *The last Mughal. The fall of a dynasty, Delhi, 1857*, London, 2006.

> of the chained and helpless [Muslim] spectators who were brought to witness their God humbled and their women raped.[10]

Though these details remain contested, there is ample evidence that Company retaliation was racialised and excessive.[11] Many rebels were executed by firing squads while others were lynched and left hanging as a warning for all to see. Large parts of the city of Delhi, particularly the nobility's *havelis* between the Red Fort and the *Jāmiʿa masjid*, the central mosque, were seized and demolished. In the months that followed, Muslims were required to carry special permits to enter the city. Emperor Bahādur Shāh Ẓafar (r. 1837-57), the last Mughal, was banished to Burma and when he died his body was quietly interred in Rangoon. There were calls from some in the administration, including Charles Raikes and Philip Egerton of the British judiciary committee in India, to convert the *Jāmiʿa masjid* into a church and to label each brick with the name of a 'Christian martyr'.[12]

Company fury was further fuelled by the fear that an uprising in India could stir rebellion elsewhere. To dispel such an idea, the British Prime Minister, Lord Palmerston (1784-1865), ordered 'every building connected with Mahommedan tradition (including the Pearl Mosque in Agra and the most revered Juma Mosque in Delhi) be levelled to the ground without regard to antiquarian veneration or artistic predilection'.[13] Though this calamitous order was rescinded, and the clemency of Lord Canning (1812-62), Governor-General of India and later first Viceroy, prevailed, the severity of its intent underscores the acuteness of the situation and shows that blame for the uprising was placed squarely upon the Muslim community.

The Uprising and Christian-Muslim relations

The Uprising has raised many intriguing questions for historians, among them the extent to which religious sensitivities could have caused such a momentous upset in Indian society and how this related to Christian-Muslim relations. While both the British and the Indians, Hindus and Muslims, are known to have employed religious discourse to legitimise

[10] K. Ahmad, *Britain and Muslims. A historical review*, Karachi, 1971, p. 41.
[11] R. Mukherjee, *Spectre of violence. The 1857 Kanpur massacres*, New Delhi, 2007.
[12] Dalrymple, *Last Mughal*, p. 408.
[13] Letter dated 9 October 1857 from the Canning Papers. See D. Coffey, 'Admitted truths in Muslim-Christian dialogue. A study of William Muir, Sayyid Ahmad Khan and William Goldsack in 19th-century India', Edinburgh, 2002 (PhD Diss. University of Edinburgh), p. 243.

their activities and to mobilise their communities,[14] close reading of the historical sources indicates that religion was of less importance than has sometimes been assumed. This is not the place for a full investigation of the religious discourse, though some of its perspectives can appropriately be examined.

A principal idea among the heads of the East India Company was that the Uprising – regardless of who started the fighting – only became a fully-fledged revolt because of the existing network of Muslim insurgents, the *mujāhidīn*, also known as the 'Indian Wahhābīs'. This was a movement for religious renewal that spread across northern India in the 1820s, gaining considerable support from Bengal in the east as far as the Afghan frontier in the west. In a report commissioned by the Governor-General, the Earl of Mayo (1822-72), William Hunter (1840-1900) explored at length the question of Muslim loyalty to the British crown. Hunter, a statistician and author of the *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, put forward the view that 'Musulmans' from Cairo to Calcutta were positively 'bound' to be permanently resistant to British rule, and he traced the origins of the 1857 war to battles fought in the craggy hills of the North-West Frontier by the radical Muslim revivalist Sayyid Aḥmad Barelvī (1786-1831) and his idealist followers. Hunter interpreted the events of 1857 as the culmination of Sayyid Aḥmad's jihad, and this, he argued, was an aspiration that would not dim until Muslim hegemony was restored.[15]

In the view of ʿAbdulʿazīz (1746-1824), son of the greatly revered jurist Shāh Walī Allāh (1703-62) of Delhi, British encroachment upon the practice of *sharīʿa* was a cause for alarm. The Anglo-Mohammedan Laws, enacted in the last decades of the 18th century, extended the jurisdiction of East India Company courts to include civil affairs, with significant repercussions for Muslim communities, particularly in matters of inheritance and divorce.[16] The changes were significant enough for ʿAbdulʿazīz to judge that India had become *dār al-ḥarb* ('abode of war') since basic protection and liberties were no longer afforded to Muslims. Sayyid Aḥmad in turn declared jihad against British and Sikh rulers in the North-West Frontier, galvanising popular support from the whole region, and even more so following his 'martyrdom' in 1831 at the Battle of Balakot. The movement did

[14] C. Bates and M. Carter, 'Holy warriors. Religion as military modus operandi', in G. Rand and C. Bates (eds), *Mutiny at the margins. New perspectives on the Indian uprising of 1857*, New Delhi, 2013, 41-60.

[15] For a rebuttal, see A. Lyall, *Asiatic studies, religious and social*, London, 1884, pp. 228-57.

[16] N. Cassels, *Social legislation of the East India Company. Public justice versus public instruction*, New Delhi, 2010.

not result in broad upheavals but, as Tariq Hasan has observed, its popularity revealed deep-seated frustration and dismay among the Muslim leadership when their influence was fading.[17]

It is important to note that Hunter identified the threat of rebellion as common to all Muslims, which was a standard attitude for his generation. He defined 'true Islam' as an inflexible set of laws that were opposed to reason and prone to violence,[18] and he contrasted the 'devout' with the 'upper classes', whom he characterised as willing to depart from the qur'anic duty to rebel in order to save their positions, although they were fickle allies who would repeatedly attempt to regain power by stirring up religious fervour to mobilise the masses.[19] The Uprising confirmed the suspicions of those who subscribed to his views, and this influenced subsequent administrations to fashion policies aimed at guarding against Muslim resurgence. They were implemented through the allotment of resources, and particularly educational and employment opportunities.[20] Though Hunter was not without critics, many in the British government shared his conclusion that 'The presence of Muslims was a permanent obstacle to the creation of an Indian nation.'[21]

Competing monotheisms

Another cause frequently cited for the war of 1857 is that it was a reaction to the British attempt to consolidate power through the state-sponsored promotion of Christianity, or what Gregory Fremont-Barnes has termed 'evangelical imperialism'.[22] The Charter Act of 1813 altered East India Company policy to require them to show greater concern for the wellbeing of Indian subjects by allowing them more direct social engagement, particularly in education. Earlier restrictions on Christian missionary activity were lifted and missionaries took an active role in developing schools, colleges, orphanages and hospitals. There were also changes in legislation to protect the rights of converts to Christianity, allowing them

[17] T. Hasan, *The Aligarh Movement and the making of the Indian Muslim mind (1857-2002)*, New Delhi, 2006, p. xii.

[18] S. Haj, *Reconfiguring Islamic tradition. Reform, rationality, and modernity*, Palo Alto CA, 2009, pp. 1-10.

[19] W. Hunter, *The Indian Musalmans. Are they bound in conscience to rebel against the Queen?*, London, 1871.

[20] L. Zastoupil and M. Moir, *The great Indian education debate. Documents relating to the Orientalist-Anglicist controversy, 1781-1843*, Richmond, 1999.

[21] Khan, *Causes of the Indian revolt*, p. 12.

[22] G. Fremont-Barnes, *The Indian Mutiny 1857-58*, Oxford, 2007, p. 19.

to share in the property of their families who still belonged to their former faiths. Such policies added to the widespread belief that the British were seeking to create social conditions favourable for the growth of an indigenous Indian Christian community that was loyal to their interests. The government was apparently facilitating missionary efforts, and this created a sense that imperial expansion paralleled and perhaps even precipitated missionary ambitions to convert the Indian people to Christianity.[23]

As these policies came into effect in the decade before the Uprising, public exchanges between Muslim and Christian preachers took on an increasingly polemical tone. The popular practice of *munāẓarah*, or public debate, common in this context, took on a significance that was far greater than the simple exchange of ideas. In the 1854 debates between the missionaries Karl Gottlieb Pfander (1803-65),[24] Elwood Morris Wherry (1843-1927)[25] and Thomas Valpy French (1825-91)[26] and their Muslim counterparts Raḥmatullāh Kairānavī (1818-91)[27] and Wazīruddīn Khān (n.d.), participants attempted to invalidate the foundational sources and doctrines of their opponents. Known as 'the Muslim controversy', the debate became a topic of discussion even in the highest circles of the East India Company. It was amplified by a burgeoning print industry, which provided an inexpensive means of disseminating information far more broadly than ever before and contributed to the climate of polarisation that was settling over society.[28]

Many 19th-century British perceptions of the Uprising, as Salahuddin Malik has argued, exemplified 'Christian nationalism' at work.[29] Britain became unified by a sense of betrayal and self-righteous anger. As news of the violence arrived in the country, there was a general sense of outrage, the extent of which can be seen, for example, in the royal proclamation of Wednesday 7 October 1857, as a 'Day of national humiliation, fasting and prayers' led by the Palmerston Government. Churches in Britain overflowed with mourners and there were calls from the pulpits for vindication. One clergyman spoke for many: 'Surviving systems of error [in India] must be broken, whether Hinduism, Buddhism and Muhammadanism',

[23] A. Porter, 'Evangelicalism, Islam, and millennial expectation in the nineteenth century', *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 24 (2000) 111-18.

[24] See G. Nickel and W. Raza, 'Karl Gottlieb Pfander', in *CMR* 24, 188-236.

[25] See M. Ebenezer and C.M. Ramsey, 'Elwood Morris Wherry', in *CMR* 16, 371-84.

[26] See J. Chesworth and Y. Sadiq, 'Thomas Valpy French', in *CMR* 24, 338-44.

[27] See N. Mushtaq and C.M. Ramsey, 'Raḥmatullāh Kairānavī', in *CMR* 24, 253-60.

[28] A. Powell, *Muslims and missionaries in pre-Mutiny India*, London, 1995.

[29] S. Malik '"Mutiny" and the Muslim world. A British viewpoint', *Islamic Studies* 5 (1966) 283-304.

though it was evident to all which of these 'systems' was the real threat.[30] The Uprising was not only an affront to economic and political stability, it was also a challenge to Christian civilisation itself. An attitude of millennial optimism gained impetus in many churches, and coffers of missionary societies increased to record levels, together with their efforts in the field. Sir William Muir (1819-1905),[31] Governor of the North-Western Provinces, and Orientalist extraordinaire, was at the vortex of the political and religious fervour of the time.[32] Though he personally insisted that the Uprising was not about religion, his view aptly summarised the general sentiment: 'Muhammedanism is perhaps the only undisguised and formidable antagonist of Christianity[. ... I]n Islam we have an active and powerful enemy.'[33] For many, the causes of the war, and the justification for the subsequent actions taken by the British, were seen as an eschatological conflict in which there could only be one victor. Regardless of whether this interpretation is accepted, many historians view the resulting increase in racial distance as the war's most enduring legacy.[34]

For their part, Muslim loyalists adamantly refused to accept that they were to blame. In *Causes of the Indian revolt*, one of the earliest Muslim accounts of the war, and later in *An account of the loyal Muhammedans of India*, Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān[35] insisted that the uprising (*sarkash*) transcended religious boundaries; it was neither pre-planned nor Muslim-led and, with the notable exception of Delhi, Muslims were not heavily represented among the mutinous soldiers or among bands of looters or participants in sieges.[36] Muslims were being scapegoated because of the spectre of a unified Muslim resurgence. But the differences among Muslims were too great and such unity never came into being. The Indian 'Wahhābīs', for example, basically regarded the Mughal emperor as a *kāfir* and had no interest in reinvigorating Mughal leadership. Muslims were being assigned a disproportionate amount of blame for the uprising because they were imagined as being contenders for power. Though some were from leading

30 Powell, *Muslims and missionaries*, p. 107.

31 See A. Powell and G. Nickel, 'Sir William Muir', in *CMR* 24, 666-96.

32 M. Ali, *The Qur'an and the Orientalists. An examination of their main theories and assumptions*, Ipswich, 2004.

33 W. Muir, *The Mohammedan controversy. Biographies of Mohammed, Sprenger on tradition, the Indian liturgy, and the Psalter*, Edinburgh, 1897, p. 2.

34 B. Metcalf and T. Metcalf, *The concise history of modern India*, Cambridge, 2006.

35 See C. Troll, C.M. Ramsey and D. Thomas, 'Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān', in *CMR* 24, 424-47.

36 H. Malik, *Political profile of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan. A documentary record*, Islamabad, 1982, pp. 9, 134-87.

families and from among learned religious clerics, the actions of a few should not be extrapolated to account for the sentiments of the many.[37]

The loyalist position articulated here was undermined by another significant group of leaders, the religious clerics (*'ulamā'*). Some, including Aḥmadullāh Shāh (1787-1858) and Faẓl-i Ḥaqq Khairābādī (1796-1861), had vociferously called for jihad against the British. Others, including Muḥammad Ja'far Thanesarī (1838-1905), were tried for sedition and sent to the infamous Kālā Pānī ('Black Water') prison archipelago in the Andaman Sea.[38] Although the vast majority of the *'ulamā'*, regardless of their personal opinions, were simply not involved in any of the related disturbances, they were nevertheless targeted with punitive measures and looked on by the government and Muslim elites with suspicion. One consequence was a disruption of patronage and financial support to religious madrasas. It was during this time that the grassroots movement centred in Deoband was formed to equip mosque functionaries and to carry on traditional religious education.[39] The clerics Rashīd Aḥmad Gangohī (1826-1905) and Muḥammad Qāsim Nānautavī (1832-80) established 'a new clientele composed of ordinary lay Muslims who would fund this *madrasa* as well as be its social base'.[40] Whereas the loyalists sought ways to integrate themselves into British society, traditionalists remained quietly resistant and intent on promoting a parallel society that would preserve and sustain a communal leadership structure. Both camps, however, agreed that the Muslim community was being unduly blamed for the uprising and was more relentlessly punished than others in the aftermath.

Conclusion

Two differing approaches to education grew out of the Uprising. In what became known as the Aligarh Movement, the loyalists established schools and colleges in order to train Muslims as citizens of the British Empire. They embraced a modernist approach to learning and to religious formation, and they sought to prepare Muslims for leadership in the colonial administration and in society at large. The traditionalists sought to

[37] H. James, 'The assassination of Lord Mayo. The "first" jihad?', *International Journal of Asian and Pacific Studies* 5 (2009) 1-19.

[38] J. Malik, 'Letters, prison sketches and autobiographical literature. The case of Fadl-e Haqq Khairabadi in the Andaman penal colony', *Indian Economic and Social History Review* 43 (2006) 249-74.

[39] M. Zaman, *The ulama in contemporary Islam. Custodians of change*, Karachi, 2004.

[40] Metcalf and Metcalf, *Concise history*, p. 97.

continue the existing ways of learning and forms of knowledge in madrasas. Today the modernist and traditionalist approaches to faith and learning are significantly different and often at odds, though they also have a great deal in common. They signify different responses to changes in India during the colonial period, changes that came to a head in the Uprising of 1857. This legacy has endured, on the one hand resulting in an elite that tends to present itself self-consciously as liberal and in accord with Western cultural values, and thus more likely to engage in educational and social interactions with Christians. On the other hand, traditionalists have defined themselves in opposition to systems, values and ideas associated with Christianity or Western society. Many Christians tend not to be aware of the events of that fateful year but, for the Muslims of South Asia, the Uprising of 1857 remains an episode of infamy.

Treatment of *sharīʿa* in Anglo-Muhammadan law courts and manuals

Alan M. Guenther

From a Christian perspective, the importance of the *sharīʿa* in the history of Christian-Muslim relations has often been limited to discussions of the treatment of *dhimmī* or non-Muslim 'protected peoples' in regions under Muslim rule. While in the history of Christian scholarship, the study of theology has always predominated over the study of ecclesiastical law, in the history of Muslim scholarship the study of law has been predominant. In encounters, Christians would often seek to comprehend Muslim beliefs about God, about Jesus Christ, and about salvation, whereas Muslims – while not uninterested in these topics – would inquire after Christians' practices in following the laws of God as revealed by the prophets, particularly the Prophet Muḥammad. The *sharīʿa*, then, was considered by Christians as part of Muslim scripture, third in importance behind the Qur'an and the Hadith, even though isolated instances of Christian discussions of the *sharīʿa* can be found as early as the writings of John of Damascus in the 8th century.[1] This neglect of the study of the *sharīʿa* by Christians ended with European colonial expansion into Asia and Africa, beginning in the late 18th century, particularly in South Asia. While initial studies of Muslim law were impelled by the British imperial commitment to administer Indian law for the Indians under their rule, Orientalist research to uncover and translate the foundational texts of Indian society also contributed to Christian study of the *sharīʿa*.

After the British took responsibility for the administration of justice in Bengal in 1772, the newly appointed Governor-General, Warren Hastings (1732-1818), expressed his intention to govern the people by their existing laws. In a letter to the Lord Chief Justice in England, Hastings expressed his misgivings about attempts to introduce new laws and judicial structures into India, something, he argued, even the Muslims of the Mughal Empire had not been able to do. He insisted on the rights of Indians 'to possess those benefits under a British and Christian administration which the bigotry of the Mahomedan government has never denied them. It

[1] J. Ralston, *Law and the rule of God. A Christian engagement with Sharīʿa*, Cambridge, 2020, pp. 7-9.

would be a grievance to deprive the people of the protection of their own laws, but it would be a wanton tyranny to require their obedience to others of which they are wholly ignorant, and of which they have no possible means of acquiring knowledge.'[2] In his view, far from being empty of law, even written law, India and its Hindu and Muslim communities possessed highly developed legal traditions. Muslim law, wrote Hastings, was 'as comprehensive, and as well defined, as that of most of the states in Europe'.[3] On the basis of similar reasoning, this pluralistic approach to law in the broader British Empire was also being implemented for the French-Canadian communities in British colonies in North America with the passing of the Quebec Act in 1774.[4]

In delineating which laws, which officials and which courts were to adjudicate various types of legal cases, Hastings's administration legislated 'that in all suits regarding succession, inheritance, marriage, and cast, and other religious usages, or institutions, the laws of the *Koran* with respect to *Mahometans*, and those of the *Shaster* with respect to *Gentoos*, shall be invariably adhered to; and on all such occasions the *Moulavies* or *Pundits* shall respectively attend to expound the law.'[5] The reasons for specifying the particular suits that would be governed by Muslim law has been variously interpreted by historians, but it set the British administration on the path of having to study what that law entailed.[6] The focus on the Qur'an as the source of Muslim law encouraged a textual approach, displacing other sources of law such as *ʿurf* (custom), *ʿāda* (customary practice), *ijmāʿ* (consensus), *ijtihād* (reasoning) and *qiyās* (analogy), and excising 'Islam's lived and discursive traditions from religio-legal life'.[7] The outcome of these policies was the transformation of Muslim law into what became known as 'Anglo-Muḥammadan law', in which the *muftī*s, or scholars of Islamic jurisprudence who were qualified to issue *fatwā*s or legal rulings, were displaced by British judges and English manuals of law. This establishing of Muslim law on texts, moreover, circumvented the dynamic

[2] Letter from W. Hastings, Fort William, to Lord Mansfield, 21 March 1774, in G.R. Gleig, *Memoirs of the life of the Right Hon. Warren Hastings, first Governor-General of Bengal*, London, 1841, vol. 1, p. 400.

[3] Gleig, *Memoirs*, p. 403.

[4] C.R. Burset, *An empire of laws. Legal pluralism in British colonial policy*, New Haven CT, 2023, pp. 124-6.

[5] J. Duncan, *Regulations for the administration of justice in the courts of Dewannee Adaulut, passed in Council, the 5th July, 1783*, Calcutta, 1785, p. 121.

[6] Burset, *An empire of laws*, pp. 107-8.

[7] E. Lhost, *Everyday Islamic law and the making of modern South Asia*, Chapel Hill NC, 2022, p. 27.

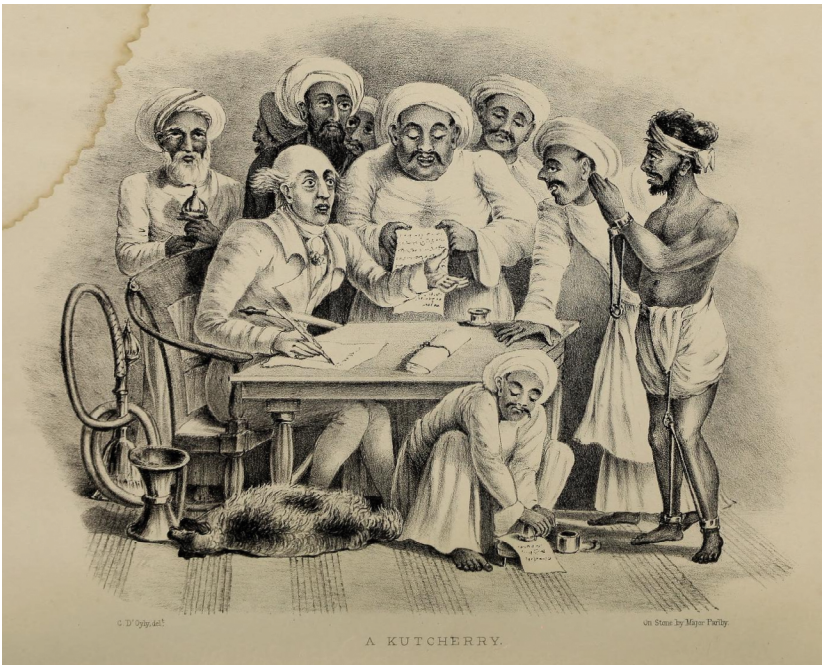


Illustration 2. A British magistrate hearing a case, with a *munshi* and court officials

process by which *muftī*s and the *fatwā*s they applied to new questions and contexts had contributed to the evolution of law throughout Muslim history. Towards the end of the 19th century, however, Muslims who had been trained in British jurisprudence in England returned to India to take up positions as barristers and judges in the judicial system, marking a return of aspects of the *sharīʿa* albeit in modified form.

The impact of translating Muslim law texts

The transformation of Muslim law in India under British colonialism was effected by three concurrent processes through the late 18th and 19th centuries: translation, legislation, and adjudication leading to judicial precedents.[8] Of the three, the work of translation was the most intermittent but nonetheless most influential in changing the face of Muslim law in India. A limited number of texts were translated in the late 1700s, and

[8] Much of this essay is drawn from ch. 4 of A. Guenther, 'The transformation of Muslim law in British India', Montreal, 2004 (PhD Diss. McGill University).

a few more in the middle of the 1800s, but they eventually became the primary sources to be consulted on any question involving Muslim law. The translations were also motivated in large part by the conviction on the part of the British that consistent justice could only be brought about by recourse to the original texts of law, thus bypassing reliance on the opinion of Indian judges as they interpreted and applied their traditional laws.

Although the law specified that Muslim religious scholars would be authorised to expound their laws, Hastings concurrently sponsored the translation of religious legal literature in order to assist British judges in deciding the laws to be enforced. It was considered advisable that texts of Hindu and Muslim laws should be compiled 'for the sake of giving confidence to the people, and of enabling the Courts to decide with certainty'.[9] Men such as Nathaniel Brassey Halhed (1751-1830) and Sir William Jones (1746-94)[10] were commissioned to produce translations of Hindu and Muslim laws to assist the courts in producing consistent judgements.[11] This work of translation was a process of 'converting Indian forms of knowledge into European objects', which could then be used by the British to rule India more efficiently.[12] 'Hastings's attempt to produce authoritative codes or digests of legal opinions fitted with his broader project of asserting the exclusive rights of the sovereign state to administer public justice.'[13]

Through co-opting Muslim jurists as 'law officers' into the colonial judicial system, British rule continued to expand and encompass the application of Muslim law, affecting the involvement of British judges in that law. 'Given the rapid growth of the judiciary and the dearth of Indian jurists with a rigorous training in Islamic law, English judges were increasingly called on to possess a basic familiarity with Islamic law'.[14] This was compounded by widespread distrust of the Muslim law officers, who were 'suspected of using their knowledge to undermine the company by offering biased legal interpretations'.[15] As a result, the translating of books of

[9] Gleig, *Memoirs*, p. 402.

[10] See Hadi Baghaei-Abchooyeh, 'William Jones', in *CMR* 12, 560-72.

[11] B.S. Cohn, 'Law and the colonial state in India', in J. Starr and J.F. Collier (eds), *History and power in the study of law. New directions in legal anthropology*, Ithaca NY, 1989, 141-7.

[12] B.S. Cohn, *Colonialism and its forms of knowledge. The British in India*, Princeton NJ, 1996, pp. 25-30.

[13] R. Travers, *Ideology and empire in eighteenth-century India. The British in Bengal*, Cambridge, 2007, p. 125.

[14] S.Z.M. Siddiqui, *Islamic law on trial. Contesting colonial power in British India*, Oakland CA, 2025, p. 56.

[15] Siddiqui, *Islamic law*, p. 56.

Muslim law for the use of colonial judges assumed greater importance. 'By replacing the multiple and messy opinions of the jurists with a brief and translated code of Hanafi law on personal status, the British attempted to limit the discretion of Muslim legal professionals, allow British judges to pronounce on Islamic law using an authoritative code, and subject the content of Islamic law to the forms and logics of British judicature'.[16]

Not knowing the languages in which the Muslim and Hindu laws were written, British officials who had been assigned to administer the laws had been relying on native officers to guide them. The government deemed this arrangement unsatisfactory because the native officers were seen as 'men sometimes themselves too ill-informed to be capable of judging, and generally open to corruption', as Charles Hamilton (c. 1753-93)[17] stated in the 'Preliminary Discourse' to his translation of Abū l-Ḥasan ʿAlī l-Marghīnānī's (d. 1196) compendium of Ḥanafī law, the *Hidāya* ('Guidance'), in 1791.[18] It was this belief in the superiority of British justice that motivated the translations of works of Muslim law by him and other early Orientalists in India. Although Hamilton maintained that the British government had introduced as few innovations into the native forms and principles of the administration of justice 'as were consistent with prudence', a major change had been the appointment of Englishmen to run the courts.[19] He was motivated to prepare his four-volume translation by 'the necessity of procuring some certain rule whereby those gentlemen might be guided, without being exposed to the misconstructions of ignorance or interest, and which might enable them to determine for themselves, by a direct appeal to the *Mussulman* or *Hindoo* authority on the ground of which they were to decide'.[20] Hamilton's translation of the *Hidāya* became the standard text of Muslim law to assist the British judges adjudicating Muslim law in the Indian courts for the next century. In addition, his preliminary discourse provided a concise but comprehensive history of the development of the *sharīʿa* and a clear description of its functioning in Muslim societies.

This view of the unreliability of Indian judicial officers was shared by the contemporary Orientalist Sir William Jones, who translated two

[16] I.R. Hussin, *The politics of Islamic law. Local elites, colonial authority, and the making of the Muslim state*, Chicago IL, 2016, p. 85.

[17] See A. Guenther, 'Charles Hamilton', in *CMR* 12, 553-9.

[18] C. Hamilton, *The Hedáya, or guide. A Commentary on the Mussulman laws, translated by order of the Governor-General and Council of Bengal*, London, 1791, vol. 1, p. vii.

[19] Hamilton, *Hedáya*, p. vi.

[20] Hamilton, *Hedáya*, p. vii.

works on Muslim law in the same years.[21] He stated, 'Perpetual references to native lawyers must always be inconvenient and precarious; since the solidity of their answers must depend on their integrity, as well as their learning; and at best, if they be neither influenced nor ignorant, the court will *hear and determine* the cause, but merely pronounce judgement on the report of other men'.[22] For this reason, the English judge would need to have sufficient knowledge of Muslim jurisprudence and languages 'for the purpose of keeping a check over the native counsellors, of understanding and examining their opinion, and of rejecting or adopting it, as it may be opposed or supported by their books of allowed authority, to which they should constantly refer'.[23] Thus, not only were Indian Muslims displaced as the ones with ultimate authority to administer Muslim law in the highest courts, but their right to interpret and decide the content of that law was undermined.

The authority of the *muftī*s, as the living scholars of Muslim jurisprudence qualified to issue authoritative judicial decisions, was being replaced by the authority of a book; and where the *muftī*s would have consulted a range of judicial texts in formulating their decisions, the British judges were limited to the one or two translations that had been made, in order to promote uniformity and standardisation of law. A similar dynamic was occurring with regard to Hindu law. 'The pandit as a professor of a living science was rejected for the more or less fossilized treatises which would head the pandits' lists of references'.[24] In practice, this displacement did not occur as completely or as quickly as was envisioned by Hamilton and Jones, because the Muslim court officers continued to function as advisors to the British judges, writing *fatāwā* (pl. of *fatwā*, a legal opinion given by a *muftī*) on Muslim law, until their position was abolished some 70 years later.

In the preface to his translation of Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Sajāwandī's (fl. 1023) *Sirājiyya*, Jones demonstrated the way he was changing both the law itself and the way it was administered by carrying

[21] For an analysis of the translations produced by William Jones, see N. Kanalu, 'The pure reason of *Lex Scripta*. Jurisprudential philology and the domain of instituted laws during early British colonial rule in India (1770s-1820s)', in E. Cavanagh (ed.), *Empire and legal thought. Ideas and institutions from antiquity to modernity*, Leiden, 2020, 462-91, pp. 468-9.

[22] W. Jones, 'The Mahomedan law of succession to the property of intestates in Arabick, engraved on copper plates from an ancient manuscript, with a verbal translation, and explanatory notes', in Lord Teignmouth (ed.), *The works of Sir William Jones*, London, 1807, vol. 8, p. 162.

[23] Jones, 'Mahomedan law', pp. 162-3.

[24] J.D.M. Derrett, *Religion, law and the state in India*, New York, 1968, p. 255.

out his translation. He noted that the Persian translation of the work by Maulavī Muḥammad Kāsim from which he was making his own English translation was too lengthy for his purposes, prompting him to select what was 'important' and to omit minute criticisms, various readings and literary curiosities, anecdotes of lawyers and their subtle controversies.[25] He also rejected Kasim's accompanying commentary on the text, complaining that 'it is often impossible to separate what is fixed law from what is merely his own opinion'.[26] He thus misconstrued the working of Muslim law in seeking to isolate an elusive 'fixed text' from the accretions of the centuries of Muslim jurists, and failed to understand that it was precisely the debates and controversies of learned Muslims – past and present – that constituted a living and dynamic law.

After the heyday of translation at the end of the 18th century, the attention of British jurists turned towards the legislating of laws and regulations and towards collecting and organising the rapidly growing accumulation of judicial precedents. The only other major contribution in the area of translation until the late 19th century was Neil B.E. Baillie's (1799-1883) translation of a work on inheritance based on standard Ḥanafī texts in 1832, and portions of *Fatāwā-yi ʿĀlamgīrī*, the 17th-century Mughal legal compilation, in 1850 and 1853.[27] Little is known of Baillie's life apart from his 1853 testimony that he had worked 21 years in various legal roles in the Indian judiciary until 1844, when he returned to England.[28] In his preliminary remarks to his work on the Muslim law of sale, he noted that the application of Muslim law had become restricted in the courts of justice of the East India Company to matters 'which have relation to religion, marriage, or inheritance'.[29] However, he added, it continued to be observed by Muslims in their dealings with each other, and even by Hindus in areas where through centuries of use it had become the customary law. Thus,

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[25] W. Jones, 'Al-Sirájiyyah: or, the Mohamedan law of inheritance; with a commentary', in Lord Teignmouth (ed.), *The works of Sir William Jones*, vol. 8, p. 201.

[26] Jones, 'Al-Sirájiyyah', p. 200.

[27] N.B.E. Baillie, *The Moohummudan law of inheritance, according to Aboo Huneefa and his followers, comp. in large part from the Sirajiyah of al-Sajawandi, and its commentary, the Sharifiyat of Jurjani*, Calcutta, 1832; N.B.E. Baillie, *The Moohummudan law of sale, according to the Huneefeea code: from the Futawa Alumgeeree, a digest of the whole law, prepared by command of the Emperor Aurungzebe Alumgeer*, London, 1850; N.B.E. Baillie, *The land tax of India, according to the Moohummudan law; translated from the Futawa Alumgeeree, with explanatory notes, and an introductory essay, containing a brief exposition of leading principles, and their application to the present system of land revenue*, London, 1853.

[28] 'First report from the select committee on Indian territories, together with the minutes of evidence and appendix', in *The sessional papers printed by order of the House of Lords, or presented by royal command, in the session 1852-3*, London, vol. 41, pp. 321-2.

[29] Baillie, *Moohummudan law of sale*, p. x.

in applicable cases, Muslim law was 'accordingly administered by the Company's judges, as a rule of justice, equity, and good conscience'.[30] He argued that, in the event of a code of law being created for all the Muslim communities, their own law should be accommodated since that was the one by which most of the Muslims regulated their transactions, provided that it be not 'calculated to retard the advance of society in India, under the new impulse which has been given to it by its connection with England'.[31] Despite his predilection for a textually based authority for Muslim law, Baillie was prepared to grant Muslim law – or at least the Muslims' administration of it – a flexibility to meet the changing circumstances in India. He pointed to the doctrine of *ḥīla*, or legal stratagems, that were designed to circumvent restrictions imposed by a very literal reading of the law. If the government in India were to intervene and abolish such restrictions in the matter of sale, the Muslim law thus altered 'would not only be well suited to the present condition of Indian society, but sufficiently accommodated to its progress', and prove better adapted to the people of India than unmixed English law.[32]

By the time Baillie produced a complete *Digest* of Muslim law more than ten years later, the British government in India had abolished the office of the Muslim law officer, encouraging a greater reliance on compendiums such as this work.[33] The process of codifying law was also gaining momentum by that time, but the 1855 report of the Law Commission made the decision not to enact either Muslim law or Hindu law in any codified form for the reasons that such codification would tend to obstruct rather than promote the gradual progress of society, and that a British legislature could not presume to manufacture religion, since such laws were seen to derive their authority from the Muslim and Hindu religions.[34] Baillie concurred with this opinion, and saw the decision as enhancing the importance and necessity of his translations.

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[30] Baillie, *Moohummudan law of sale*, p. x.

[31] Baillie, *Moohummudan law of sale*, p. xiv.

[32] Baillie, *Moohummudan law of sale*, p. x.

[33] N.B.E. Baillie, *A digest of Moohummudan law on the subjects to which it is usually applied by British courts of justice in India, compiled and translated from authorities in the original Arabic, with an introduction and explanatory notes*, London, 1865, p. xxii.

[34] Baillie, *Digest*, p. xxiii. See also United Kingdom. Indian Law Commission, *Second report of Her Majesty's commissioners appointed to consider the reform of the judicial establishments, judicial procedure, and laws of India,* London, 1856, pp. 7-9; R.K. Wilson, 'Should the personal laws of the natives of India be codified?', *The Imperial and Asiatic Quarterly Review and Oriental and Colonial Record*, 3rd series 6 (1898) 225-49, pp. 239-40.

The impact of legislation on Muslim law

Despite this stated reluctance to codify the whole of Muslim law, legislation produced by British rule in the form of the East India Company had a significant impact on the practice of Muslim law. In the first two decades of the 19th century, J.H. Harington (1764-1828) produced a major analysis of the laws being administered by the British government in India, in which he outlined the changes that had been introduced. He had arrived in India to work for the East India Company in 1780. In 1801, he was appointed puisne (not of senior rank) judge and ten years later promoted to chief judge.[35] He supported the establishment of the College of Fort William in Calcutta and was the law specialist as well as a member of the Persian department in the college. As a Christian with evangelical beliefs, he 'variously held office in the Calcutta School Society, the Calcutta School Book Society, the Church Missionary Society (of which he was an honorary life governor), the British and Foreign Bible Society, and the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge'.[36] In his final two years in India, he was a member of the Supreme Council and became president of the board of trade, before returning England in 1827.

In his volumes on laws enacted by the British government in Bengal, Harington expanded on the work of Hamilton by providing a detailed explanation of the historical development of Ḥanafī law and the various authoritative texts that Muslim jurists had been consulting in administering it in India.[37] He went on to state the modifications and additions to Muslim criminal law that the British government had made through the regulations it issued from time to time. He quoted extensive sections from letters by Governors Hastings and Cornwallis in which the 'defects' of Muslim criminal law were discussed and amendments proposed.[38] For example, both governors opposed the privilege granted by Muslim law to the nearest of kin to pardon the murderers of their kinsmen, Hastings being of the opinion that this right belonged only to the state and Cornwallis arguing that too often it allowed the criminal to escape punishment. In his volumes, Harington went on to list the specific changes

35 K. Prior, art. 'Harington, John Herbert', in *ODNB*.

36 Prior, 'Harington'.

37 J.H. Harington, *An elementary analysis of the laws and regulations enacted by the Governor General in Council at Fort William in Bengal for the civil government of the British territories under that presidency*, Calcutta, 1805, vol. 1, pp. 215-45. This section was also published as J.H. Harington, 'Remarks upon the authorities of Mosulman law', *Asiatic Researches* 10 (1808) 475-512.

38 Harington, *An elementary analysis*, pp. 341-69.

to Muslim law in areas such as punishments for murder and for perjury produced by the regulations enacted by the government in 1793 and subsequent years, where the provisions of existing Muslim law had appeared to the British officials to be inadequate.[39]

The regulations introduced by the British government in the early 19th century included changes to how *muftī*s were to provide their *fatāwā* when serving as 'law officers' and assisting British judges in the courts. No longer were they free to prepare judgements applying to specific cases, as had been the practice in traditional Muslim jurisprudence. For example, the British insisted on capital punishment for murderers, and were unwilling to be bound to follow a *muftī*'s *fatwā* according to which the payment of blood money was accepted. To circumvent the possibility of kinsmen pardoning a murderer, 'the judge, without making any reference to the heir or heirs of the slain, shall require the law officer to declare the punishment to which the prisoner convicted would be liable according to the Mahomedan law, supposing all the heirs of the slain entitled to prosecute the prisoner for *kissas* [from the Arabic *qiṣāṣ*, 'retaliation'], to have attended and prosecuted him'.[40] Likewise, in cases where the witnesses presenting evidence were not Muslims, 'the law officers of the courts of circuit are to declare what would have been their *futwa*, supposing such witnesses to have been Mohummudans'.[41] Thus, the British were changing not only substantive rules of Muslim law, but also procedural directions for the administration of these rules. No longer would the muftis serving as law officers be permitted to follow the established procedures of Muslim law, which had clear rules regarding who could testify. Rather, they were required to follow British directions. Harington's work in bringing together the various regulations enacted by the British Indian government affecting the administration of Muslim law became more than a modest 'elementary analysis', as he entitled it, and actually functioned as a convenient primary sourcebook for judges deciding cases pertaining to Muslim law. Harington's lengthy compendiums of these regulations demonstrated the *ad hoc* and unwieldy nature of this approach to legislation, prompting a movement towards the systematic codification of law. Eventually, legislated codes of law would completely replace the vestiges

[39] Harington, *An elementary analysis*, pp. 370-486. For a thorough analysis of the intervention of the British in the administration of Muslim criminal law during this period, see R. Singha, *A despotism of law. Crime and justice in early colonial India*, New Delhi, 1998, pp. 49-75.

[40] Harington, *An elementary analysis*, p. 371.

[41] Harington, *An elementary analysis*, pp. 396-7.

of Muslim criminal law and procedural law that had not already been transformed by the regulations, leaving only certain sections of civil law to remain under the rubric of Muslim law.

Another Orientalist who prepared a significant compendium of British Indian legislation and its effects on Muslim as well as Hindu law was William Hook Morley (1814-60).[42] He had trained as a barrister in the Middle Temple and was called to the Bar in 1838.[43] Unlike the previous scholars surveyed here, he did not live and work in India but conducted his extensive research in the libraries of Europe. He had begun gathering notes on various oriental subjects from the age of 15 and increasingly focused his research on aspects of Muslim history.[44] One of his final writings was a volume on the British administration of justice in India, in which he traced the history of the regulations that had guaranteed to Muslim and Hindu communities living in British territories their own respective laws.[45] He concluded his review with a strong plea for caution in any consideration of altering or abrogating Hindu or Muslim laws, emphasising that 'in the present state of society in India, they are undoubtedly the best adapted to the wants and prejudices of the people who form the great bulk of the population of the country; that they are an integral part of the faith of that people; and that, though we may not be bound by absolute treaty, we have virtually pledged ourselves to preserve them by repeated proclamations and enactments.'[46]

In his account of Muslim law, Morley begins with a review of the standard sources of Muslim law and the history of the development of its various schools, providing copious biographical details on the various scholars mentioned.[47] While he maintains that the Qur'an is universally accepted as the final authority by all Muslims, he qualifies this with 'the reservation that such authority depends upon its interpretation, and that the latter differs according to the views of the principal commentators of the various sects, the Shí'ahs more especially rendering the meaning of many texts

[42] *ODNB* gives the year of his birth as 1815, but the Saint Mary Parish Register found on the Ancestry online database confirms that it is 1814.

[43] J. Hutchinson, *A catalogue of notable Middle Templars with brief biographical notices*, London, 1902, p. 169.

[44] D.M. Blake, *Catalogue of the European manuscripts in the Oriental and Indian Office collections of the British Library*, London, 1998, p. 365.

[45] W.H. Morley, *The administration of justice in British India. Its past history and present state comprising an account of the laws peculiar to India*, London, 1858. In the preface he notes that the work is an expanded version of the introduction to his *Analytical digest of the reported cases decided by the Supreme Courts*, published a few years previously.

[46] Morley, *Administration of justice*, p. 197.

[47] Morley, *Administration of justice*, pp. 241-57.

in a manner totally opposed to their acceptation by sects of the Sunnís'.[48] He then proceeds to provide a detailed explanation of the role of various levels of *mujtahid*s in exercising *ijtihād* in determining Muslim law, according to standard Muslim legal texts. He defines the role of the *qāẓī* in the contemporary period as 'A Muḥammadan judge, an officer formerly appointed by the government to administer both civil and criminal law, chiefly in towns, according to the principles of the Kurán: under the British authorities the judicial functions of the Kázís in that capacity ceased, and, with the exception of their employment as the legal advisers of the courts in cases of Muḥammadan law, the duties of those stationed in the cities or districts were confined to the preparation and attestation of deeds of conveyance and other legal instruments, and the general superintendence and legalization of the ceremonies of marriage, funerals, and other domestic occurrences among the Muḥammadans'.[49] About the *muftī* he writes, 'A Muḥammadan law-officer, whose duty it was to expound the law which the Kází was to execute: the latter, in British India, usually discharges the duties of the Muftí also'.[50]

Morley's chief contribution, however, was an extensive list of the legal texts utilised by the jurist-scholars of Islam in administering the *sharīʿa*, in which he gave details of which books had been published up to that time and which could be located as manuscripts in various libraries.[51] He did not limit himself to works of *fiqh* or jurisprudence, but included commentaries on the Qur'an, books of Hadith and collections of *fatāwā* that were recognised as authoritative by Muslims in India. The paucity of the English translations and original treatises by European authors that he included in his list is striking in comparison with his extensive list of available and authoritative works of Muslim jurisprudence. The fact that he included Ḥanafī texts published in the Ottoman Empire may have actually 'led to the widening of the field of knowledge covered by Indian dispensations of *fiqh*'.[52]

[48] Morley, *Administration of justice*, p. 251.
[49] Morley, *Administration of justice*, p. 353.
[50] Morley, *Administration of justice*, p. 354.
[51] Morley, *Administration of justice*, pp. 257-323.
[52] N. Chatterjee, 'Uncolonised Islam. The textual field of shari'a within and beyond the colonial legal system in India', *Revue d'histoire du XIXe siècle* 64 (2022) 1-23, p. 10 [online edition].

The impact of adjudication

Initially, the British judges newly appointed to administer justice in the ever-expanding British territories relied on their Muslim court officers to assist them in determining the relevant laws. The testimony of David Anderson (1750-1825), assistant to Samuel Middleton, who was the Resident (the East India Company representative) at Murshidabad, was typical of the early efforts under the Warren Hastings administration. In 1772, he wrote to his parents that Middleton had entrusted to him the administration of justice and, in the description of his duties, he revealed that the responsibility for providing justice was hardly an over-riding concern – certainly secondary to his main pre-occupation with making his fortune in India.

> This office does not require so great a share or Capacity of Knowledge as you would imagine. The Decrees are guided by the Mussulman and Gentoo Laws, and I have always 3 or 4 learned men to expound them, and it is only when no Law can be found, that I allow my own notions of Equity to regulate my Determinations. An Appeal may be made to the President and Council so that the parties may always be sure of Redress.[53]

However, as the number of regulations issued by the British governing council increased, the administration of justice became more complicated. The cumbersome multiplication of regulations passed by the government required judges to rely on their own interpretations of them together with judicial precedents to guide them in matters dealing with the changes to Muslim law in India. The major textual contribution in the field of adjudication came from William Hay Macnaghten (1793-1841) in the form of his *Principles and precedents of Moohummudan law* in 1825.[54] He was born in Calcutta, where his maternal grandfather and his father had been judges of the supreme court.[55] William returned to India after his education in Britain to serve in the Madras army in 1809, but shortly afterwards he took a course of education at the College of Fort William, where he

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[53] A.M. Guenther, 'Seeking employment in the British Empire. Three letters from Rajah Gobind Ram Bahadur', *Fontanus from the Collections of McGill University* 12 (2010) 129-54, p. 131.

[54] W.H. Macnaghten, *Principles and precedents of Moohummudan law, being a compilation of primary rules relative to the doctrine of inheritance* (*including the tenets of the Schia sectaries*)*, contracts and miscellaneous subjects; and a selection of legal opinions involving those points, delivered in the several courts of judicature subordinate to the presidency of Fort William; together with notes illustrative and explanatory, and preliminary remarks*, Calcutta, 1825.

[55] K. Prior, art. 'Macnaghten, Sir William Hay, baronet (1793-1841)', in *ODNB*.

distinguished himself in the study of Arabic and Sanskrit. When he completed his studies, he worked in various judicial appointments, which led to his publication of the volume on Muslim law as well as corresponding volumes on Hindu law. These 'were a significant addition to the East India Company's tradition of moulding India's vast body of customary and textual law to fit the English notion of precedent and were used as handbooks by generations of British-Indian judges'.[56]

In this influential compilation of Muslim law, Macnaghten did not describe the beginnings and evolution of Muslim law, as Hamilton, Harington, and Morley had done. Nor did he limit himself to the translation of a text of Muslim jurisprudence, as Hamilton and Jones had done, or to the exposition of the regulations issued by the British government in India like Harington. Rather, in presenting the *principles* of Muslim law, he drew first on his own experience as a judge and then 'had recourse to living authorities, referring to books only for the purpose of verification', implicitly recognising the authority of qualified *muftī*s to decide Muslim law.[57] By far the major part of his book consisted of the judicial precedents he had gathered and arranged, the legal expositions of the Muslim law made by the *muftī*s and *qāḍī*s working as officers of the British Indian courts.[58] These precedents were presented in their original *istiftā'-fatwā* form of questions and answers on specific cases. In his preface to the second edition of Macnaghten's work, the editor William Sloan described it as the 'the safest guide in the administration of Mahomedan Law, and an indisputable authority both by the Crown and Mofussil Courts', because the accuracy of its doctrines was established 'by the concurrent testimony of innumerable Futwas, delivered by Moofties and Cauzies, whose lives had been exclusively devoted to the study of this particular law'.[59] As such, Macnaghten's section on precedents offers the clearest glimpse of the process of writing *fatwā*s in the colonial legal system.[60]

While this volume encapsulated the vital contribution of Indian Muslim *muftī*s who were experts in the law, its publication conversely served to make their role in the courts redundant by providing the British judges with a ready reference text to Muslim law and freeing them from reliance

[56] Prior, 'Macnaghten'.
[57] Macnaghten, *Principles and precedents*, p. lxxii, footnote.
[58] Baillie, *Digest*, p. xxii.
[59] W.H. Macnaghten and W. Sloan, *Principles and precedents of Moohummudan law, being a compilation of primary rules relative to inheritance* (*including the tenets of the* Schia *sectaries*)*, contracts and miscellaneous subjects*, Madras, 1860, p. vii.
[60] Chatterjee, 'Uncolonised Islam', p. 10 [online edition].

on the oral pronouncements of their Muslim court officers. This process of adjudication and subsequent textualisation also served to remove the flexibility that had been part of the history of Muslim law. In effect, British judges 'refuted the legitimacy of *sharia* as it had actually been practiced in the subcontinent in favor of their own conceptions of Muslim law as an immutable body of divine commands'.[61] However, as recent research has shown, although 'this reduction of Islamic law (designated Muḥammadan law) to a small number of English language manuals, and a growing body of colonial precedents, all restricted to the family law of Muslims and to religious endowments, or *waqf*, a range of *fiqh* texts remained in circulation both in manuscript and in print form as a body of Islamic juristic knowledge not under the control of the British judicial system'.[62]

The Muslim critique of the British administration of Muslim law

Indian Muslims had been involved throughout the transformation of Muslim law into Anglo-Muḥammadan law. They had been closely involved in the translation of Muslim legal texts and even in selecting which texts should be chosen to be translated. The mandate of Warren Hastings had specified the continued involvement of Muslims in the process of deciding Muslim law by co-opting them as court officers issuing *fatwā*s in British courts, though, as has been demonstrated, they were increasingly side-lined. When the civil service was opened to Indians, Muslims became increasingly involved in non-traditional judicial matters as subordinate judges – a prime example being Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān (1817-98).[63] Towards the end of the 19th century, Muslims educated in England became involved in all levels of the judiciary, including the high courts. Education in jurisprudence acquired in England now displaced the teaching of *fiqh* in the traditional centres of learning, the madrasas, as the primary source of legal education for Muslims entering government service. With the abolition of the position of court officers for *qāḍī*s and *muftī*s in 1864, the employment opportunities for those with traditional learning in jurisprudence were restricted.[64] Such changes in the administration of Muslim law in India did not go unnoticed by the Muslim community. Towards the

[61] J. Stephens, *Governing Islam. Law, empire, and secularism in South Asia*, Cambridge, 2018, p. 45.

[62] Chatterjee, 'Uncolonised Islam', p. 11 [online edition].

[63] See C. Troll, C.M. Ramsey and D. Thomas, 'Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān', in *CMR* 24, 424-47.

[64] M.Q. Zaman, *The ulama in contemporary Islam. Custodians of change*, Princeton NJ, 2003, pp. 21-5.

end of the 19th century, Indian Muslim barristers trained in London were at the forefront of critics who commented on the handling of Muslim law in British India. These Muslim jurists educated in England were neither unaware nor uncritical of the transformation wrought on India by the imposition of British law. Writing in 1880, Syed Ameer Ali (1849-1928) lamented the disappearance of the Muslim institution of the *qāẓī* that had formerly facilitated the resolution of legal issues related to marriage and its dissolution, and directly blamed British rule.

> The British in India, with hardly commendable wisdom, have persistently and characteristically ignored or abolished the old institutions, which they found existing in Hindustan when they seized the government of the country. The Kāzi's courts, which dealt with the matrimonial cases of the Moslems, have, with many other useful institutions, been swept away by the iconoclastic movement inaugurated under the British rule. The difficulties which were settled formerly by a simple reference to the Kāzi, without employment of advocate or pleader, now eat into the core of Moslem society without remedy or cure.[65]

Ten years earlier, a British judge, James O'Kinealy, had commented in similar terms on the damage done by the abolition of the role of the *qāẓī* to Muslim education in Indian vernacular languages, pointing out that it removed the remaining respectable employments available to Muslims who did not know the English language.[66] The government yielded to pressure from Muslim communities around India and re-authorised an official role for the *qāẓī* in the Kazis Act, 1880, in the same year that Ameer Ali's volume was published.[67]

In addition to criticising the British for the disappearance of institutions such as the position of *qāẓī*, Ameer Ali also blamed them for the decline in the traditional study of Muslim law in their refusal to support it with their patronage. He noted that, in India, even among educated Muslims, knowledge of Muslim law was extremely rare. Whereas the early British governors such as Hastings had encouraged the cultivation of Muslim law

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[65] A. Ali, *The personal law of the Mahommedans according to all the schools, together with a comparative sketch of the law of inheritance among the Sunnis and the Shiahs*, London, 1880, p. 382. Subsequent editions contained moderated language and no direct indictment of the British. On Syed Ameer Ali, see J.H. Morris, 'Syed Ameer Ali', in *CMR* 24, 863-79.

[66] Archives New Delhi, National Archives of India, New Delhi – GOI, Home Judicial (A), Feb. 1876, Nos. 42-81. J. O'Kinealy 'Memorandum by J. O'Kinealy, Esq.' Dec. 1870. For the decline of the role of the *qāẓī*, see: U. Yaduvansh, 'The decline of the role of qadis in India, 1793-1876', *Studies in Islam* 6 (1969) 155-71.

[67] J.A. Redding, 'The making of colonial and postcolonial law by South Asian Muslims', *Law and Social Inquiry* 49 (2024) 611-17, pp. 612-13.

and literature and had respected their traditions, Ameer Ali wrote, subsequent rulers such as Lord William Bentinck (1774-1839) relegated Indian Muslims to the 'cold shade of neglect'.[68] As a consequence, the Muslim institutions died out and the study of every branch of Muslim learning fell into decay. The result, he declared, was that cases were now decided in the highest law courts against every principle of Muslim law, owing to an imperfect knowledge of Muslim jurisprudence, Muslim manners, customs and usages.[69] Ameer Ali did not inculpate his own English legal education in this process of the diminishing of Muslim law, but rather saw his role as one of restoring the lustre and utility of Muslim law in British India. After a couple of decades practising law in Calcutta, he was appointed as a judge in the Calcutta High Court in 1890 and then in 1909 to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in London, becoming the first Indian and first Muslim to receive such an appointment. He also lectured on law at Calcutta University, publishing his lectures in manuals of Muslim law. But whereas the translation and publication work of earlier Orientalists served to limit the sources of Muslim law available to judges, Ameer Ali was able to utilise a much broader range of sources in his judgements and his writings because these were no longer manuscripts hidden in obscure libraries but were being published in various parts of the Islamic world. 'Thus Amir Ali refused to accept a limited number of translated English-language texts as the sum total of Islamic law. Instead, he viewed Islamic law as an international, multi-lingual and multi-sectarian system of jurisprudence, subject to historical evolution.'[70]

Besides Ameer Ali, other Muslims were making similar complaints. At the fourth session of the All India Muslim League held in 1910, Qāẓī Kabīruddīn likewise lamented the loss of the prominent position of traditional Muslim jurists and its effect on the education of Indian Muslims in jurisprudence.

> The Indian courts successfully administered [the Act enshrining Islamic law] till the time they were assisted by muftees or Mahommedan law officers, as through them they could ascertain the purport of the original texts. Since the abolition of the posts of muftees, an English judge who is unacquainted with the language in which the law is written finds considerable difficulty in understanding the spirit of that law. [...] Another unfortunate effect of the abolition of the posts of muftees was that educated Muslims gave up cultivating the knowledge of Muslim law as there was

[68] Ali, *Personal law of the Mahommedans*, pp. v-vi.
[69] Ali, *Personal law of the Mahommedans*, p. vi.
[70] Chatterjee, 'Uncolonised Islam', pp. 16-17 [online version].

> no opening for them. Mohammedan law being clothed, for the most part, in the garb of an unfamiliar language, the W[e]stern lawyers and judges found it extremely difficult to ascertain and apply its principles. They, therefore, invoked the aid of English law either to cut down or explain away its meaning, and were thus induced to introduce Western thoughts and ideas into the principles of this law.[71]

The problem of the loss of government employment was compounded by the British policies on education, which tended to stop the funding of educational institutions such as madrasas, which they considered imparted 'religious' knowledge, or which they thought were not effectively transmitting 'useful' knowledge.[72] Families who wanted to see their sons employed in the government civil service or to set up private practice as barristers therefore sent them to universities in England and the Inns of Court in London, after preparing them in the various educational institutions in India.

Sayyid Maḥmūd (1850-1903), a contemporary of Ameer Ali and the first Muslim to be appointed as a high court judge in British India, was convinced that the British judicial system in India had mishandled the administration of Muslim law. He worked to rectify the situation in his position as puisne judge of the high court at Allahabad. Rather than independently ruling against precedents in which he felt Muslim law had been misinterpreted, he had on a number of occasions referred questions to a full bench of the Allahabad court, where, together with his fellow judges, he hoped to clarify the ambiguities and correct the mistakes of previous rulings. When he was later accused by Chief Justice Edge of obstructing the smooth working of the court by unnecessary referrals, he defended himself by appealing to the sense of duty he felt as the lone Muslim on the bench faithfully to interpret and apply Muslim law.

> Under the unfortunate impression that I should be advancing the cause of the proper administration of Muḥammadan Law, I, with the consent of my hon'ble colleagues, had referred cases to the Full Bench for disposal, instead of taking it upon myself to say that numerous cases to be found in the reports containing enunciations of the law by learned Chief Justices and by learned Puisne Judges of the highest tribunals in India, were erroneous and had operated in derogation of the administration of native laws which had been guaranteed to the people ever since the beginning of the British rule. These cases were heard in Full Bench, of which I had the honor of being a member, but by an irony of fate, on more than one occasion, I was the

[71] S. Muhammad, *The Indian Muslims. A documentary record*, vol. 3, Meerut, 1980, p. 24.
[72] Zaman, *The ulama*, pp. 60-8.

> only member of the Court who was not sufficiently sure of his knowledge of Muḥammadan law to be able to deliver judgments there and then.[73]

That final barb was delivered because in two such cases he had reserved his judgements in order to examine more fully books on *fiqh* that dealt with the questions under consideration, while his fellow judges gave immediate, on-the-spot decisions.

The chief cause of mishandling Muslim law by the British judiciary in India was that many of the judges lacked access to authoritative legal sources. Since most, if not all, of the judges coming from Britain had received no training in the Arabic and Persian languages, they were limited to consulting the few standard texts that had been translated, and to relying on them even when they proved to be in error. Sayyid Maḥmūd stated the problem thus:

> One of the greatest difficulties in the way of the Courts established in British India, is the paucity of text-books upon Muḥammadan Law written in English which are sufficiently accurate to be safe guides in the administration of those branches of that law which, by s. 24 of the Bengal Civil Courts Act (IV of 1871), we are bound to administer. The only means of information consists of books of reference which are either incomprehensive compilations or abbreviated translations, and, in some cases, translations of translations.[74]

By focussing on translation, he made the first significant contribution in this area since Baillie's efforts in the 1830s and 1850s, discussed earlier. While he did not produce a translation of any complete text, Maḥmūd selected numerous portions from a variety of texts relevant to the particular issues being addressed by the court, and had those portions entered into the official Law Reports along with their translations.

One translation that came under frequent criticism was Hamilton's English version of the *Hidāya*. Maḥmūd gave a specific example of the effect of poor translation in a judgement by William Markby (1823-1914), who had been a puisne judge of the Calcutta High Court from 1866 to 1878, in the case of *Assamathem Nessa Bibi v. Roy Lutchmeeput Sing* (ILR, 4 Calc. 142). Maḥmūd noted that Markby had relied on the English translation of the *Hidāya* for his interpretation of the Muslim law of inheritance. Upon examining the *Hidāya* himself, Maḥmūd concluded that it did not support Markby's conclusions, and pointed out that the text he had used

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[73] Archives London, British Library – Appendix O, India Office Records, Public and Judicial Department Records, L/PJ/6/355, File 1680, date 15 Aug 1893, pp. 7A-8A.

[74] *The Indian law reports* 7 All. 822 (10 Feb. 1885) Jafri Begam vs. Amir Muhammad Khan, p. 826.

was 'merely a translation of a translation', being an English translation by Charles Hamilton in 1791 of a Persian translation of the Arabic text by Indian *'ulamā'*.[75] He sounded a call for a new translation of the *Hidāya*, 'especially as the English terms employed in Mr. Hamilton's translation are frequently not the equivalents of the original Arabic terms, and are not used with the degree of definiteness essential for a book of law'.[76] Maḥmūd also referred to passages from Hamilton's translation used by judges in another case as 'only a loose paraphrase of the original Arabic, and [...] liable to convey a wrong meaning.'[77] Despite the weaknesses of the translations, it should be noted that, where he found no conflict with the original Arabic, Sayyid Maḥmūd frequently quoted them in his judgements because they were the most accessible source of Muslim law for his fellow judges and lawyers.

The culmination of the transformation of the *sharī'a* into Anglo-Muḥammadan law was that final appeals in cases involving Muslim law in India were made to the Privy Council in London. The fact that judges in England, who were not qualified as *mujtahid*s, had not been trained in Islamic *fiqh* and were not even Muslims, could make pronouncements on Muslim law that were accepted as authoritative by Indian Muslims was a distinct departure from the traditional view of Muslim law – at least Sayyid Maḥmūd and numerous other Muslim judges at lower levels of the judiciary were Muslims. Furthermore, their judgements, along with those of numerous other non-Muslim judges ruling on Muslim law in India, could be – and regularly were – appealed against and overturned by higher courts. But the Privy Council in England was the highest court of appeal, and therefore Sayyid Maḥmūd and other leading Muslim jurists in India had to accept its authority in matters of their own Muslim law.

By their acceptance of the authority of the Privy Council to rule on Muslim law, Muslim judges were, in fact, creating a new source for Muslim law as it was to be administered in India, even though they disagreed at times with the changes that resulted. This transformation was directly addressed by one such Muslim barrister trained in England. In his historical sketch of Muslim law, Sir Abdur Rahim (1867-1947), a younger

[75] *The Indian law reports* 7 All. 822 (10 Feb. 1885) Jafri Begam vs. Amir Muhammad Khan, p. 830. See also Hamilton, *Hedáya*, pp. vii, xliv-xlv. For further comment on translations, see S.A. Kugle, 'Framed, blamed and renamed. The recasting of Islamic jurisprudence in colonial South Asia', *Modern Asian Studies* 35 (2001) 269-73.

[76] *The Indian Law Reports* 7 All. 822 (10 Feb. 1885) Jafri Begam vs. Amir Muhammad Khan, p. 830.

[77] *The Indian Law Reports* 7 All. 822 (10 Feb. 1885) Jafri Begam vs. Amir Muhammad Khan, p. 839.

contemporary of Sayyid Maḥmūd and Ameer Ali, followed his listing of works on Muslim law available to judges in India with this observation:

> But, once the British India Courts in adjudicating upon questions raised before them have ascertained from the available materials the Mohammedan Law applicable to the subject, these decisions themselves according to the principles of British Jurisprudence form henceforth a fresh basis and starting point. If a rule of Mohammedan Law is laid down by a judgment of the Privy Council or has been settled by a uniform course of decisions of the Indian High Courts, it must be accepted even though it may not agree with a proper reading of the original authorities.[78]

Despite such apparent acceptance of Privy Council decisions as a new source of Muslim law, Abdur Rahim went on to evaluate critically three decisions by the Judicial Council of the Privy Council that fundamentally altered the way Muslim law had been decided in India. He argued that, if the question of whether a rule of Muslim law is decided without any reference to the principles of Muslim jurisprudence, or if the British courts appropriate the authority to construe the texts of the Qur'an and the Hadith without regard to the rules laid down for that purpose, then 'elements of great uncertainty have been introduced in the administration of Mohammedan Law and a prospect is opened for innovations in the doctrines of Mohammedan jurisprudence'.[79]

Conclusion

British imperial expansion in India opened up new sites of encounter between Christians and Muslims, particularly in the area of the *sharīʿa*. The declaration by Warren Hastings that British rule would apply Muslim law to Muslims stimulated a rapid increase in the study of the contents of the *sharīʿa* and the way it functioned. Scholars such as Charles Hamilton provided both translations of significant Muslim manuals of law and introductions to the process of formation of the *sharīʿa*. What Hamilton and others may not have realised was that their work would subvert that process and lead to a transformation of the *sharīʿa* into Anglo-Muḥammadan law. His volumes on the *Hedáya* and the work of other Orientalists in delineating the content of Muslim law as it was applied in British India did

[78] A. Rahim, 'A historical sketch of the growth of Mohamedan jurisprudence', *Calcutta Law Journal* 3 (1906) 109 footnote.
[79] Rahim, 'A historical sketch', p. 111 footnote.

more than provide information on the *sharīʿa* because they transformed it by limiting the sources used by the judges who enforced it. In addition, legislation resulting in the regulations and adjudication resulting in judicial precedents also increasingly served to limit the application of Muslim law. J.H. Harington's magisterial work on the authorities of Muslim law and the impact of legislation on the contents of that law in the early decades of the 19th century demonstrated how rapidly that transformation was taking place. William Hay Macnaghten, on the other hand, focused on the changing role of the *muftī*s and their *fatwā*s, the other half of Hastings's pronouncement. Muslim court officers were to be the experts guiding British judges who were adjudicating matters of Muslim law. However, by Macnaghten's time, the accumulation of judicial precedent was deemed to be sufficient – along with the texts translated earlier and the modifying legislation – to guide judges, thus making the service of the *muftī*s as court officers increasingly irrelevant. However, with the appointment of Muslims to judicial posts as duly qualified civil servants, the transformation took another turn and, through the judgements and writings of Syed Ameer Ali and Sayyid Maḥmūd, once again introduced some limited expansion into the range of sources available for the determination and implementation of Muslim law.

What importance, then, does this transformation of Muslim law into Anglo-Muhammadan law have in the history of Christian-Muslim relations? First, the historical reality that the British Empire – though 'Christian' – administered the Muslim sharīʿa for more than 150 years needs to be recognised. Even today, what is seen as Muslim personal law in India is in large part what the 19th-century British judges said it was. Why, then, is it perceived by some as absolutely beyond the realm of possibility for Western nations today to include elements of the *sharīʿa* in their judicial systems? Second, the Christians who, as British civil servants and judges, were directly involved in this transformation of Muslim law into Anglo-Muhammadan law show few signs in their writings of reflecting on the appropriateness of Christians altering a vital component of the religion of Islam. They did not seem to interpret this encounter with Muslims in terms of religious dialogue but rather in terms of imperial rule. They were intent on providing justice for those under their rule which in their minds included administering Muslim law for Muslims and Hindu law for Hindus. The changes the British introduced into these bodies of law were motivated by an attempt to 'improve' those laws by bringing them into alignment with British — not necessarily 'Christian' — standards of justice.

Christian missionaries in India who wrote on Islam, such as T.P. Hughes (1838-1911) and Edward Sell (1839-1932), tended to ignore Anglo-Muhammadan law and focused rather on Islamic law as it had been developed by the early *mujtahid*s from which no deviation was permitted, thus resulting in a law which allowed no change or progress.[80] Chirāgh ʿAlī (1884-95) wrote a lengthy refutation of the assertion by the missionaries and other critics of Islam such as Robert Durie Osborn (1835-1889) that Islamic law was incapable of change, arguing that 'Islam is capable of progress, and possesses sufficient elasticity to enable it to adapt itself to the social and political changes going on around it'.[81] Although he was an Indian scholar, he was not addressing the Indian context nor commenting on the flexibility of Muslim law to incorporate the transformation imposed by the British legal system. Rather, as indicated in the title of his book, *The proposed political, legal, and social reforms in the Ottoman Empire and other Mohammadan states*, he had the Ottoman context in view, defending the ability of a state governed by a Muslim ruler to adapt Muslim law to its modern context.

Other Muslims who observed and participated in the process of transformation of Muslim law did not necessarily interpret the change in terms of Muslims encountering Christians. They did raise objections to the loss of traditional Muslim institutions such as *muftī*s and *qāḍī*s but nevertheless took advantage of greater access to historic texts on Muslim law as these were translated and published. Like Chirāgh ʿAlī and Muslim scholars in Egypt and other parts of the Ottoman Empire in the latter part of the 19th century, these western-educated scholars insisted that not only was the modernisation of Islam and its law necessary but it could be accomplished without having to adopt Christianity because the roots and premises of scientific and political progress were not limited to the Christian religion but could be found in the tradition of Islam as well. In the realm of Christian-Muslim relations, then, they represent Indian Muslims negotiating justice with British Christian rulers in a colonial context, appealing to an imagined shared foundation for that justice that transcended religious differences.

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[80] T.P. Hughes, *Notes on Muhammadanism*, London, 1875, p. xi; E. Sell, *The faith of Islam*, London, 1880, p. 23. On Hughes, see *CMR* 16, 311-19 and *CMR* 24, pp. 1004-6; on Sell, see *CMR* 24, 781-803.

[81] C. Ali, *The proposed political, legal, and social reforms in the Ottoman Empire and other Mohammadan states*, Byculla, 1883, p. 10. On Chirāgh ʿAlī', see *CMR* 24, 625-36; on Osborn, see *CMR* 24, 368-78.

Works on Christian-Muslim relations 1800-1914

William Ward

DATE OF BIRTH 20 October 1769
PLACE OF BIRTH Derby
DATE OF DEATH 7 March 1823
PLACE OF DEATH Serampore

BIOGRAPHY

William Ward was born and brought up in Derby and, when he left school, he became an apprentice to John Drewry, a printer and bookseller, and gained his first journalistic experience by assisting with and later editing the *Derby Mercury*. At some point in the early 1790s, he started attending a Baptist church. He moved to Stafford in the mid-1790s to assist another member of the Drewry family, Joshua, in editing the *Staffordshire Advertiser*. In late 1795, he moved to Hull to work as editor for the *Hull Advertiser and Exchange Gazette* and remained there for nine months. He was baptised as a Baptist in Hull on 28 August 1796 and subsequently started preaching in and around Hull before going to Eward Hall near Halifax to study with Dr John Fawcett in August 1797. The following year, he joined the Baptist Missionary Society (BMS), and left Britain in May 1799.

Ward was refused permission by the East India Company to join William Carey (*CMR* 24, 154-62) in Calcutta, so he and the other new missionaries of the BMS went to the Dutch settlement of Serampore, which was outside Company territory, where Carey subsequently joined them. In 1802, Ward married the widow of John Fountain, a fellow missionary (Carlyle and Stanley, 'Ward, William'). He initially managed the mission's busy printing operations and was also actively involved in preaching until 1806, when the expansion of the BMS and its printing operations forced him to remain at the mission's headquarters. He also worked on his own publications, including the four-volume *Account of the writings, religion, and manners of the Hindoos* (completed by 1811), which remains an important account of European perceptions of Hindu society in Bengal during the early 19th century. Following a spate of bad health, he visited Britain in 1819 in order to collect funds for the mission's educational goals. He made several trips within Britain and also to Europe and the United States before returning to India on 28 May 1821 with £3,000 for the new college at Serampore. Two years later, on 7 March 1823, he died of cholera.

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Primary

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E.I. Carlyle, revised B. Stanley, 'Ward, William (1769-1823)', in *ODNB*

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

'Persian pamphlet'

DATE 1807
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

There are numerous accounts of Bengalis eagerly consuming Ward's pamphlets and tracts, and being converted by them (see West, 'Evangelizing', pp. 155-74). Of particular prominence among these short works is 'An address from the missionaries at Serampore to all persons professing the Moohummudan religion', known as the 'Persian pamphlet'. He may have composed it as early as 1804 and, according to William Carey, it was translated in 1807 by a certain Hadātullāh, a convert from Islam, into Bengali and Persian (see West, 'Evangelizing', p. 202 n. 50). Hadātullāh had no idea of the trouble he was starting but, over the years following its publication in its translated form, it caused such an uproar that Carey was required to make a translation back into English. This was sent by the Governor-General of India to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors of the East India Company in London on 2 November 1807. The reason for this was that, in its Persian and Bengali translations, the pamphlet contained inflammatory references to Muḥammad. In this retranslated form (which

is used here) it is barely two pages long ('Persian pamphlet', pp. 47-9), although, according to West ('Evangelizing', p. 202) it originally comprised thirteen pages.

It appears that neither Ward's original composition nor the translation is any longer extant and, judging by the fact that Carey had to make a translation back into English for himself, the original was clearly not available to him. The date of this original is not mentioned in the official correspondence, although, in a letter dated 18 October 1804, Ward tells his friend Andrew Fuller (1754-1815), a fellow-Baptist minister: 'We have printed two pieces in the Hindoostanee language. One of them is Brother Pearce's *Address to the Lascars* with some additions respecting the Life of Mahomet & the faults of the Koran' (West, 'Evangelizing', p. 203). He must be referring to the 'Persian pamphlet' because this incorporates the Baptist minister Samuel Pearce's (1766-99) tract for Muslim dockworkers in Britain, again translated by Carey, and also parts of the 'Preliminary discourse' written by George Sale (1697-1736; *CMR* 13, 325-43) for his translation of the Qur'an. If this is the case, Ward's pamphlet must have been in circulation for three years before it was translated and began to provoke reactions from Muslims.

In its retranslated form, the pamphlet comprises two main parts: an exploration of various religious ideas focusing primarily on sin, the avoidance of hell and salvation; and a biography of Muḥammad. It was the second part that quickly caused trouble.

Ward begins by alerting Muslim readers to the concern felt by 'well-wishers in England' for them and the state of their religion, because 'nothing but the affairs of this world is able to engage the smallest portion of your attention'. But, as the Arabic proverb reminds them, 'This world is the field to be sown, the harvest is to be reaped in a future state' (p. 47). Ward then outlines the Muslim teaching that God, as Creator of all things, has made humans able to know good from evil and will call them to account when He judges them. Therefore, they should consider that they owe their lives to Him and that their most important duty is to praise and thank Him lest He condemn them to hell when they die.

Muslims accept that God communicated the Old Testament through Moses, and there He commanded all humans to reverence Him and to 'love their neighbours as themselves'. This means that to harbour enmity towards others is disobedience to God and the source of the greatest evils. So, 'Alas! Alas! for your miserable state, O you Mohummudans! who have perverted his commands, and thereby incurred the wrath of God, reflect

seriously how deserving of punishment are those who do evil with their eyes open' (p. 47). Humans cannot escape hell or wipe away their sins through their own efforts, but 'God has appointed an all-powerful Saviour and Intersessor to effect the salvation of you and us' (p. 48).

At this point in his translation, Carey explains that he is omitting the rest of this argument because it does not contain any insulting remarks and is moving on to the biography of Muḥammad, who, he says ominously, 'is described under the term zanlim [Persian *ẓālim*] or, the tyrant' (p. 48). This omission explains the reduction of the original pamphlet from thirteen pages to two.

The next part of the pamphlet contains this biography, entitled 'An account of a certain tyrant, from his birth to his death'. Derived from George Sale's (1697-1736) 'Preliminary discourse' to his translation of the Qur'an and Samuel Pearce's 'Address to the Lascars' (West, 'Evangelizing Bengali Muslims', pp. 202-3), it covers the main events of Muḥammad's life, describing briefly how, after marrying the rich widow who had been appointed by his uncle to look after him, he was able to rise to fame among his countrymen and 'subsequently he conceived the desire of setting up as a prophet' (p. 48). He attracted converts among people 'the lamp of whose judgement was extinguished', although, when he told them that he had ascended to heaven and had held a conversation with God, many deserted him (p. 48). After spending years flattering and misleading people in Mecca, Muḥammad, at the age of 53, told his followers to murder anyone who would not accept his religion, claiming that permission for this had come from God. The Meccans then conspired to kill him, so he fled to Medina and from there he 'got possession of many cities [...] which he plundered with the hand of violence and tyranny, having converted the inhabitants to his own false religion' (p. 48).

Muḥammad 'composed some pages in Arabic' and, after his death, these were collected together into the Qur'an that is known today. Muslims 'consider the reading of this book as a means of salvation', though Muḥammad's creed is 'only the source of mental darkness'. The Qur'an contains many borrowings from other scriptures, opening Muḥammad to the accusation of theft, and it sanctions 'the plainest atrocities' that the Old and New Testaments and the Psalms prohibit. It recommends actions such as fasting, prayer and pilgrimage as means to attain salvation, although the Old and New Testaments and the Psalms teach that 'good actions are not in themselves sufficient for the salvation of man, except through the means of God's goodness [...] only through the medium of Jesus Christ' (pp. 48-9). This law directly contradicts both scripture and 'the comprehension of

the wise' (p. 49). It promises the same lustful gratification in heaven as on earth and sanctions killing those who do not accept Islam. So, readers of the pamphlet must choose: 'Quit [...] the lying religion which you have been taught to believe, and embrace the faith of Jesus Christ' (p. 49).

Ward's appeal here bears most of the features that a pamphlet published in England at the time might contain, asking readers to reflect rationally. Its distinguishing feature is the emphatic condemnation of Muḥammad, particularly as an idolater and tyrant, and of his teachings as contrary to true scripture. This condemnation, expressed in Hadātullāh's translation in words of which Ward was not entirely aware, quickly caused deep offence to Muslim readers and led to talk of war between the British and Danish colonial governments, and to the British authorities themselves considering the closure of the Baptist mission.

SIGNIFICANCE

Ward's 'Persian pamphlet' achieved rather more prominence than he could have imagined. Complaints about it from Muslims were brought to the attention of British officials in the summer of 1807. These arose not from Ward's arguments within the original, even though it levelled direct accusations at Muslims, but from Hadātullāh's translation, particularly his insertion of 'tyrant' before each occurrence of Muḥammad's name. Ward had been too busy to check this translation before it was printed, and so it was only when Muslims protested about it that these insults became known. When he was apprised of the offence, the Governor-General of India demanded that the printing press used by Ward in Serampore should be brought to Calcutta. This offended the governor of the Danish territories, in which Serampore was situated, who assured the missionaries that he would not make them comply with these demands 'unless forced to do so by an invading British army' (West, 'Evangelizing', p. 219). But then, after a series of meetings was held, the missionaries made apologies, suspended the publication of the pamphlet, handed in all their copies of it, and agreed to submit future pamphlets to both the British and Danish provincial governments for approval (pp. 220-1).

The incident became a larger issue than this in Britain, where it formed part of a continuing public debate about whether missionaries should be allowed to carry on their work in India. It was at this time, in response to an upsurge in publications written against missionary work in India, that Ward's friend Andrew Fuller wrote his *Apology for the late Christian missions to India* (1808), which focused particularly on issues of toleration, the nature of God and truth, and the Great Commission. A debate was

also held in the House of Commons at the end of January 1808, though it passed 'without much incident' (West, 'Evangelizing', p. 228).

The pamphlet produced some positive reactions among local Muslims (West, Evangelizing', p. 157) but, despite provoking publications in England and notwithstanding the controversy it initially stirred, it ultimately exerted little influence on the progress of the BMS in Bengal or on East India Company policy towards the mission. Ultimately, this and Ward's other writings represent important examples of early interactions between missionaries and Indian Muslims, and help to build a picture of what Islam in Bengal was like in the years around 1800. They show that Ward took a direct approach towards Muslims by engaging them in debate, challenging their religious ideas and attempting to introduce a more serious consideration of the doctrinal and existential questions of sin and judgement.

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James Harry Morris

William Tennant

DATE OF BIRTH 1758
PLACE OF BIRTH Ayr, Scotland
DATE OF DEATH 1813
PLACE OF DEATH Glenconner, Scotland

BIOGRAPHY

William Tennant was born in 1758 in the county of Ayr in western Scotland, the eldest son of John Tennant, a Scottish farmer. He received his early education locally and later studied for two years at Glasgow University. He showed his abilities by earning first place in various subjects and winning prizes for classical criticism and literary composition. After attending lectures in theology, he was ordained deacon and priest in the Church of Scotland, though he failed to find a position. In the meantime he published his first work, *System of natural history*.

Tennant was eventually appointed as a military chaplain for the East India Company and sailed for India in 1795. When he arrived, he was made a member of the Asiatic Society, which had been established by Sir William Jones (1746-94; *CMR* 12, 560-72) in 1784. He was stationed with the King's 78th regiment, which was known for its recent campaigns under the command of Major-General Arthur Wellesley (later created first Duke of Wellington, 1769-1852) against the Maratha Empire. He served as a military chaplain for five years, from 1795 to 1799.

While travelling in various parts of the country, Tennant kept a journal in which he wrote his observations on many facets of Indian life. With the encouragement of his commanding officers, he composed over 100 short essays ranging from religious culture to agricultural practices and political history. These later formed the contents of his three-volume *Indian recreations*, published between 1803 and 1808, shortly after he returned to Great Britain.

He never married and, after returning home, he spent the remainder of his life in Glenconner, Scotland, where he died in 1813.

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Indian recreations

DATE 1808
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

The first two volumes of *Indian recreations*, both subtitled *Consisting chiefly of strictures on the domestic and rural economy of the Mahommedans and Hindoos*, were published by C. Stewart, Edinburgh, in 1803, while the third volume, with the different subtitle *Consisting of thoughts on the effects of the British Government on the State of India: accompanied with hints concerning the means of improving the condition of the natives of that country*, was published by Edinburgh University Press in 1807. Although Tennant states that he composed vols 1 and 2 in India (vol. 3, 1807 edition, p. 1 note), a number of hints, particularly in the opening sentences of the Preface to vol. 1 (1803 edition, p. vii) and of the Advertisement of vol. 3, indicate

that the series was intended as a single work. Vols 1 and 2 consist of essays on aspects of Indian life, while vol. 3 consists of a series of reflections, mainly on British rule. Tennant modestly offers the work as a recreation, in vol. 1 expressing the hope that 'in this eventful and dangerous period', by which he must mean the time of the Napoleonic wars, they may serve 'for the amusement of a leisure hour' (p. ix) and, in vol. 2, explaining that he has introduced among essays on aspects of farming 'other topics, less tedious, and more interesting to the generality of readers' (1808 edition, p. iii). In vol. 1 he also acknowledges the encouragement given by his commanding officers as he went about making the observations he used for the essays and explains that he benefitted from works by Indian authors and from conversations with Indian officers, whom he 'referred to for elucidation, as the best qualified to decide on their own manners and institutions', including two Muslims, Gholam Hossein Khan and Abu Taleb Khan (Ghulām Ḥusain Khān and Abū Ṭālib Khān, p. viii). He adds that he also profited from the works of a number of British scholars in India, including Sir William Jones, and from conversations with them (p. ix).

Vol. 1, which is 386 pages long, comprises 46 essays that range from a few pages to over 20 pages. Each focuses on a particular topic but the book has no obvious overall structure. The majority of the essays are on Hindu topics (a largely unfamiliar religion to most Europeans of Tennant's time), though a number are on Islam, including: 'The Mahommedan conquests of India', which is largely a political history of Muslim rule; 'Peculiarities of the Mussulmans. Their character – intolerance, and cruelty', consisting of observations on the behaviour and practices of Muslims; 'Mahommedan festival of Mohurrum', on the major Shīʿī festival in the month of Muḥarram; 'The cruelty of the Mahommedans in India'; 'The domestic life of the Mussulmans'; and 'The state of married women among the Mahommedans – a vindication of their rights by Abu Taleb', a confident defence of the position of women in Indian Islam by one of Tennant's Muslim advisers.

In this volume, whether he is assessing religious practices, beliefs or social habits, Tennant generally views Muslims in India (whom he estimates as ten percent of the entire population) as people marked by cruelty, strong intolerance and aggressiveness towards other cultures. The reason for this, he suggests, is that, in the past they have been used to being in the position of conquerors who have been able to look down on others.

Vol. 2, which is 415 pages long, comprises 45 essays mainly about agriculture, with only a few incidental references to matters of religion.

Although Tennant says little about Islam here, his comments show that he has learnt a certain amount about it. Thus, he quotes from a letter written in 1616 by Sir Thomas Roe (1581-1644), English ambassador at the Mughal court in the early 17th century, to the Archbishop of Canterbury, which states that Muslim scholars 'know somewhat of philosophy and mathematics, are great astrologers, and can talk of Aristotle, Euclid, and other authors' in Arabic (p. 269); he outlines periods of Mughal history, including the reign of Akbar (r. 1556-1605; *CMR* 11, 102-20), and tells of the visit of the Jesuit Jerome Xavier (1549-1617) to his court (p. 269; *CMR* 11, 84-91); he explains how the Islamic law of inheritance causes the break-up of great estates into portions too small to be managed profitably (p. 338); and he observes that Muslims are allowed to erect monuments over the graves of their leaders, 'however [Islam] may prohibit any sensible object of worship' (p. 383).

Vol. 3, which is 376 pages long and divided into 17 sections and an appendix, differs from the first two in that its essays are generally more substantial and analytical. Their titles indicate their subject matter: 'Inducements to attempt the improvement of the condition of the natives of India' (section 2); 'Conjectures concerning the future influence of the British government in moderating the despotism of India' (section 3); 'Of the means of preventing scarcity in Hindostan' (section 8); 'Other subsidiary arrangements for the comfort of the natives of India' (section 9); 'Of the conduct of the missionaries – causes of their want of success' (section 12); 'The propriety of establishing schools for the instruction of youth in India' (section 13). They are concerned with aspects of British rule of India, which they generally assume is an established fact and will be for the good of Indians no matter what their religion. There are only a few passing mentions of Muslims.

In the comparatively few references to Islam in these volumes, Tennant shows that he has some knowledge of particular aspects of it, not least that the Qur'an 'allows considerable authority to our sacred record [Christian scripture] and acknowledges the truth of Christ's mission as a subordinate prophet' (vol. 1, pp. 182-3), and that Muslim law governs, at least in principle, numerous aspects of Muslim life. He does not discuss the Qur'an as scripture or Muḥammad as a prophet, and tends to accept Muslim life and behaviour without going on to judge it or compare it with Christianity.

An exception to this is found in 'Peculiarities of the Mussulmans. Their character' (vol. 1, pp. 181-91), where he observes that, although Islam is based on a theistic belief that is similar to his own Protestant Christianity,

Muslims do not appear to benefit from this in the way they lead their lives because 'not one in an hundred is able to read his own Scriptures; and the number able to profit by what they read is still much less considerable'. Thus, 'The idea [...] entertained by some of our divines, that the progress of Islamism over so great a part of the world, is likely to pave the way for that of Christianity, is rather to be regarded as a fond conjecture, than a fact at all established by experience' (p. 182). This hints at an attitude that is revealed in a number of other places, and most explicitly in recommendations Tennant makes about education in India in some of the sections in vol. 3, that Muslims, and also Hindus, need Western education. In Europe, schools have been the means for remedying not only ignorance but also vice and mendacity, and so,

> does it not follow, with the irresistible force of an experimental truth, that we must resort to the same measure in India, before we can expect, I do not say their conversion, but any permanent amelioration of their condition, or valuable accession to their moral and religious knowledge? (vol. 3, p. 279)

Islam and Hinduism may have their place, but rational knowledge will emancipate Indians and bring them to the enlightened beliefs of Protestant Christianity.

Indian recreations demonstrates a largely matter-of-fact attitude towards Muslims in India, presenting them as distant and haughty in the main (despite Tennant's apparently friendly relations with his Muslim informants and advisers). It also portrays them as people with some culture and learning (though there is little about such achievements as the great architectural monuments of Mughal times), but in need of a suitable form of education that will enable them to appreciate the claims of Christianity, which are unquestionably sound and demonstrably superior. The implication is that Islam as a faith should not be taken seriously.

SIGNIFICANCE

The work appears to have been received politely by its first readers but without acclaim. Thus, writing after Tennant's death, A.M., the author of the 'Memoir' on him, comments coolly: 'It is acknowledged by all, that the work contains much useful and interesting information about Indian affairs' (A.M., 'Memoir', p. 492). This is the kind of assessment that might be expected of a presentation that is mainly factual and lacks discussion arising from serious engagement with the realities of the culture and religion of Hindus and Indian Muslims.

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Shafique, *British historiography of South Asia*

A.M., 'Memoir'

Evan Kratz

Āqā Aḥmad Bahbahānī Kirmanshāhī

DATE OF BIRTH 1777
PLACE OF BIRTH Kermanshah, Iran
DATE OF DEATH 1819
PLACE OF DEATH Unknown, probably Iran

BIOGRAPHY

Āqā Aḥmad Bahbahānī Kirmanshāhī was the grandson of Muḥammad Bāqir Bahbahānī, a revered Twelver Shīʿī cleric and revivalist. His father, Muḥammad ʿAlī, was a respected *mujtahid* who actively opposed Sufi mysticism. Bahbahānī received his early education in Kermanshah until 1795, before further studies in the seminaries of Najaf and Karbalāʾ in Iraq.

At this time, the Persianate world faced fragmentation as a consequence of the British consolidating their dominance over the Indian subcontinent. Iran, amid increasing European presence and influence, was grappling with political pressures from the British, Russians and French, prompting internal debates on the meaning of modern nationhood. In January 1801, the first Anglo-Persian treaty of friendship marked a pivotal moment, with Britain offering military support to Persia.

In 1804, at the age of 27, Bahbahānī embarked on a journey to India, drawn by familial ties among the Bengali Muslim elite and the reputation of Shīʿī nobles in India for making generous religious endowments. He arrived in India on 10 May 1805 and remained there until 8 February 1810.

In Hyderabad, Bahbahānī developed a friendship with Mīr ʿAbdullaṭīf Shūshtarī, though this ended with the latter's untimely death in 1806. In Lucknow, he encountered opposition from ruling nobles and clerics, and was compelled to seek protection from the British, which included guards, customs exemptions and safe passage documents. He then settled in British-ruled Patna, where he attained the position of Friday prayer leader at a Shīʿī mosque.

Bahbahānī had several children, including a son born in February 1810, around the time of his departure from India. Little is known of his life after this until his death nine years later.

At the end of the second part of his *Mirʾāt al-aḥvāl-i jahānʾnumā*, Bahbahānī lists his various writings, eighteen in all, including an outline of the principles of jurisprudence, a study of the Shīʿī imamate and ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib's claim to the caliphate, and a treatise containing biographies of the line of Imams.

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Mir'āt al-aḥvāl-i jahān'numā. Safarnāmah va tarājim-i aḥvāl-i mu'ṣirān
India in the early 19th century. An Iranian's travel account

DATE April 1809
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Persian

DESCRIPTION

Bahbahānī completed *Mir'āt al-aḥvāl-i jahān'numā*, which details his own life and social affiliations, in 1809. In its modern translation, *India in the early 19th century*, it is 370 pages long (including a 22-page preface by the

translator), and is divided into three parts. This translation is referred to here.

Part 1 covers the author's pre-India years, detailing his ancestry, upbringing, travels and studies in Iraq and Iran. Part 2, the book's main section, divided into 26 chapters (pp. 43-242), chronicles his entry into India, extensive travels, observations of Hindu and Muslim practices, and interactions with various communities, including the British. Part 3, divided into nine chapters, includes descriptions of the physical geography of Britain, the British system of government, the history of the British East India Company, the British presence and justice system in India and European military capabilities.

The work is dedicated to the Qajar prince Muḥammad ʿAlī Mīrzā Dawlatshāh (1789-1821), suggesting that Bahbahānī was seeking his patronage. He includes in his narrative both virtuous and repugnant figures, irrespective of religious or ethnic lines, and he makes clear that he values virtuous conduct and ethical behaviour more than religious affiliation.

Bahbahānī criticises the customs of local Muslims in India as deviations from true faith, attributing them to Hindu influences. He objects to practices such as the self-immolation of widows (*satī*) and the giving of large dowries in marriages. He describes Hindu customs only superficially, showing little concern to understand them on their own terms. He disapproves of the intermingling of Hindu practices with Muslim law, such as the supposed abandonment of circumcision among imperial princes.

Bahbahānī regards Hindu-Muslim relations as fundamentally tense, seeing Hinduism as contributing to the moral and social degradation of the regions it dominates. Despite acknowledging the spread of Islam in India, he is ambivalent about the compromises that facilitated this because they diluted Islamic rigour.

Concerning British political control, Bahbahānī notes the significant influence the British exercise, particularly in Murshidabad, a former centre of Shīʿī power and learning that has declined under British rule. He laments that British rule has shifted Murshidabad's wealth into Hindu hands, pointing to a decline in the economic status of Muslims.

While Bahbahānī does not explicitly praise the British, his comparisons between British-controlled parts of India and standards in Iran indicate that he recognised certain improvements in the way the British ran things, such as the establishment of the postal system and restaurants. When he is ill, Bahbahānī prefers British medical practitioners over local Sunnī physicians, reflecting his trust in British medical knowledge.

Bahbahānī criticises Indian Muslims for allowing practices such as prostitution and drinking, noting that even the British refuse to profit from prostitution, although such recognition of British virtue is tempered: 'Even the English, though infidels amassing wealth by day and night from various sources including taxes on wine-houses, do not benefit from such sort of money, and regard it as a matter of shame and disgrace for themselves…' (p. 69). He mentions that the British presence in Murshidabad has led to Muslim nobles receiving stipends but he criticises their frivolous spending and the resulting debt.

Direct criticisms of Christianity are not present, though occasional remarks reveal Bahbahānī's sense of the superiority of his own faith, such as his comment that 'idol-worshippers and Jews and Christians who adore the pictures of Moses and Christ and argue that […] they do not worship those objects as God, rather regard them as their intercessors and mediators with Him for the fulfilment of their wants' (p. 22). Passing references to Christian belief often carry a tone more of curiosity than of criticism. Thus, when he discusses government ministers in the British parliament, he writes:

> The ninth is the Minister incharge [*sic*] of the Religious law of Christ. He is entrusted with four duties: the one to appoint the preletes of the churches; the second, to contract and dissolve marriages; the third, to supervise the burying of dead; and the fourth, christening of children. They [the Christians] believe that children are born without any religion and unless christened, they are not admitted to the pale of the church. (p. 249)

Bahbahānī seems puzzled by the apparent indifference on the part of the British towards their Christian faith. He comments that '[t]he English, though they profess the religion of Christ, do not perform any religious obligation save and except blowing of the wooden gongs once a week on Sunday' (p. 256). Furthermore, he does not show awareness of the variety of Christian denominations, seemingly conflating Russians and English in their faith in the observation: 'the Russian army, which is the leading fighting force among the Christians' (p. 294).

SIGNIFICANCE

Although there is no indication that Bahbahānī's lengthy visit to India was commissioned by the Qajar authorities, it can be seen as part of a broader trend among Persian scholars and dignitaries to travel to places in Europe and European colonies during a pivotal period when the Qajar dynasty was keen to learn from and catch up with European powers.

His critique of Hinduism and certain aspects of Muslim practice in India is notably harsh, while his comments about the British and Christianity, though relatively mild, still indicate a strong belief in Muslim superiority. He regarded the Christian faith of the British with curiosity, noting their perceived lack of strong devotion and commitment, and considering them to wear their faith very lightly.

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STUDIES

Cole, 'Mirror of the world'

Kia, 'Limning the land'

Peter G. Riddell

Claudius Buchanan

DATE OF BIRTH 1766
PLACE OF BIRTH Cambuslang, Scotland
DATE OF DEATH 1815
PLACE OF DEATH Broxbourne, Hertfordshire

BIOGRAPHY

Claudius Buchanan was born in Cambuslang near Glasgow in 1766. He began his education at Inveraray and in 1782 enrolled at the University of Glasgow, where he completed his degree in 1786. He did not want to enter the ministry in the Church of Scotland so, unbeknown to his parents, he attempted to travel to Europe on foot, supporting himself by playing the violin. He made it as far as London, where he obtained a job in a solicitor's office.

In 1790, he met John Newton (1725-1807), the rector of St Mary Woolnoth. Newton exerted a positive influence on him and eventually prompted him to become ordained in the Church of England. To achieve this, he had to study at an English university, so he went to Queens' College, Cambridge, in 1791.

While Buchanan was at Cambridge, Newton suggested that he should go to India, an idea that was supported by the evangelical Charles Simeon (1759-1836), who was also at Cambridge at that time. In 1795, Buchanan completed his degree and the following year, now priested, he was appointed to a chaplaincy in Bengal for the East India Company. He arrived in Calcutta in 1797 and spent his first two years stationed in Barrackpore just to the north. This was an unpleasant time for him because there was no church and no British regiment located there, so to pass the time he studied the Bible in its original languages and also studied Persian and Urdu. He married Mary Whish on 3 April 1799, and was transferred back to Calcutta the following December. Mary died in 1804.

Buchanan's abilities, particularly his sermon writing, quickly impressed the governor-general of Bengal, Richard Wellesley (1760-1842), who appointed him vice-provost of his newly established college for employees of the East India Company at Fort William. Together with the Revd David Brown (1763-1812), who was appointed provost, Buchanan had strong evangelical expectations for the College, believing it could serve as an important means for spreading Christianity in India. He went on

zealously to defend and promote the work of the College by raising money to have the Bible translated into Indian languages. He also lobbied for the establishment of an Anglican episcopate in India, beginning with his essay *Memoir of the expediency of an ecclesiastical establishment for British India*, published in 1805. In 1806 and 1807, he made two tours of southern India at his own expense to observe and record the state of Christianity in the subcontinent and to gather evidence in support of sending missionaries to non-Christian parts of the country. Through these years, he also assisted his fellow chaplain, Henry Martyn (1788-1812; *CMR* 20, 89-111), particularly in translation work.

In 1808, Buchanan returned to England, where in 1810 he became the curate of Ouseburn, Yorkshire, and married Mary Thompson. He continued to support the evangelical cause in India by arguing that the East India Company should do more to spread Christianity within the territories under its control. One of his writings from this time that sheds light on Christian-Muslim relations was a sermon he preached in 1809 entitled *The star in the East*. This incorporates an account of the conversion of two Persian Muslims to Christianity, which he used as an illustration to his argument that the time to spread Christianity to the East had come, a goal he believed could be tangibly accomplished through the Company lifting its ban on missionary activity within its territories.

There is also a very brief but telling passage about Islam in Buchanan's *Christian researches in Asia*, which is concerned with translations of the Bible for the different peoples of Asia. In the section on 'The Arabians' (*Works*, pp. 119-25) he recalls that, among remarkable features of Arabia is that:

> it was the theatre of the grand defection from Christianity, by the Mahomedan delusion, which was to extend to 'a third part of men' [Revelation 9:15]. This predicted apostasy was to be effected, not by returning to Paganism, but by a corruption of Christianity; that is, by admitting some part of the former revelation of God, and pretending to a new revelation. The delusion itself is aptly compared in the prophecy concerning it, to 'smoke issuing from the bottomless pit'; and its great extent is expressed by its 'darkening the sun and the air' [Revelation 9:2]. (p. 120)

This repeats the traditional characterisation of Islam as a Christian heresy that is foretold in the Bible and is based on mistaken interpretations of the biblical text.

Part of Buchanan's efforts also involved publishing his findings from the tours he had made through India in *Christian researches in Asia* (1811) and *Apology for promoting Christianity in India* (1813). The descriptions

of Indian society he gave in these works greatly influenced the British and American public. In opposition to notions of a glorious, exciting and exotic subcontinent, he and other like-minded evangelicals presented a degraded India that needed Christianity to reform its society and culture. His lobbying soon saw successful results through the Company's charter renewal in 1813. This lifted the missions ban, allowing Christian missionaries to obtain licences to go to British India, and it also established an episcopate in India.

Buchanan suffered two strokes in 1811 and died from a third on 9 February 1815 in Broxbourne, Hertfordshire. His body was later returned to Yorkshire. He was survived by Charlotte and Augusta, his two daughters with his first wife.

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

The star in the East. A sermon, preached in the Parish-Church of St James, Bristol

DATE 1809
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

Buchanan preached his sermon *The star in the East* in the parish church of St James, Bristol, in 1809. It is 47 pages long in the third edition of 1809

(an eloquent sign of its popularity) and it focuses on two main issues: 'Evidences of the general truth of the Christian Religion, existing in the East' and 'Evidences of the divine power of that religion, exemplified in the East' (p. 10). With regard to the first, Buchanan shows how the religions of the East, particularly Hinduism, foreshadowed the doctrines of Christianity in their own teachings; and with regard to the second, he outlines the success of the spread of Christianity through Bible translations and preaching.

The most apparent feature of the sermon concerning Christian-Muslim themes is the story Buchanan tells of two Arab Muslims who converted to Christianity (17-21; all references are to the 8th American edition of 1809). Originally told to Buchanan by one of them, this outlines how the two men travelled from their native Arabia to Kabul, where one, Abdallah, was taken into the ruler's service while the other, Sabat, travelled on. Abdallah came across a Bible and, after reading it, converted to Christianity. Knowing he was now in danger, he tried to reach the Christian communities near the Caspian Sea. When he reached Bukhara, he met Sabat by chance, but Sabat knew about his conversion and reported him to the ruler. Abdallah was publicly tortured, with Sabat looking on, and finally executed. Filled with remorse at the meekness with which his friend had suffered and died, Sabat left Bukhara and found his way to Madras, where 'he was appointed by the British government [as] a mufti' (p. 19). In the course of his duties, he chanced upon a Bible and, by comparing it with the Qur'an, arrived at the truth of Christianity and converted. Even though his family sent his brother from Arabia to kill him, he remained true to his new faith and, at the time Buchanan was preaching about him, he was translating the New Testament into Indian languages under the direction of the East India Company chaplain, Henry Martyn (1781-1812, p. 19). He had also written works about Christianity for Arab Muslims, the first entitled *Neama besharatin lil Arabi* ('Happy news for Arabia'), which 'contains an eloquent and argumentative elucidation of the truth of the Gospel, with copious authorities admitted by the Mahometans themselves, and particularly by the Wahabians' (p. 20).

Buchanan concludes from this story 'that the time for diffusing our religion in the East is come' (p. 21) and in the rest of the sermon he underlines the urgency of this task.

SIGNIFICANCE

This remarkable story of the two Muslims' conversions became a popular feature of missionary and evangelical literature in the early decades of the 19th century. It was published both within the United Kingdom and further afield. It may have been part of the move to encourage the Society for Missions to Africa and the East, as it was then known (later, the Church Missionary Society), to start mission work in India.

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Evan Kratz

Arnold Nesbit Matthews

DATE OF BIRTH 16 February 1765
PLACE OF BIRTH Paris
DATE OF DEATH 5 October 1820
PLACE OF DEATH Chandannagar, West Bengal

BIOGRAPHY

Arnold Nesbit Matthews was a soldier in India in the early 19th century. He is remembered for his translation of the well-known medieval compendium of Hadith, *Mishkāt al-maṣābīḥ*.

Most of the known details about Arnold's life are recorded in *The Sedbergh School Register, 1546-1895* (where his surname is spelt Mathew). Born in Paris on 16 February 1765, he was the son of Francis Mathew (*sic*), MP for Tipperary, who in 1797 was created first Earl of Landaff (near Cardiff, South Wales, now spelt Llandaff). Arnold was baptised a Roman Catholic. He was educated at Sedburgh School and in 1782 he went to Calcutta, where he joined the Bengal Artillery in 1783. He lost a leg in the 1803 Battle of Delhi and was appointed Fort Adjutant at Agra and later Deputy Commissary General of Ordnance at Fatehgarh. In 1806, he married Countess Elizabeth Francesca Provoleri, with whom he had one son. In 1808, he 'embraced Mohammedan views'. He was invalided out of the army in 1817 and he died in Chandernagore (Chandannagar, West Bengal) in 1820. He refused to have any connection with his parents and did not return to Ireland to succeed his father as earl (*Register*, pp. 155-6).

Other sources state that he was born only five months after his parents were married (*Dod's peerage*, p. 555) and that he married Bibi Gool (Bībī Gul), who was a Muslim, and with her had a son named Richard Hunt Matthews. He published his translation of the *Mishkāt* in 1809.

The reference to Matthews converting to Islam (which is presumably what is meant by his adopting Muslim views) in 1808 is curious in light of his statement in the Preface of *Mishcàt-ul-maśábìh*, where he clearly writes from a Christian standpoint that one of his reasons for carrying out the work was to help clergy because

> It behoves those ministers of our holy religion, whose zeal may lead them to labour in the propagation of its sacred truths, and in refuting the errors of unbelievers, or schismatics, of whatever description, to be well

> acquainted with the tenets of those sects, whose dogmas they undertake to impugn. (p. ii)

It is possible that his evident interest in Arabic and the teachings of Islam, and also his marriage to a Muslim wife, rather than any inner religious conviction he held, led to his being called a Muslim. Conversely, after his conversion, he may possibly have continued to present himself as a Christian in order to get his translation accepted by his intended readership. This matter, among other details about Matthews's life, would benefit from further investigation.

MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Primary

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Mishcàt-ul-maśábìh
'Niche of lamps'

DATE 1809-10
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

Matthews's English translation of the Arabic Hadith collection *Mishkāt al-maṣābīḥ* was published in Calcutta in two volumes in 1809-10 (its full title is *Mishcàt-ul-maśábìh or a collection of the most authentic traditions, regarding the actions and sayings of Muhammed; exhibiting the origin*

of the manners and customs; the civil, religious and military policy of the Muslemàns). The first volume is 665 pages long (plus short prefaces by the translator and author) and the second 817 pages (plus an index of persons, tribes and places).

Mishkāt is a selection of thematically arranged Hadiths mainly from the *Kutub al-sitta* ('The six books'), the collections of al-Bukhārī, Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj and the four other compilers of traditions whom Sunnī Muslims regard as the most reliable. The Hadiths selected from them are regarded by Sunnī Muslims as the most authentic and their arrangement in this work makes them serviceable in ways that the original compilations do not. *Mishkāt* was compiled by Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-Khaṭīb al-Tibrīzī (fl. 1337) as an expansion and revision of the earlier compilation *Maṣābīḥ al-sunna* ('Lamps of the *sunna*') by Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn al-Baghawī (d. 1122). Containing nearly 6,000 Hadiths, *Mishkāt* remained popular as an accessible and usable source of Hadiths from the time it was written. It was often published together with one of the many commentaries written on it.

Matthews adds little to his translation of the *Mishkāt* apart from explanatory footnotes. He remains true to the intention he states in the Preface, to convey what al-Tibrīzī considered 'instruction of the most important nature' in 'the most direct and unequivocal terms' (p. iii).

Earlier in the Preface, he explains that his main reason for making this translation was to assist legislators:

> For the wisdom of our legislature [Parliament] having decreed, that the administration of civil justice to those people [Indian Muslims under British rule] shall be, in a great measure, regulated by their own laws, and made those laws the standard of criminal jurisprudence for all the native inhabitants of our Indian empire, it is of essential importance that those laws be well and thoroughly understood. (p. i)

He goes on to point out that a proper understanding of the 'spirit' of Muslim laws requires knowledge of their source in the Qur'an and Hadith. The Qur'an had been translated into Latin by Lodovico Marracci and into English by George Sale, but there had been no translation of the Hadith. He himself seeks to remedy this, and his 'selection of this work, in preference to others, was its containing the most important and authentic traditions, compiled from all the preceding collections' (p. 2).

He also intends the translation as a help for anyone who 'is desirous of gaining the esteem, the regard, or the affection of those with whom he

converses' and also as an accurate source for 'ministers of our holy religion' to save them from arguing against 'opinions, which the followers of the Arabian prophet never maintained' (pp. ii-iii).

SIGNIFICANCE

From what he says in the short Preface, Matthews does not appear to harbour any particular religious or other prejudice himself but simply wishes to enhance understanding between the British and Muslims in India and to prevent misunderstanding from leading to resentment and friction. He accepts the situation of rulers and ruled as it is and seeks to provide a means to help it work. If this was his true purpose, he stands out as an unusually forward-looking individual who was able to divest himself of narrow religious or racial bias in order to serve the good of all.

However, it may not have been as clear and simple as this. The possibility that Matthews was attracted to Islam as a faith at about the time he was working on his translation suggests that he may have been motivated by a desire to improve the conditions of Muslims under British rule. The fact that he had acquired enough proficiency in Arabic to attempt the work raises the question of whether he started it simply as an intellectual exercise, as he professes:

> Having devoted to the study of the Arabic language a considerable share of the leisure which [the translator] could spare from the duties of his profession, this work was begun and completed, as an amusement and an exercise, with a view to further improvement in that nervous and copious tongue; without the smallest intention of submitting it to public view; (p. i)

or as a gesture of fellowship with followers of a faith that absorbed him beyond intellectual interest.

The translation proved to be as helpful as Matthews had hoped. Karl Gottlieb Pfander made use of it in *Remarks on the nature of Muhammadanism, traditions* (Calcutta, 1840, p. 6) and Ignác Goldziher referred to it in *Muhammedanische Studien* (Halle, 1890, vol. 2, pp. 270-1; trans. C.R. Barber and S.M. Stern, *Muslim studies*, London, 1971, vol. 2, pp. 247-8). Almost a century after it was published, E.M. Wherry wrote that it was the main aid for any English reader who wanted to become familiar with Muslim traditions (*Muslim controversy*, London, 1905, pp. viii-ix).

More recently, John Robson, who made his own English translation of the *Mishkāt* (Lahore, 1970), described Matthews's translation as 'a remarkably good piece of work', particularly considering the location and period in which it was carried out, when 'research had not yet made available the many aids which scholars possess today' (Robson, *Mishkāt*, p. xv).

Robson also pointed out what he called 'imperfections', among them frequent unaccountable omissions of material, faulty translations resulting from misunderstanding of the Arabic text, and defective transliteration of names.

PUBLICATIONS

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Gordon Nickel

James Mill

DATE OF BIRTH 6 April 1773
PLACE OF BIRTH Angus, Scotland
DATE OF DEATH 23 June 1836
PLACE OF DEATH London

BIOGRAPHY

Born in Northwater Bridge in the Scottish county of Angus to a shoemaker father and a mother who was the daughter of a farmer, James Mill proved to be a good scholar at school with 'an admirable turn for languages' (Bain, *James Mill*, p. 6). After parish school, he was sent to Montrose Academy and went on to the University of Edinburgh while also working as a private tutor. After completing his studies in Divinity in 1798, with a particular interest in philosophy, he was licensed as a preacher. He moved to London in 1802 and, from 1805, served for several years as editor of *St. James's Chronicle* and also of the *Literary Journal*. Mill eventually rejected orthodox Christianity together with all forms of organised religion. Nicholas Capaldi observes that he 'could not accept the doctrines of any church and abandoned his career in the ministry [...]. By 1810 [...] he had given up all religious attachments' (*John Stuart Mill*, p. 2). In 1805, he married Harriet Burrow, a union which, according to their son John Stuart Mill, was less than exemplary. The younger Mill explains his father's rejection of all religious systems as follows: 'he regarded it with the feelings due not to a mere mental delusion, but to a great moral evil' (*Autobiography*, p. 40). Thus, Mill saw not just Islam but *all* religion as fraudulent and oppressive and, as he studied the religions of the Indian subcontinent, including Islam, he considered them even more false and tyrannical than Christianity.

Towards the end of his life, between 1829 and 1834, Mill was involved in the question of the renewal of the privileges of the East India Company, including being summoned before Parliamentary Sub-Committees, where, when he was asked 'as to the most desirable frontier' of British India, he replied,

> There is nothing now between us and that, but the territory of Runjeet Sing. If threatened by the Russians on the northwest frontier, we should be

> obliged to take possession of the country to the foot of the hills. Runjeet Sing occupies the Punjaub: the boundary between him and the Hill States is not very definite. (Bain, *James Mill*, p. 346)

In fact, the Sikh kingdom was eventually annexed after the death of Ranjit Singh, meaning that the largely Muslim areas within it, such as Kashmir, passed into British hands, as Mill had suggested.

Mill's anti-religious attitude remained to the end, as his son observed:

> Until the last few days of his life there was no apparent abatement of intellectual vigour; his interest in all things and persons that had interested him through life was undiminished, nor did the approach of death cause the smallest wavering (as in so strong and firm a mind it was impossible that it should) in his convictions on the subject of religion. (J.S. Mill, *Autobiography*, p. 203)

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

The history of British India, vol. 1

DATE 1817
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

The history of British India, vol. 1 consists of 648 pages in the first edition of 1817 (references here are to this edition). It is divided into three 'Books', the first, consisting of five chapters, on the establishment of the East India Company, the second, consisting of ten chapters, 'Of the Hindus', and the third, consisting of five chapters, on 'The Mahomedans' (pp. 481-625). Anna Plassart notes the paradox of Mill's attitudes towards Indian religion:

> In modern scholarship, the HBI's harsh condemnation of Indian society and religion is looked upon as a something of a paradox. Mill is well known to have been, at home, a staunch advocate of toleration. The HBI draws much of its material from the writings of Christian missionaries such as Jacob Bryant, William Ward, Claudius Buchanan or Abbe Dubois. (Plassart, 'James Mill's treatment of religion', p. 527)

In *The history of British India*, Mill approaches Islam primarily as a political-historical phenomenon, presenting it as a conquering religion that subjugated the vanquished. Hence, its oppressive character is worse than that of Christianity. He regards 'the writer' of the Qur'an, 'notwithstanding his mental rudeness', as having 'greatly profited' from Jewish and Christian texts (p. 645). Addressing the Mughal conquest of India, he declares that:

> The people who actually invaded Hindustan, and assumed the government over so large a portion of its inhabitants, were perfectly on a level with the Arabians and Persians, in the highest state of their civilization. The Mahomedans, who established their dominion in Hindustan, were principally derived from the eastern portions of that great country which was contained within the limits of the Persian empire in its greatest extent. (p. 625)

The natural inference of these statements is that India had always been dominated by foreigners, so there was nothing wrong with the British supplanting the most recent alien rulers. Throughout the chapters dealing with Muslims, he presents them as engaging in invasion after invasion, coup after coup, slaughter upon slaughter, thereby inevitably, if obliquely, raising the question of the legitimacy of their rule in India.

Mill also criticises the inadequacy of Muslim law as it is expressed in the *Hidāya*, the manual of Ḥanafī *fiqh* that was employed in the Subcontinent (pp. 637, 639):

> The Mahomedan law, as introduced into India by its Mogul conquerors, is defective indeed, as compared with any very high standard of excellence; but compare it with the standard of any existing system, with the Roman law, for instance, or the law of England, and you will find its inferiority not so remarkable, as those who are familiar with these systems, and led by the sound of vulgar applause, are in the habit of believing. (p. 636)

He thinks it falls short of the Christian system (p. 638) and is particularly unsparing in his denunciation of *ḥudūd* penalties: 'The most atrocious part of the Mahomedan system of punishment, is that which regards theft and robbery. Mutilation, by cutting off the hand, or the foot, is the prescribed remedy for all higher degrees of the offence. This savours strongly of a barbarous state of society' (p. 640).

When Mill's work was published in 1817, British rule in India – specifically that of the East India Company – did not face any serious external foe. They dominated territory the size of Central and Western Europe, a source of captive trade and a base for commerce with China. In such circumstances, when knowledge of India's geography, history, demography and especially its religions was at best superficial among the majority of Britons, natural curiosity and the obvious politico-economic necessity to understand this vast land of very different cultures and religions demanded a major study. Mill's work supplied this.

In his use of historical sources, Mill consistently relied on Christian testimonies rather than on sceptical or deistic accounts. The British public had experienced the evangelical revival, and supposed Muslim sexual practices would have shocked them. Thus, with regard to Alla ('Alā'uddīn Khaljī, r. 1296-1316), Mill notes that one of his generals was 'Cafoor, a slave and eunuch, his favourite, and, it was said, the instrument of his pleasures…' (p. 286). Another case is that of Abdolla, vizir to the weak Mughal ruler Feroksere (Farrukhsiyar, r. 1713-19), of whom Mill observes that 'Abduolla, the Vizir […] was so addicted to women and other pleasures, that he neglected business; and let the affairs of his high office devolve into subordinate hands, whose mismanagement shed discredit and unpopularity on himself' (p. 600). Mill was writing for a contemporary British public scandalised by the immorality, indolence and profligacy of the Prince Regent.

Despite the obviously secondary character of the work – Mill never visited India – his presentation of Hindu and Muslim beliefs and practices, notwithstanding some errors noted by his later editor, Horace Wilson, showed great attention to detail and this was even more true of the history of the two religions in the subcontinent.

SIGNIFICANCE

The immediate significance of Mill's history can be judged by its effect on the East India Company. Notwithstanding his sometimes critical attitude towards them, after the publication of his work he was appointed to a position within the Company (*Autobiography*, p. 26). A long review in *The British Review, and London Critical Journal* (11 [1818] 212-70) welcomed it warmly.

The history prepared the ground for British attitudes towards the Indian Uprising some 40 years later: that it was a reversion to type, that the Muslim participants – themselves descendants of invaders from outside – were simply trying to restore their previous rule at the expense of more civilised recent interlopers, the British. The work helped to concentrate British attitudes towards India and Indian Islam, which were to influence popular and even government opinion up to and after the Uprising. A review in the *Weekly Repertory or Literary Gazette* (3 [1818] 222-31, 274-7) judged that Mill's book would dispel ignorance about Britain's subcontinental empire, while a slightly later review in *The Edinburgh Review or Critical Journal* (21 [1819] 1-44), which was both laudatory and critical in parts, noted that Indians 'have been transferred from pagan and Mahomedan to Christian rulers, and of course been exalted to the highest pitch of happiness by the change' (p. 1).

These comments suggest that *The history of British India* filled a gap in the knowledge of everyday Britons about an important part of their growing Empire, and also that rule by the 'Christian' British was so much better for India that that by the Hindus or Muslims.

The period of the Indian Uprising saw the re-publication of Mill's work in 1858 (albeit edited somewhat critically) by the Orientalist Horace Hayman Wilson, professor of Sanskrit at Oxford University. In his preface, Wilson wrote:

> The whole of the Mohammedan history of India, when Mr. Mill wrote, was restricted to a single compilation, loosely if not incorrectly translated, and to a few fragmentary notices snatched from oblivion by the industrious curiosity of European orientalists. We have now a more trustworthy translation of Ferishta [a Persian historian (1570-1620) who wrote for the

> sultans of Deccan], and in the autobiography of Baber [Bābur, founder of the Mughal Empire in 1526], and in other publications, much more copious and serviceable contributions to our knowledge of the transactions of the Mohammedans in India. (p. xi)

The fact of its re-publication at this time testifies to the demand of the British public for an authoritative study of India, and the fact that Mill's work – albeit the edition by Wilson – was still being used to understand the subcontinent points to its continuing impact.

Mill's criticisms of the actions of the East India Company in the subcontinent doubtless made his work all the more compelling in the light of the Uprising. That event led to the surrender of the company's power to the Crown as a result of its mistakes and failures. E. Sreedharan comments: 'The British – both the government and the people – were more inclined to take Mill's [...] view of the Indians. The great Revolt of 1857, they thought, was a further proof of the validity of Mill's argument' (*Textbook of historiography*, p. 408).

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Anthony McRoy

Mary Martha Sherwood

DATE OF BIRTH 6 May 1775
PLACE OF BIRTH Stanford-on-Teme, Worcestershire
DATE OF DEATH 22 October 1851
PLACE OF DEATH Twickenham, London

BIOGRAPHY

Mary Martha Sherwood was a writer of English didactic fictional works. She was born in 1775, daughter of the Revd George Butt, rector of Stanford-on-Teme near Worcester. She started to write at an early age, maybe encouraged by her father, who had moved in intellectual circles as a young man. When he suddenly died in 1796, the family went to Bridgnorth, where Mary began to write religious stories aimed mainly at Sunday School pupils, for which she became renowned. In 1803, she married her cousin, Captain Henry Sherwood (1776-1849), and travelled with him to India where she spent more than a decade (1805-16), accompanying him to postings in Calcutta, Dinapur (Danapur), Berhampur, Kanpur and Meerut. What she witnessed there in the lives of 'pagan' Indians and British soldiers appalled her and, influenced by her evangelical beliefs, which were strengthened by the missionary Henry Martyn (1781-1812), after whom she named one of her sons, she decided that she must do something to remedy what she saw as a lack of religion and morality. She opened a school, where she taught religion and literacy to soldiers, soldiers' children and Indians working in the encampments. She founded an orphanage and adopted some orphans herself, while writing tracts and novels that presented Christianity as the remedy for moral weakness. These works were influential in characterising Britain's relationship with India as moral and didactic, and were extensively used for educational purposes. Sherwood's stories were translated by other British women in India, and in this form reached readers within the British educational system in India. Many early converts in the 19th century learned about Christianity, Western learning and moral education from them.

The family returned to England in 1816 and settled near Worcester, where Sherwood opened a girls' boarding school in 1818. She continued to write vigorously, often to meet the requirements of publishers, and her books were nearly always on religious themes. Her most famous work

was *The history of the Fairchild family*, which appeared in 1818. It proved so popular that a second part came out in 1842 and a third in 1847. She closed her school in 1830 and continued to write, publishing material until 1849, two years before her death in 1851 in Twickenham, where the family had moved.

Sherwood did not appear to have been happy in India. She often described how she and her children were regularly sick and, in fact, she lost four of the six children she bore there. Many of her works show that, though she would never have allowed herself to complain, India constituted a land of peril that she looked on as inhospitable and amoral, overflowing with 'heathenism', sin, violence, corruption and vice, even though she drew inspiration from it. She despised the religions she encountered there and regarded the conversion of 'natives' from Hinduism and Islam to Christianity as not only a transformation of their religion but also a shift from one culture to another. She mentions Islam frequently in her works, though usually only incidentally in the background, and tends to feature Muslims as subsidiary rather than as main characters. In her comments on the faith she is usually scathing, as, for example, in her novel *Arzoomund* from the 1820s, when she explains at the beginning why there are Muslims in India:

> About one thousand years ago, another race [coming after the Hindus], descended from Japhet, poured in upon them from the north. These conquerors were Moguls, or Tartars. They ravaged the country with fire and sword, and brought with them another religion which was little better than that of the idolaters. This religion is that which was taught by Mahomet, an Arabian imposter, falsely called The Prophet. The Mahometans, or Mussulmauns, are not idolaters, that is, they do not profess to make images of God, but they deny the divinity of Christ, and reject the Scriptures of the Christians, receiving the Koran in its place, a book composed by their prophet, and abounding with distorted truths, and wicked inventions. These followers of Mahomet are now intermixed in every town and village among the old Hindoos, though they never eat nor intermarry with them. (p. 5)

This brings together all the main criticisms of Islam, Muḥammad and the Qur'an that Sherwood and her readers would have been able to find in most contemporary accounts.

She is hardly more generous when she mentions Muslim individuals, as in *The ayah and lady* (1822), which is about an English woman in India and her personal servant, a Muslim to whom she tries to teach Christian

principles. When the English woman discovers that the *ayah* has intentionally accused an innocent person of breaking a glass in the house, she remarks:

> We English people are wicked enough, but in this respect we are not half so sinful as you Hindoos and Mussulmauns are. Very few English men or women will tell lies upon oath; but among you there is no truth: you are all liars; and, for the purpose of gain, or love of vengeance, there is nothing to which you would not swear. You, Ayah, are a Mussulmaunee, and the Mussulmauns pretend to respect the commands of God; know that this is one of God's commandments – Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor. (*The ayah and lady*, third edition, London, 1822, p. 83)

A major reason for her antipathy is revealed in her short story *The merchant of Bagdad* (in *The works of Mrs Sherwood*, vol. 3, New York, 1834, 393-404), in which the Muslim merchant Abdallah experiences numerous reversals of fortune until he is reduced to nothing and left for dead, but is saved by a stranger whom he recognises is a Christian. The two live together, and, over time, this gentle soul gradually reveals the Christian story. Abdallah is slow to accept what he hears until finally he recognises 'the depravity of his own nature' and the love of God for him (p. 404). In his resistance, he represents all Muslims, who will not accept the degraded human state and the gift offered by God in Christ. For Sherwood, it is the refusal to recognise the truth of Christianity as it is expressed in evangelical Protestantism that distresses her about Islam.

Sherwood's most sustained critical comments about Islam occur in her allegorical story *The Indian pilgrim*, framed on John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's progress*. Here, Islam and Muslims appear as the opposite of Christianity and the protagonist as he strives to learn about the faith.

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

The Indian pilgrim

DATE 1818

ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

Sherwood explains the origins of *The Indian pilgrim* (its full title is *The Indian pilgrim; or, the progress of the pilgrim Nazareenee,* [*formerly called Goonah Purist, or the Slave of Sin,*] *from the City of Wrath of God to the City of Mount Zion, delivered under the similitude of a dream*) at the beginning of the book in the 'Advertisement'. She recounts how, in 1810, 'a plan was

formed by certain pious persons in Calcutta', who are identified in her private papers as the two missionaries Henry Martyn and Daniel Corrie (1777-1837) and her husband, to translate John Bunyan's *The pilgrim's progress* into 'Hindoostannee' (p. v). When she attempted to do this, she found it impossible to transfer the work into an Indian idiom (see Malhotra, 'Attempting') so she composed a version of the work set in an Indian context, 'adapted to the taste, the manners, and the peculiar prejudices of Hindoostann' (p. vi). In its first edition of 1818, the work is 211 pages long and divided into 13 chapters that describe various episodes in the spiritual search of its protagonist, Goonah Purist (*gunā parast* in Urdu, 'one habituated to sin'), within the setting of a dream, similar to the frame narrative of *The pilgrim's progress*. At the end of the 'Advertisement', Sherwood hints that her novel presents the history of a schoolmaster in her employment and that many of the facts and conversations in it are taken from real life (p. viii).

As is related in ch. 1, the story is told by an unnamed narrator who has a dream about a great city whose inhabitants are unaware of the moral degradation in which they live or the disease of leprosy with which they are afflicted. One of them, named Goonah Purist, 'being so called, because his sins had entire dominion over him' (p. 5), a very rich man but a leper like the others, is struck by disaster and loses his wealth. This brings him to realise his condition and to want to save himself from his sins. A brahmin comes across him as he lies destitute in the street and Goonah reveals how his suffering has led him to reason that there must be a Supreme Being, though, because of his sins, he does not know how he can appear before Him when he dies. The brahmin tells him about

> Brumhu, the Supreme Being, in his state of repose, in which he is supposed to remain during the revolution of ages; being destitute of ideas or intelligence, remaining in a state of undisturbed tranquillity, from which, after certain long intervals, he awakes to the work of creation (p. 11).

and explains to him that, according to Hinduism, the aim of life is to attain the soul's release from the body. He leads Goonah through a series of rituals intended to achieve this, each more depraved than the previous, until Goonah is tempted to throw himself beneath the wheels of the god Jugunnathu's car, so that 'he would, by so doing, ensure to himself the highest bliss in the next world' (p. 23). He is stopped by the sudden appearance of a band of Muslims 'armed with sharp and fiery swords', who disperse the worshippers of this god.

In ch. 2, the narrator tells how Goonah Purist explains his search to the Muslims and is taken to their 'city of the wrath of God' and to the 'Sheikh Olislam, or high-priest of their tribe' in his home near the *caaba* (p. 27). The sheikh explains to Goonah how the one God has periodically sent messages to humankind but that only the last of them has remained uncorrupted. He goes on to describe Muslim teachings about the Last Judgement and, in answer to Goonah's question about his own salvation, he lists the observances that Muslims should follow. But for Goonah these are not enough: 'I feel that the state of mankind on earth is such as to demand a powerful atonement, yea, such an atonement as no created being can provide' (p. 34), at which the sheikh and his followers grow angry and Goonah leaves them.

In the street outside, Goonah witnesses a Shīʿī Muḥarram procession and is told by a mendicant how they believe that the deaths of Hussein and Hossein (Ḥasan and Ḥusayn, the sons of ʿAlī) will atone for the sins of their followers. He asks for the basis of this belief and the mendicant tells him that, although the Qur'an does not speak of it, it is true, to which Goonah replies, 'By this rule, all the stories which the Hindoos relate of their idols are true' (p. 37). While these two grandsons of Muḥammad may have been historical, there is no guarantee that they could atone for others because they were ordinary men and therefore sinners: 'We require a redeemer infinitely holy, and infinitely merciful. What mortal man can answer this description?' (p. 39).

> [Goonah] found as little comfort in the religion of the Mussulmauns as in that of the idolaters: for although it was true that the followers of the prophet abhorred idols, and held some rational doctrines; yet their religion had no power to cleanse him from the filthiness of his moral leprosy, nor to provide an adequate means of atonement for his past offences. (p. 40)

In ch. 3, Goonah meets a Roman Catholic priest and hears about his religion but is not satisfied by his explanation for the observances he follows and his praying to saints. He also meets Mr Self-Confidence, who recommends following the Ten Commandments, for 'if we should cease to exert ourselves and rely only on [Christ] for salvation, what an inlet would this be to all manner of sin, and to every kind of abomination!' (p. 52). In ch. 4, he is shown by an enigmatic Christian messenger how he can gain redemption by following the light he now sees shining on him. This messenger appears more than once in the story, coming to help Goonah when he cannot help himself; he says that he has been 'sent unto thee from my own land with a token of love. […] I am one of those sent by my

divine master to gather unto him from the streets and lanes of this city the lame and the blind, the maimed and the afflicted' (p. 55). The subsequent chapters tell how Goonah progresses in his faith and is baptised and given the new name of Nazareenee (p. 95). He then proceeds along the King's highway towards the final goal of Mount Zion, encountering on the way a succession of obstacles (just like John Bunyan's hero).

In ch. 10, after he leaves the City of Vanity, he comes across a group of Muslims at a saint's tomb. They engage him in discussion and ask him why he did not follow Islam when he met the Sheikh Olislam. Nazareenee replies that Islam did not satisfy his need for a personal redeemer, to which the leader of the group asks for proof of the truth of Christianity, 'which we consider as nothing more than the fabrication of designing men' (p. 150). Nazareenee begins his answer by showing that three of the four books which Muslims accept, 'the Toreet, the Zuboor, [and] the Engel', all agree and so cannot be ignored (pp. 150-1). When the Muslim refers to the threats of eternal suffering and promises of eternal pleasure in Islam, Nazareenee refers to the promises in Christianity. When the Muslim argues that Jesus foretold Muḥammad, Nazareenee rejects his logic. The two debate further differences between them, such as that Muḥammad did not foretell future events or perform miracles, until it becomes clear that, for Nazareenee, all the promises of Islam are directed at carnal natures that are not called to rise above the human level. As they continue, it becomes clear to the Muslim that the Christian will not flinch and has answers to all his questions and claims. He and his companions dismiss Nazareenee from their presence.

Nazareenee continues his journey until he comes across a pit with a man sitting in it. This man turns out to be someone who was born a Muslim and became a Christian, advancing so far in his learning that he was able 'to prove the force of my reasoning powers upon those who were considered as the wisest among my former brethren' (p. 167). But this was only to seek the approval of others and, when he was advised to show humility, he abandoned Christianity and returned to Islam. However, this has left him in such deep despair that he feels he is beyond hope of retrieval. The Christian messenger appears again at this point and advises Nazareenee that he cannot help this man and must leave him to God. This raises the question of predestination in Nazareenee's mind, but the messenger advises him to leave it untouched because God's ways are above human understanding.

Nazareenee continues his journey and meets more people, including his wife and baby son (p. 187), with whom he moves onwards to Mount

Zion. On his way, he sees a vast burial ground divided into graves reserved for Muslims on the right 'and to all those persons who attempt to effect their own salvation by their good works' (p. 202), to Hindus on the left and in the centre the land of Beulah, where Christians await their final reward.

The story ends with the Christians finally coming to the shore of the River of Death and crossing over.

Throughout this allegory, Sherwood leaves no doubt that, together with Hindus and Catholics, Muslims are the chief opponents of the Christians, whom she considers right. She implies that Muslims constitute a more important threat to Christians than others because they possess arguments against Christianity that Hindus do not. Further, Muslims are closer to Christians than Hindus because they worship the same supreme God who is in direct relationship with the creation. It is the form taken by this relationship that she appears to want to clarify by demonstrating that only in Christianity are there the means by which humans who have an innate awareness of being sinful can become acceptable to God. In her evangelical analysis, only Christianity in the form she herself favours offers resolution for the universal human predicament of helpless sinfulness.

SIGNIFICANCE

Muslims are portrayed in the novel according to well-established stereotypes as intolerant, stern and inflexible, and their arguments against Christianity come from a reserve that goes back to the first centuries of Islam. Sherwood brings together all the stock images that will show them and their preoccupations in a bad light compared with the freshness of evangelical Christianity. In doing so, she is, of course, creating a narrative device that helps her make her point, though she is able to do this only because the majority of her readership will have some acquaintance with the images she creates and will recognise her portrayal. Thus, *The Indian pilgrim* serves as an excellent example of commonly accepted 19th-century representations of a major competing belief system and way of life for evangelical Protestant Christians in India. The figure of the enigmatic Christian messenger, who appears to help Nazareenee at moments when he cannot understand or is at a loss, serves in the background to remind readers that the final answers to conundrums and dilemmas are always and only available from European missionaries, who stand in benevolent supervision of Indians as they seek the truth.

The Indian pilgrim went through a few new editions and numerous reprints and was also translated into some of the main Indian vernacular

languages. This brought it to a wide audience, though no response on the part of Muslims in South Asia is known.

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Deepra Dandekar

James William Graham

DATE OF BIRTH 16 July 1785
PLACE OF BIRTH London
DATE OF DEATH 22 June 1849
PLACE OF DEATH London

BIOGRAPHY

James William Graham was born in 1785 in London. He studied at Westminster School and, by 1800, he had joined the East India Company, progressing through its military ranks from ensign in 1801, to lieutenant in 1803, captain in 1816 and on to major in 1826. He acquired proficiency in Hindustani, Sanskrit, Persian and Arabic, and was accordingly appointed as Interpreter and Translator to the Supreme Court in Bombay from 1824 to 1827. In 1828, however, he was sentenced by a general court martial and dismissed from the army. He returned to England in 1832. His main contribution to Christian-Muslim relations was a paper on Sufism presented to the Literary Society of Bombay in 1811, which was published in 1819.

In London, Graham was employed by Maharaja Pratap Singh, the Maratha ruler of the principality of Satara who had been deposed by the British, to advocate on his behalf for the restoration of his rule and, later, to oppose the British annexation of Satara in 1848. In this effort, Graham, along with others, lobbied the directors of the East India Company, made speeches before meetings of its proprietors, and generally assisted the Maharaja's envoy, Rungo Bapojee (Rungo Bapujī), with such tasks as translating documents from Marathi.

In England, Graham became known for openly favouring and approving of Islam and Hinduism and for studying the Qur'an and commentaries on it in Arabic. Near the end of his life, he professed to be a Muslim and, as a consequence, he instructed the lawyer who was drawing up his will to allocate funds for the poor in Constantinople and for the construction of a cenotaph with his name and description in that city. After a brief illness, he died at his home in London in 1849.

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Alan M. Guenther

WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

'A treatise on Sufiism, or Mahomedan mysticism'

DATE 1819
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

Originally delivered in a shorter form as a lecture to the Bombay Literary Society on 30 December 1811, 'A treatise on Sufiism' is a 31-page essay in which Graham seeks to define Sufism and explain its main features. In doing so, he identifies similarities between Sufism and some spiritual forms of Christianity. The treatise comprises an introduction and eleven sections, which deal with: 1. the meaning of the terms 'Sufiism' and 'Sufi'; 2. the religion or doctrine of Sufism; 3. and 4. various spiritual states and the stages towards unity with God (*sharīʿa*, *ṭarīqa*, *ḥaqīqa*, *maʿrifa*) and emblematic allusions to them; 5. and 6. Sufis and their different types; 7. Sufi statements on the inefficacy of formal worship; 8. commonalities between the Trinity and the hypostases, as he calls them, of Sufi teachings; 9. three anecdotes about Sufis who have reached the zenith

of mystical perfection; 10. fundamental differences between Sufis and observers of Islamic law; and 11. commonalities between Sufism and what he calls 'Christian spiritualism'. Throughout the text, Graham expresses great admiration for Sufism and does not hide the pleasure he derives from reading and hearing about 'this wonderful order' and 'extraordinary' Muslim mystics such as Shams-i Tabrīzī (1185-c. 1248) and Abū Manṣūr al-Ḥallāj (858-922).

Although Graham dedicates only two sections of the work to charting resemblances between Sufism and Christian 'spiritualism', and more broadly Christianity (section 8, on the Trinity, and also section 11), his comparison starts from the very beginning of the treatise and continues all over the text. At the opening, after examining the etymological roots of the term *ṣūfī*, which he has selected out of its multiple potential roots, namely *ṣafā'* (purity) and *ṣūf* (wool), he suggests 'mysticism' or 'quietism' as the proper English terms to comprehend the whole Sufi system in a single word. Later, he asserts that 'Sufiism is evidently the system of spiritualism, or nearly the doctrine of grace' and defines it concisely as 'the doctrine of spiritualism and grace' ('Treatise', pp. 108, 119; all references are to the 1819 publication), thus translating mystical Islam through categories already available in Christian vocabulary. Indeed, many of what he calls 'remarks and explanations' on Sufi tradition are not simply clarifications of Sufi elements but comparative interpretations of Sufism in the light of Christianity, and to a lesser extent Indian and Greek traditions.

Graham points out three major similarities between Sufism and Christianity in its Protestant and spiritual expression. The first, which is highlighted throughout the text, is anti-ritualism or anti-formalism. Sufism, as he sees it, is a total disengagement from the practical worship and ceremonies prescribed in Islamic law. It 'disregards and disclaims all ordinances and outward forms, of what sect or religion soever', including 'observances of feasts, fasts, stated periods of prayer, particular kinds of meat to be eaten, ablutions, pilgrimages, and such like other rites and ceremonies' (pp. 96-7). Sufis not only show little interest in performing the 'pharisaical' mode of worship but also believe in the 'inefficacy of such performance of worship to material bodies', which may make man strongly attached to material substances and thus cause 'all our sin' (p. 97). Instead, he writes, Sufis concentrate on mental or spiritual worship abstracted from the observance of external performance, something he directly compares with the Christian idea of justification by faith: 'Thus, by the words of the apostle St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans, chap, iii.,

ver. 28, "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law'" (p. 97).

The second similarity is that the spiritual worship advocated by both Sufism and Christianity is based on contemplation, love for God and union with God. Graham explains that the Sufis attain knowledge of God through knowledge of themselves and can transform their being into God's essence by means of contemplation. For him, this is analogous to St Paul's saying in 2 Corinthians 3:18, 'But we all, with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord' (pp. 126-7). Love plays a central role in such transformation and *unio mystica*. The Sufi describes God as his beloved, and 'he is in love, and full of perfect and divine love which has no fear, so God is in him' (p. 128) and, in the same way, Christians also lay a similar emphasis on divine love and mystical union. Referring to 1 John 4:16, 'God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him' (p. 116), Graham points out that the Christian fathers of the third and fourth centuries 'supposed that the Scripture itself authorizes a belief of the ultimate union of the soul with the Deity and it evidently says, "God is in all", and that "ye are the temples of the living God"'. He continues: 'This is the doctrine, too, which the Sûfis hold forth' (p. 99).

The third commonality between Sufism and Christianity concerns the Trinity and what Graham calls the three hypostases of the Sufis. After citing some passages from a book entitled *Makhzen-us-Salikeen* and *Maqsood-ul-Arafein* (probably *Makhzan al-sālikīn wa-maqṣad al-ʿārifīn* of Burhān al-Dīn Jānam, d. 1582), he presents the Christian equivalents of the Sufi concepts mentioned there. The passages he cites refer to 'the beloved' (*maḥbūb*), 'love' (*maḥabbat*) and 'the lover' (*muḥibb*) and mention the Hadith of the 'hidden treasure', a saying popular among Sufis according to which the hidden God became manifest and created the world because of His desire to be known. For Graham, 'the beloved' in these Sufi passages is obviously the Son, 'love' is the Holy Spirit and 'the lover' is the Father, while the self-manifestation of God out of love is equivalent to what is stated in John 1:3 and 14 about the relationship between God and the universe. Therefore, he concludes, 'I think there can be no stronger language in the mystery of the Trinity than this, and no stronger proof, especially from Mahomedan authority; though I am sorry to say they do not take it as such' (pp. 117-18).

These three similarities that he detects lead Graham to compare the relationship between Sufism, as opposed to normative Islam, and Christianity, as opposed to Judaism. Calling the observers and keepers of Islamic law

'scribes and pharisees of the Mahomedan synagogue', he asserts that 'the Mussulman Shĕryât [*sharīʿa*] in its feature very much resembles the Jewish dispensation' (pp. 119, 126). Thus, the arduous advocacy of *sharīʿa* by Muslim clerics, which is the opposite to the Sufis' spiritual attitude, is parallel to the standpoint of 'the Jews of old in the time of our Saviour' (p. 111). He goes a step further in associating Sufism with spiritual Christianity and states that 'we [Christians] are, generally speaking, at least in this country [India], looked upon as a species or one kind of *Sûfi*, from our non-observance here of any rites or forms, conceiving a worship of the Deity in mind, and adherence to morality, sufficient', and he continues, 'the present free-thinker or modern philosopher of Europe would be esteemed a sort of Sûfi in the world, and not the one retired therefrom' (p. 102).

The essay ends with Graham's declaration that he respects Christianity and makes this comparative study as a faithful Christian: 'If any pious reader should be alarmed by some of the parallels attempted between extracts of Sûfi writers and texts of the Christian Scriptures, he may be assured that his own mind is not more pure from intentional irreverence than that of the author of the above paper' (p. 128).

SIGNIFICANCE

'A treatise on Sufiism' was the first discrete systematic exposition of Sufism in a European language (Ernst, *Sufism*, p. 13), and is foundational to the way in which mystical Islam has been understood in the West. Though the exotic behaviour and the social and political undertakings of dervishes and fakirs had already been discovered and discussed, often critically, by Europeans who had travelled to the East or worked as administrators there, Graham's work left its mark on the establishing of the newly constructed concept of Sufism in Europe, which had much more positive connotations for Westerners. It also contributed to the popularity of the term 'Sufism' itself, which gradually replaced other variants such as 'Sooffeeism' (J. Malcolm, *History of Persia. From the early period to the present time*, vol. 2, London, 1815, p. 387). In addition, since the treatise appeared during the formative period of Orientalism, it also influenced the understanding of Sufism among Orientalists and, through them, the image of mystical Islam for the Western public. Its publication was also contemporary with the construction of the modern concept of 'mysticism' in Europe and America with an enhanced semantics that transcended the borders of Christianity (S. Zarrabi-Zadeh, 'The "mystical" and the "modern". Mutual entanglement and multiple interactions', *Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses* 49/4 (2020) 525-45, pp. 528-9). The de-Islamised and de-contextualised

Sufism presented by Graham resembled spiritual Christianity and could easily be incorporated into this new conception of mysticism.

Although Graham's detailed and creative focus on similarities between Sufism and Christianity from a European standpoint is among the novel aspects of 'A treatise', the idea that Sufism was distinct from normative Islam and more a supra-confessional spirituality with only an accidental rather than essential connection with Islam was not his own invention. In this respect, he was particularly indebted to Sir William Jones (1746-94), the renowned British Orientalist and founder of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, to whom he refers several times in the treatise. Jones believed that Sufism was a representative of a primeval and perennial religion that originated in India and expanded to other parts of the world, including Europe ('On the mystical poetry of the Persians and Hindus', in *The works of Sir William Jones*, vol. 4, London, 1807, 211-35, pp. 211-12). In assuming this universalist standpoint, Jones was inspired by a 17th-century Persian treatise, *Dabistān-i madhāhib* ('School of sects'), written by an unknown author with eclectic interests in the religions of India (C.W. Ernst, 'The *Dabistan* and Orientalist views of Sufism', in J. Malik and S. Zarrabi-Zadeh (eds), *Sufism east and west. Mystical Islam and cross-cultural exchange in the modern world*, Leiden, 2019, 33-52, pp. 33-4), who declared that 'The Sufi is by no necessity bound to a creed; no faith nor religion fetters his choice' (*Dabistan, or, School of manners*, trans. David Shea and Anthony Troyer, vol. 2, Paris, 1843, p. 115). Though Graham does not refer to this work directly, echoes of it are discernible in his narrative, which may be the reason why *Dabistān* was recommended as a source of further reading by the editors of the *Transactions of the Literary Society of Bombay* in their editorial note (p. 128) added to the reprint of 'A treatise' in 1877.

Besides introducing a universalist approach towards Sufism, Jones's ideas also prepared for Graham's comparative study of Sufism and Christianity in another way. Jones's theory about the relationship between European and Indo-Aryan languages ('The third anniversary discourse, delivered 2 February 1786. By the President [On the Hindus]', in *Asiatic researches; or, Transactions of the Society instituted in Bengal*, Calcutta, 1788) was later developed by figures such as Friedrich Schlegel (1772-1829) into a theory of 'racial' relationships among the Indo-Europeans and their superiority over the Semites. This placed both Christianity and Sufism, the latter often associated with the Persians, on the side of the Aryans, while setting Islam and Judaism on the Semitic side. Such alleged linguistic and racial connections between Christians and Sufis, and their supremacy over

Jews and Arab Muslims, could indeed serve as a background for Graham's analogy between Sufism and Christianity and the distinction between them and Judaism and Arab-based, legalistic Islam.

The periodical in which 'A treatise' was published enjoyed a wide circulation in both India and England, so Graham's comparative study was noticed by several scholars, who agreed or disagreed with it (see Sedgwick, *Western Sufism*, p. 110). The first scholar who referred to the essay was the military diplomat and historian John Malcolm (1769-1833), on whose staff Graham served as an officer. Malcolm, who had requested Graham to write an article on Sufism, used the first draft of the essay in 1811 for his own lengthy discussion of Sufism in *The history of Persia*, a well-read book published four years before 'A treatise' itself. Malcolm asserts that 'There cannot be higher authority than this gentleman [Graham] who adds to great learning a singular knowledge of the opinions and usages of this extraordinary class of oriental devotees [Sufis]' (*History of Persia*, vol. 2, p. 386). He follows Graham and Jones in regarding Sufism as anti-legalistic and distinct from normative Islam and states that traces of Sufi doctrine 'exist, in some shape or other, in every region of the world' and that it can be found 'in the most splendid theories of the ancient schools of Greece, and in those of the modern philosophers of Europe' (p. 383). However, in his final evaluation, Malcolm was not sympathetic to Sufism, nor did he follow Graham in pointing out the similarities between it and Christianity.

The sympathetic and interreligious understanding of Sufism presented by Graham was soon criticised by other figures such as the French scholar Silvestre de Sacy (1758-1838) and the German theologian August Tholuck (1799-1877). The latter was the author of the first European monograph on Sufism, entitled *Ssufismus, sive theosophia Persarum pantheistica* ('Sufism, or the pantheistic theosophy of the Persians', Berlin, 1821; see *CMR* 22, p. 138), which was published two years after 'A treatise'. In this book, which was originally his doctoral thesis, he blames Sufism for its alleged degeneration into mere 'pantheism', a system that, for a Protestant scholar such as himself, was extremely deleterious. As he saw it, therefore, Sufism was not comparable with 'true', non-pantheist Christianity.

Despite the criticism that Graham's and Jones's understanding of Sufism received, the interpretation they offered remained influential in shaping Western conceptualisations of it. For instance, Helena Blavatsky (1831-91; see *CMR* 16, 279-87), the leading figure and co-founder of the Theosophical Society, supported the idea that the universal Sufi doctrine could be held under 'any profession of an outward faith', including Christianity (*Isis*

unveiled. A master-key to the mysteries of ancient and modern science and theology, vol. 2, New York, 1877, p. 306). 'A treatise' was in fact not unknown to the members of the Society, and it was published in an abbreviated version in 1882 in one of the society's major journals, *The Theosophist*. In addition, some Protestant theologians felt that they were closer to Graham than Tholuck and adopted a positive view of Sufism. Otto Pfleiderer (1839-1908), for example, considered the 'high-thinking Sufis' as those who have cleansed themselves from religious formalism and ritualism and for whom 'external works are without value' (*Religion and historic faiths*, trans. D.A. Huebsch, New York, 1907, p. 287). For such theologians, Sufism was something close to philosophical or spiritualist Protestantism (G.A. Lipton and S. Zarrabi-Zadeh, 'Analytic essay. The idea of Sufism in the West', in M.K. Hermansen and S. Zarrabi-Zadeh (eds), *Sufism in Western contexts*, Leiden, 2023, 39-81, pp. 43-5).

Finally, Graham's association of legalistic Islam with Judaism and Sufi Islam with Christianity was also echoed by several 20th-century scholars. Figures such as Ignaz Goldziher (1850-1921), Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje (1857-1936), Tor Andrae (1885-1947) and Margaret Smith (1884-1970) emphasised the similarities between Sufism and the Christian faith and believed that Sufism, or at least parts of it, originated in, or was strongly influenced by, Christianity (A. Knysh, 'Historiography of Sufi studies in the West', in Y.M. Choueiri (ed.), *A companion to the history of the Middle East*, Oxford, 2005, 106-33, pp. 112-18). In the words of the Spanish Orientalist Miguel Asín Palacios (1871-1944), Sufism is a sort of 'Christianised Islam' (*El Islam cristianizado. Estudio del "Sufismo" a través de las Obras de Abenarabi de Murcia*, Madrid, 1931), which, together with Christianity, stands apart from the Semitic religions. Graham's perception of Sufism has also remained influential on the Western conception of Sufism in the 21st century, despite the post-modern reconsideration of universalist, context-free conceptualisations of Sufism in the West (M.K. Hermansen and S. Zarrabi-Zadeh, 'Introduction. Sufism in Western contexts', in M.K. Hermansen and S. Zarrabi-Zadeh (eds), *Sufism in Western contexts*, Leiden, 2023, 1-36, pp. 11-23). One can see such impact in the 2010 statement by William Dalrymple, who announces that Sufism in some ways 'represents the New Testament of Islam' ('The Muslims in the middle', *New York Times*, 16 August 2010). For some scholars, this declaration 'perfectly conforms to Graham's own treatment of this subject two centuries earlier' (Khalil and Sheikh, 'Editorial introduction', p. 365 n. 7).

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Saeed Zarrabi-Zadeh

Shāh ʿAbdulʿazīz

DATE OF BIRTH 11 October 1746
PLACE OF BIRTH Delhi
DATE OF DEATH 5 June 1824
PLACE OF DEATH Delhi

BIOGRAPHY

Shāh ʿAbdulʿazīz was born in Shahjahanabad, an area near the Red Fort in Old Delhi, the seat of Mughal power in India, in 1746. His father, Shāh Walī Allāh (1703-62; *CMR* 12, 525-33), was a highly regarded scholar, mystic and religious authority, who led the Madrasa Raḥīmiyya, which had been founded by his father ʿAbdurraḥīm (1644-1719) and was known as a leading centre of scriptural study and religious reform. ʿAbdulʿazīz was educated by two of his father's disciples and, when his father died, as the eldest of four sons he continued the work of the madrasa together with his brothers, even though he was only 17 years old. He lectured regularly on subjects of Islamic theology and philosophy for over 60 years until his death in 1824. Along with his brothers Rafīʿuddīn and ʿAbdulqādir, he pioneered the use of Urdu in the Islamic sciences, particularly the translation and exegesis of the Qur'an and study of Hadith. He played a pivotal role in the study of Hadith in India and emphasised the importance of independent reasoning (*ijtihād*) in Islamic law, earning the title *muḥaddith.*

In his youth, ʿAbdulʿazīz witnessed the disastrous sacking of Delhi in 1757 by Aḥmad Shāh Abdālī Durrānī (r. 1747-73). This was a fraught time, and Mughal fortunes were rapidly declining just as the British were gaining territory and power. The changes resulting from the decline of Muslim political and economic influence and increasing dependence upon the British for security, employment and education sparked a heated debate among Muslims about whether India, though technically still under Mughal rule, was any longer Muslim and therefore a 'land of peace' (*dār al-Islām*) or had fallen under external rule and become an 'abode of war' (*dār al-ḥarb*). The changes in society were significant and, in response to what he saw in 1803, ʿAbdulʿazīz issued a *fatwā* to the effect that India had functionally become *dār al-ḥarb* (*Fatāvā-i ʿAzīzī*, 116).

Many religious leaders in the region, including ʿAbdulʿazīz himself, were not rigidly hostile to the British, and many of their supporters attended or

had relatives in British schools or were employed by or had dealings with the East India Company. Despite this, ʿAbdulʿazīz's *fatwā* was regarded as stimulus for jihad against the British. One of the students of the Madrasa Raḥīmiyya, Sayyid Aḥmad Barelvī (1786-1831), claimed authority from ʿAbdulʿazīz to lead an armed uprising. Using lithographic printing, he was able to spread his views quickly and mobilise many to his cause. Historians continue to disagree over whether ʿAbdulʿazīz himself actually called for armed revolt and how far he supported Aḥmad Barelvī, though he clearly expressed deep dismay at the loss of Muslim sovereignty and the uncertain future under British (and therefore Christian) rule. From the British perspective, as seen, for example, in the writings of William Hunter (1840-1900) such as *The Indian Musalmans. Are they bound by conscience to rebel against the Queen?* (1871), the origins of the 1857 Uprising can be traced to the calls for jihad issued by Muslim clerics such as ʿAbdulʿazīz and those who took up arms in the hills of the North-West Frontier.

Interest among Indians in European or 'modern' education reduced demand for traditional Islamic education among Muslims beyond learning the basic elements of the faith. There were also new forms of patronage and new systems of governance and taxation, which brought unfamiliar ethical challenges that troubled the Muslim community. In addition, ʿAbdulʿazīz was confronted by communal issues, not least among them the divisions between Sunnī and Shīʿī Muslims. In 1783, he wrote *Sirr al-shahādatayn* ('The mystery of the two martyrs"), a history in Arabic of the martyrdom of the two Imams Ḥasan and Ḥusayn, and also an Urdu translation in rhymed verse entitled *Riyaẓ al-shahādatayn* ('The gardens of the two martyrs'), and a work on the Sunnī-Shīʿī doctrinal debates entitled *Tuḥfa-i ithnā ʿashariyya* ('Gift of the Twelvers') in 1789, using the pen name Ḥāfiẓ Ghulām Ḥalīm.

ʿAbdulʿazīz explored interpretative methodologies in works such as *Bustān-i tafāsīr*, and wrote a commentary on the Qur'an in Persian, *Tafsīr-i fatḥ al-ʿAzīz*. He also wrote important works on Hadith, including *ʿUjāla nāfiʿa* and *Bustān al-muḥaddithīn*. His reflections and discourses on spiritual and social themes were compiled in *Malfūẓāt-i ʿAzīzī*, as were his legal *fatwā*s in *Fatāvā-i ʿAzīzī*.

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Fatāvā-i ʿAzīzī
'*Fatwā*s of ʿAzīz'

DATE Before 1824
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Persian

DESCRIPTION

Fatāvā-i ʿAzīzī is a collection of ʿAbdulʿazīz's legal opinions on many aspects of Indian social, economic and political activities during the crucial years of the early 19th century. Compiled after his death by disciples, students and later scholars, it comprises *fatwā*s, letters, verbal rulings recorded by others and marginalia on legal texts. The single Persian manuscript of the work is held at Madrasa Mazāhir al-ʿUlūm in Saharanpur, and there are published editions from 1893-6 and 1904. An Urdu translation was published in 1967, 633 pages long and divided into five thematic sections. This is the edition used here. The collection follows the standard form of works of this kind, consisting of questions on the topic of the particular section and ʿAbdulʿazīz's answers.

In the *Fatāvā*, ʿAbdulʿazīz addresses many questions that confronted the Indian Muslim community in the period between the fall of Delhi to the army of the East India Company in 1803 and his death in 1824. This can be seen in his responses to questions about eating food prepared by and

together with non-Muslims, collaborating with the British, accepting jobs from them and forming social relationships with them, learning English and eating food prepared in the Christian manner.

A prime example concerns a Muslim employed as a judicial officer in the East India Company. He was seen sharing a meal with Englishmen, and some *ʿulamāʾ* declared that he had transgressed the bounds of Islam. The officer responded by citing the Qurʾan, Hadith and *fiqh*, but the *ʿulamāʾ* would not accept his reasoning and brought the case to ʿAbdulʿazīz. As they reached his home they met his brother, Shāh Rafīʿuddīn and, when they asked him his opinion, he replied unequivocally that the officer was right. The *ʿulamāʾ* refused to accept this and went to ʿAbdulʿazīz. He listened to all they had to say and then delivered a long speech in which he said that the officer had committed a great mistake and was on the verge of *kufr*. The *ʿulamāʾ* were elated and the penitent officer pleaded for a way to atone for the grievance he had caused. Displaying great rhetorical skill, ʿAbdulʿazīz replied that the officer had not departed from Islam because no one becomes a *kāfir* without actual *kufr*, though as a token penance he instructed him to recite the *shahāda* and drink the sacred water from the shrine of Qadam Sharīf in nearby Paharganj (*Malfuzat-i ʿAzīzī*, Urdu trans by Muhammad ʿAli Lufti, vol. 1, p. 199).

In giving this ruling, ʿAbdulʿazīz emphasised the danger of cultivating unchecked familiarity with those of other faiths and the relationships implicit in table fellowship with them. He did not condemn the officer for eating with people from another faith but rather took the opportunity to warn and to direct him to reaffirm his faith and to remain vigilant. ʿAbdulʿazīz was aware that his words would be repeated in far-off places across the Punjab, and that his moderation should not be misinterpreted. The account of this interaction was indeed retold in many places, including the biography of Sayyid Aḥmad Khān (Alṭāf Ḥusain Ḥālī, *Hayāt-i jāved*, Lahore, 1957, p. 727). In giving this decision, ʿAbdulʿazīz was allowing for a measured interaction with the British.

Despite the restraint he shows here, it is important to recall that ʿAbdulʿazīz voiced significant opposition to British rule, though at the same time he was aware that the needs of the Muslim community had to be met. He understood that they could benefit from British scientific and technical achievements and issued a decree that it was permissible for Muslims to learn English and to acquire the knowledge of the English through education by them (*Fatāvā*, vol. 1, p. 195). In another decree he pronounced it permissible for Muslims to seek employment under the British as long as their work would not lead them to commit any capital sin (*Fatāvā*,

vol. 1, pp. 195-6). Hence, he accepted that a certain degree of cooperation with the British was not only inevitable but advisable. Muslims were involved in every aspect of East India Company operations that was open to Indians and had been since the British arrived in India. However, the scope of Company rule was becoming ubiquitous, and ʿAbdulʿazīz saw the far-reaching consequences in this shift in power.

The Qur'an gives the instruction, 'Cooperate with one another (*taʿāwanū*) in goodness and righteousness, and do not cooperate in sin and transgression' (Q 5:2). ʿAbdulʿazīz explained that 'cooperation' (*muʿāwana*) was of two kinds, paid and unpaid (*Fatāvā*, vol. 1, p. 205): paid cooperation is service, whereas unpaid cooperation is assistance and, in both cases, there are some forms of labour that are admissible and some of that are forbidden. If enemy infidels are preparing to fight the Muslims, which is to attack *dār al-Islām*, it is forbidden to give service in their ranks or to assist them in other ways. To do this would be a grave sin. If, however, infidels are fighting one other, such as the British fighting the French, then it is permitted for Muslims to be employed among the fighting-men. It is permitted to work for the British, and to be employed in their civil administration. It is acceptable to engage with them in tailoring or in trade, and to be employed in watching over their property and belongings. There is nothing contrary to *sharīʿa* in such service or assistance.

In a different instance, ʿAbdulʿazīz's response to a question about employment by Christians reveals his appreciation of the complexity and ambivalence of cooperatiing with non-Muslims. Work for Christians or for an employer from any other religion can be of different kinds. Some types of service are legally permissible, some are desirable, some are forbidden, some are major sins and some are tantamount to the rejection of faith (*Fatāvā*, vol. 1, p. 327). If someone accepts a job for a good purpose, such as promoting safety, protecting from thieves, guarding a witness for the court, constructing a bridge, or constructing and repairing a house or a building such as a caravanserai that is used by the general public, then such kinds of employment are permissible and even desirable. However, if a Muslim accepts a position for no other reason than the personal benefit that proximity to those in power will bring, this raises concern. If the nature of this kind of employment causes a Muslim to see and participate in what is against *sharīʿa* and it means he will be assisting people engaged in unjust activities, this is forbidden. For example, if a Muslim works as a domestic servant, clerk or soldier, in a capacity that is beneath his dignity or leads to humiliation, then such service is forbidden. Furthermore, to accept a position that leads to the killing of Muslims or the usurping of Muslim land,

or to the profaning and undue criticism of Islam, then all such activity is a grave sin and near to *kufr*. Such statements demonstrate that ʿAbdulʿazīz did not completely forbid service under the British (*Fatāvā*, vol. 2, pp. 258-9), though he categorised different forms of service according to differing circumstances through which Muslims and Christians might cooperate.

ʿAbdulʿazīz shows that he does not regard cooperation with the British as morally neutral and unstained from violation (*ḥurma*) because, even though actions may be legitimate under *sharīʿa*, they could still give strength to the opponent. He is aware that the power of the unbelievers is increasing, so Muslims should feel hesitant about acceding to their force and complying with their orders because this could lead to Muslims gradually becoming subservient to them. If Muslims accept positions of service or assistance under the British, these should be the kind that do not require excessive and intimate contact.

The concern was that extended contact with an employer, and particularly with one regarded as socially superior, could lead to a shift in perceived moral and religious authority. This was the underlying problem in promoting Muslim social contact with Christians, whether British or Indian. Learning the English language or wearing English dress affirmed the rise of a new and powerful social force taking root in their midst. Although ʿAbdulʿazīz did not condemn such practices, he did not declare them to be unlawful. This again is an issue of intention. If someone wanted to learn the language just to flatter English people and to raise his status in their eyes, then it was forbidden and undesirable to learn the language (*Fatāvā*, vol. 1, p. 335).

On the question of dress, he stated that resemblance between Muslims and the *kuffār* (unbelievers) is not forbidden unless the intention of the person is to portray himself as one of them, or to solicit their sympathy. There is no harm in taking on European dress or an item or practice that provides comfort to the body just because it is associated with another culture (*Fatāvā*, vol. 1, p. 199). If the person's intention is good, then wearing a suit with trousers and a brimmed hat is acceptable and not contrary to *sharīʿa*.

Along with the concerns of cooperation, employment, language and dress, there was also the issue of eating meat prepared by Christians. In particular, there was the question of whether the meat from an animal slaughtered in a manner other than the Muslim way can still be considered *ḥalāl*. This is the concern of whether Muslims could not only eat with Christians but also eat food prepared by Christians and according to their culture. To these concerns ʿAbdulʿazīz said that it was licit for a Muslim to

eat such food provided that it was not specifically forbidden, such as pork or alcohol (*Fatāvā*, vol. 2, pp. 254-5).

In another section entitled 'sacrificial vows', ʿAbdulʿazīz addresses the eating of meat slaughtered by someone who is not a Muslim, and states that, if a person sacrifices an animal and he does this in the name of his Lord, by whatever name he understands to be equated with Allāh, then it is licit for a Muslim to eat. If a Christian slaughters an animal in the name of Jesus and by this he means Allāh, then it is acceptable. Or if he slaughters the animal in the name God and by this he means Jesus, then it is also acceptable. It is acceptable if the intention is pure, namely if he is sacrificing the animal in the name of the one he believes to be the uncreated Creator, and not merely a human (*Fatāvā*, vol. 2, p. 525). If a Muslim or non-Muslim slaughters an animal for a guest in the name of God, then it is permissible for everyone to eat its meat because this is the Sunna of Abraham (*Fatāvā*, vol. 2, p. 530). Through emphasis on spiritual devotion and reflection on intention, ʿAbdulʿazīz charted a moderate course for Muslims to manage collaboration with the new power while safeguarding practices and beliefs in fidelity to Islamic tradition.

Another important aspect of ʿAbdulʿazīz's reasoning was his view of Sunna. The Sunna of Abraham refers to the sayings, actions and preferences attributed to Abraham and carried forward by later prophets. ʿAbdulʿazīz explains that the People of the Book follow in the tradition that was handed down to them under the authority of their particular prophet and revelation. Their intention to honour God in their devotion and practices, including that of slaughtering an animal, is sufficient for the Muslim to participate in what they are doing without fear of sin or consequence. This line of reasoning opened the way for Muslims to perceive Christians, and also those of other faiths, as moral people with whom they could cooperate in business and seek the common good. It facilitated a way for Muslims to travel in Europe and in lands where food prepared in the traditional Muslim way was not readily available. It allowed students to attend schools and colleges and men and women to seek employment in settings that would have otherwise been regarded as contrary to Muslim fidelity.

SIGNIFICANCE

ʿAbdulʿazīz's *Fatāvā* provides a window onto the ethical and moral reasoning of a leading Muslim jurist in 19th-century Delhi, when British colonial power was increasing and there was little the Mughal aristocracy could do to prevent it. Many opposed this change in power and some took up arms,

while others migrated to lands under Muslim rule. ʿAbdulʿazīz recognised the need for innovative reasoning in the face of the changing political landscape. Though he was regarded as a teacher and guide to reformers such as Sayyid Aḥmad Khān and Alṭāf Ḥusain Ḥālī, to name two of many more, his reasoning and interpretative methods were consistent with what was taught at the Madrasa Raḥīmiyya.

ʿAbdulʿazīz understood that, for long ages, Muslims had lived peacefully in lands ruled by those of other faiths, as had been the situation in many parts of India for nearly a millennium. He did not want to see the end of Mughal sovereignty, but he took a pragmatic approach that upheld religious convictions and affirmed the strength and dignity of the Muslim community. His legal reasoning and thoughtful deliberation opened the way for Muslim reformers to engage more fully in modernising society and to carry forward his principles to meet new challenges as they emerged.

Following the way of Muslim legal debate, in the course of the 19th century a number of ʿAbdulʿazīz's opinions were challenged, in particular his declaration that India under British rule was *dār al-ḥarb*. This was contested by scholars of different convictions, prominent among them Aḥmad Riẓā Khān (1856-1921), the founder of the Barelvi school. His less extreme view was that the requisite conditions for such a declaration, in the form of complete removal of Islamic rule, suppression of Islamic law and practices, did not fully exist under the British.

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Charles M. Ramsey

ʿAbdulmasīḥ

DATE OF BIRTH About 1776
PLACE OF BIRTH Delhi
DATE OF DEATH 4 March 1827
PLACE OF DEATH Lucknow

BIOGRAPHY

ʿAbdulmasīḥ was an Indian Christian from a Muslim background who was employed by the Church Missionary Society (CMS) as a reader and catechist from 1812 to 1825. He became widely known in north India as an evangelist and dispenser of medicines, and also internationally when excerpts from his journal and letters were translated and published in British missionary periodicals. In fact, those translations, as well as biographical articles by Daniel Corrie, are the main sources for the life of ʿAbdulmasīḥ. His journals show him to have been a versatile and creative participant in Christian-Muslim encounter and a consistent leader in Urdu-language Christian teaching and worship throughout his ministry.

Born Sheikh Ṣāliḥ in Delhi around 1776, he was educated by his father, from whom he learnt Persian and Arabic. When he was about 21, he went with his father to Lucknow in search of employment. Among his various occupations, he spent time as a soldier for a local Muslim leader, an experience that left him with a feeling of disgust at the cruelty with which people could treat one another (Corrie, 'Some account', p. 262). In 1810, while visiting Cawnpore (Kanpur), he heard the East India Company chaplain Henry Martyn (1781-1812) preach to the poor on a Sunday afternoon. Martyn was explaining the Ten Commandments, and Sheikh Ṣāliḥ was intrigued. In order to learn more he sought local employment, and was able to find work with Martyn's assistant, Sabat, as copyist of the Persian New Testament translation. Then, when Martyn had completed his Hindustani (Urdu) translation, Sheikh Ṣāliḥ was assigned to bind it.

As he went through Martyn's New Testament translations in Persian and Urdu, Sheikh Ṣāliḥ took a great interest in what he read. He subsequently converted and was baptised in Calcutta in 1811, after Martyn had left India, taking the name ʿAbdulmasīḥ, 'Servant of Christ', often abbreviated to Abdul. Two other company chaplains took an interest in his welfare, and one of them, Daniel Corrie, taught him the faith and then, towards the end

of 1812, took him to Agra, keeping a journal of the voyage up the Ganges. Abdul began to work as a catechist, becoming the first worker for the CMS in India. He served the society for many years, teaching Christianity to young people, leading Urdu-language morning and evening worship and conversing with Muslims in his home, on the street and in the homes of Muslims who invited him.

Although it was not Corrie who had led Abdul to Christian faith, he observed Abdul with evident fascination from his baptism and employment with the CMS through to his final years, training and mentoring him, but also learning from him as though he was entering an undiscovered world. In a short preface to a substantial batch of journal entries from early 1825, Corrie writes,

> I confess it is a great refreshment to me in reading his least interesting details, to observe the constant reference of his mind to God, and the attention which he gives to meditation and preparation of Sermons, with his regular habit of secret prayer: these are, doubtless, the source of his constant and steady course of Christian living, by which he adorns the doctrine of God our Saviour. (ʿAbdulmasīḥ, 'Excerpts', p. 392)

Corrie wrote that, on Abdul's first visit after his conversion to his family in Lucknow, 'he was obliged to flee in the night and in disguise' ('Some account', p. 451). On his second visit, Abdul again narrowly escaped being apprehended and punished as an apostate according to Islamic law ('Memoire', p. 451). At the same time, the journals report his family's rather remarkable acceptance of his conversion, and one of his brothers and a nephew followed Abdul to Agra to learn more about his faith. Late in the journal entries, Abdul reports a peaceful month-long visit to his mother in Lucknow (ʿAbdulmasīḥ, 'Excerpts', pp. 393-7; cf. 'Visit to Lucknow' [1815], pp. 406-9, 'Journal of a voyage up the Ganges' [1814], pp. 369-71)

After Abdul had served eight years as a catechist, his CMS friends and many Indian Christians among whom he ministered suggested that he should be ordained. When he went to Calcutta in 1820, however, the first Anglican bishop in India, Thomas Middleton (1769-1822), was not willing to ordain a 'native' clergyman, so the Lutheran missionaries serving under CMS ordained him as a missionary. He returned to Agra and continued to serve there until 1825. The next bishop, Reginald Heber (1783-1826), who met him at the beginning of 1825, was impressed with his character and ordained him a deacon and then priest at the end of the year.

ʿAbdulmasīḥ's journals and letters, and also the witness of those who admired him, attest that he was a straightforward herald of the gospel



Illustration 3. ʿAbdulmasīḥ

who never hesitated to talk about himself as a Christian from a Muslim background. At the same time, from the start he often declined to get into arguments and wrote after one encounter in which there was much disagreement, 'in short, from such wrangling there is little profit' (ʿAbdulmasīḥ, 'Excerpts', p. 394). Instead, he would often ask for permission to read from Henry Martyn's Urdu translation of the New Testament, especially the Gospel according to Matthew. In April 1824, John Irving, a later chaplain at Agra, left a striking testimony typical of many who observed the life and work of ʿAbdulmasīḥ:

> The more I see of him, the more I have reason to respect him – so unassuming, and yet so steady. I confess I do sometimes lose my patience, when I am asked by Englishmen if I think him a SINCERE convert; for there are few of us who might not, in some point or other, take pattern from him. ('Agra. Church Missionary Society', p. 195; cf. Robertson, 'Letter', p. 385)

ʿAbdulmasīḥ died in Lucknow on 4 March 1827, after failing health prevented him from serving permanently as a minister there.

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Journals and letters

DATE 1812-25
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Urdu

DESCRIPTION

ʿAbdulmasīḥ's journals and letters have come down through the reports and translations of Daniel Corrie (1777-1835), chaplain of the East India Company who worked with Abdul and knew him well. The Urdu originals are not known to exist, though reports and translations of excerpts were published in *The Missionary Register* between 1814 and 1826, most regularly and extensively between 1812 and 1815. Corrie left Agra for England in August 1814 due to ill health. *The Missionary Register* later reported that his absence was a loss, because he had been accustomed, 'on Abdool's reporting to him the principal facts which had occurred, to draw forth from him the various particulars, and commit them to writing' ('Journal' [1816], p. 335). Journal entries up to June 1814 are written by Corrie in the third person, while the 'Journal of Abdool Messee's visit to Lucknow' presents Abdul in the first person ('Journal' [1815], pp. 400-9). In 1820, as archdeacon in Calcutta, Corrie began once more to report on Abdul and to translate his first-person journal entries. Entries from January to June 1825 are again extensive.

The journals and letters open a window onto the dynamic of social and verbal engagement between a Christian from a local Muslim background and a large variety of Muslim interlocutors in the north Indian Ganges valley in the first quarter of the 19th century. They show Abdul continually initiating conversation with Muslims, and often being invited into settings where his statements and beliefs would be investigated. As a convert to Christianity, his legal status in the Muslim community was that of an apostate worthy of death. The remarkable circumstances of his interaction, therefore, are the boldness and freedom with which he owned his loyalty to his new faith and the respect and honour with which Muslims frequently heard and hosted him.

The journals report many Muslims coming to visit Abdul in his rooms in the 'Kuttra' mission compound in the heart of Agra: frequently

leaders and scholars but also 'Mogul travellers' and a persistent 'Faqueer' ('Journal' [1826], p. 398; 'Journal' [1814], pp. 195-7). More often, Abdul visits Muslim and Christian friends in their homes or addresses Muslims publicly. Muslim visitors ask him whether Jesus is the Son of God, about the deity of Jesus, about Christians' lack of ritual ablutions, and 'Is this the true Gospel?' ('Journal' [1814], pp. 192, 446; 'Ganges' [1814], p. 370; 'Journal' [1814], pp. 193, 294; 'Ganges' [1814], pp. 150, 366; 'Journal' [1814], pp. 231, 447; 'Journal' [1816], p. 27) When Abdul chooses the subject, he often preaches about sin and salvation, sacrifice or the Ten Commandments. When a *maulvī* comes explicitly to 'dispute', Abdul declines and instead offers to read with his visitor parts of the Urdu translation of the New Testament 'in a friendly way' ('Journal' [1814], p. 191). This sets up a pattern for Abdul in situations where the approach of a Muslim may initially be quite aggressive, or when the topic of conversation in public discourse turns to something he considers frivolous. Abdul's text of choice to read aloud is Jesus's Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5, a passage that calms tempers and draws positive responses. Muslims often request or accept Bible portions, especially the Gospel of Matthew or the Book of Common Prayer in Urdu.

Abdul frequently faces hatred, insults, cursing and the threat of attack from Muslims, including from some 20 'troopers' of a local Muslim ruler whom he encountered once on his way to Lucknow ('Journal' [1826], p. 393). His behaviour in such situations is to approach individuals and groups in a straightforward way, alone and defenceless, and to converse in a direct and alert manner. In the case of the 20 horsemen, ʿAbdulmasīḥ immediately makes a distinction between a Christian and a 'Feringee' (European) and appeals to history for the truth about the origins of Christianity. His words draw the approval of one of his listeners, and Abdul then finds himself speaking to the group about the sufferings of Christ. Indeed, he reports many other such experiences of Muslims – perhaps initially sceptical or hostile – becoming prepared to hear him, fair or kind, and hospitable ('Journal' [1814] pp. 232, 511, [1822] p. 341, [1826] pp. 397, 428; 'Lucknow' [1815] pp. 402-3).

Many of the journal entries are short and incidental, but some are longer stories in their own right, told with keen observation of detail and evident feeling. One such story concerns a visit in February 1825 to the vizier of Lucknow, who had been introduced to Abdul by the British Resident. At their first meeting, Abdul presents the vizier with a copy of the Book of Common Prayer in Urdu, which leads to an invitation to the house of the vizier, who has gathered not only some of the princes and chief nobles of

Lucknow, but also a Muslim debater named Subḥān ʿAlī Khān. He puts Abdul on the spot before the gathering in a manner that could very easily lead to him being killed for leaving Islam, but Abdul finds a way to cool the atmosphere and in fact to bear witness to 'the Lord Jesus Christ our God'. Subḥān ʿAlī Khān then presses Abdul with Psalm 2:9, which he claims is a prophecy about Muḥammad: 'You will rule them with an iron sceptre; you will dash them to pieces like pottery.' Another man in the gathering cites the words of Jesus in John 8:7, in the account of the woman caught in adultery, and alleges that here Jesus himself called all Christians adulterers. Then Subḥān ʿAlī Khān claims that, in the Book of Revelation, the man dressed in white standing before the throne of God is Muḥammad (cf. Revelation 4:4). In each case, Abdul responds with straightforward and sensible answers. Finally, the vizier addresses the gathering: 'It is by no means necessary that a man should follow the Religion of his forefathers: moreover, it is highly proper, that whatever Religion is proved to be righteous and worthy of approval, he should embrace it.' The vizier declares himself pleased with Abdul's conversation and invites him to visit again. He returns to his home unscathed ('Journal' [1826], pp. 395-6).

Apart from his encounters with Muslims, the journal and letters frequently refer to Abdul's responsibilities as a CMS catechist: teaching young Christians, gathering people together for worship conducted in Urdu and interacting with British chaplains, Residents, and civil servants, as well as Bishop Heber. He visits the sick and dispenses medicines. Several times he finds himself disagreeing with the faith and practice of Roman Catholics and even with a Unitarian 'sahib' whose denial of 'the Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ' sounds to Abdul 'like that of the Mahomedans' ('Journal' [1826], p. 393). In February 1825, Abdul reports very kind – and even pastoral – treatment by Mordaunt Ricketts, the British Resident in Lucknow ('Journal' [1826], pp. 394-7; cf. Corrie, 'Memoire', p. 453), and a special love for Daniel Corrie shines through to the end. The final entries published in *The Missionary Register* for April-June 1825 ('Journal' [1826], pp. 427-8) mention a number of physical ailments that limited his 'exertions', yet he continued to report friendly and meaningful encounters with Muslims of all kinds.

Nothing in the nature of guidelines on Christian-Muslim engagement in South Asia had yet been written, and Abdul's ministry took place well before the 'Muslim controversy' discussions of William Muir and others in the middle of the century (on this matter, see 'Sir William Muir', *CMR* 24, 666-96). As Avril Powell writes, 'As yet there were no Christian tracts in

circulation' (*Muslims and missionaries*, p. 114). His manner of encounter was intuitive and unscripted, always friendly and polite according to high Hindustani cultural standards, never rude or insulting, even when he was insulted. He declined to dispute when he was challenged, though he did not hesitate to tell his own story of conversion to Christ or to declare openly the central truths of Christianity, knowing full well the points of historical resistance. Normally, he did not address the story of Muḥammad lest it should provoke anger in his listeners, though he appealed openly and clearly to people to 'choose that religion which afforded the best remedy for sin' ('Journal' [1814], p. 151). And on occasion, when he was insulted for embracing Christianity, he would tell Muslims why he chose not to follow 'your Prophet' ('Abdulmasīḥ, 'Extracts', p. 341). Personally unassuming and humble according to the model he saw set by Christ, he won a hearing from the powerful. Stephen Neill found in the journal accounts 'the constant evidence that Abdul Masih, though by Muslim standards a renegade, was so far able to win the respect of both Hindus and Muslims, that he could approach all kinds of people with the message of the Gospel' (*History of Christianity*, p. 341).

Powell argues that the discussions with Muslims recorded by ʿAbdulmasīḥ 'created a situation in which *munazara* [disputation, debate] might easily be set in motion' among north Indian Muslim scholars (*Muslims and missionaries*, pp. 114-17, esp. 117), but there is no indication of this in the journal entries. Many encounters do indeed begin with Muslim interlocutors raising 'the usual objections' ('Journal' [1814], pp. 198, 227, 230, 233), but he generally declines to take the bait, offering instead to read translated Gospel portions, particularly Matthew 5, the first part of Jesus's Sermon on the Mount including the Beatitudes. He wrote after one attempt to draw him into debate, 'from such wrangling there is little profit' ('Journal' [1826], p. 394); on another occasion, a *maulvī* who came intending to dispute was so impressed with his answers about the 'true Gospel' that he remarked, 'When the subject of disputation exists, it is right to argue; but this man says nothing unreasonable' ('Journal' [1814], p. 231). In the 1825 public gathering at the home of the vizier of Lucknow, cited by Powell (*Muslims and missionaries*, p. 116, see description above), ʿAbdulmasīḥ briefly tells his own 'history' in response to a question from the vizier, but then is waylaid by a Muslim debater evidently brought in for the purpose. He parries the polemic and attempts to explain the Bible verses used by the debater, but refuses to speak against Islam as he is urged to do ('Journal' [1826], pp. 395-6).

SIGNIFICANCE

Many points of importance in Christian-Muslim relations in 19th-century South Asia are touched on in the journals and letters and deserve careful consideration. ʿAbdulmasīḥ was a striking example of Christian faith and ministry literally in the garments of an Indian Muslim. Recognised as the first evangelist to minister largely among Muslims in India, he was the first Indian to be ordained a priest in the Church of England tradition and 'probably the leading Indian Christian of his day' (Neill, *History of Christianity*, p. 340). Stephen Neill writes of the journal and letters:

> These are documents of the greatest importance, not only because of the many interesting details they reveal of the way in which an intelligent Indian evangelist set himself to make the Gospel known to his own people, but because through them, almost for the first time, English-speaking readers were able to hear the authentic accents of Indian Christianity. (*History of Christianity*, p. 341)

He notes that the voice was not that of a foreign missionary but rather of 'an intelligent Indian who through strict intellectual processes had come to an acceptance of the Christian faith' (p. 341). For Christian-Muslim relations, the journal is just as valuable for showing the real-life responses of Indian Muslims to a Christian who was in no way a 'Feringee'.

If British readers of the journal excerpts were encouraged about the progress of the gospel in relation to Islam, they were also challenged to consider some of ʿAbdulmasīḥ's comments that distinguished between Europeans and Christians. Since he identified himself as a Christian, ʿAbdulmasīḥ was often told by Muslims that they 'could never embrace the religion of the English' (ʿAbdulmasīḥ, 'Journal' [1814], p. 150). Muslim interlocutors frequently criticised the lifestyles of the British administrators they had seen or heard about, calling them 'unclean' (pp. 150, 362, 366), criticising their dress and grooming (pp. 195, 227, 365), and often assuming that the British were irreligious (pp. 192, 234, 368). In response, ʿAbdulmasīḥ did not defend British bad behaviour, and clearly distinguished Christian identity from that of the 'Feringee' (e.g. p. 365); he sometimes drew attention to good behaviour he had observed among the British, and often used the opportunity to bring out a gospel emphasis such as inward uncleanness and purity (p. 150).

ʿAbdulmasīḥ's journal entries are first-person notes about actual interfaith exchanges before Christianity became a part of the presence of the British in India, and well before the East India Company permitted

missionaries to live there. The patterns they show were not the result of any provocations from Christians but were the customary thoughts and discourse of Muslims derived from centuries of Muslim political dominance of the subcontinent. They seem to offer, therefore, glimpses behind the curtain of the British mixture of Christianity with economic and military power. ʿAbdulmasīḥ's journal and letters reveal the mind of an Indian Christian from Muslim background engaging with Muslims. But the context is that of a confident Islam that is in no way impressed with Christianity and brings questions and accusations to a Christian from a position of religious dominance. Though the East India Company ruled India at the time, the leading Muslim *'ulamā'* were well-educated and confident and, until relatively recent times, they had enjoyed centuries of patronage from Muslim empires. As Barbara Metcalf expresses it in relation to a later evangelist, '[t]he Muslims felt not only intellectually but morally superior to their Christian opponents' (*Islamic revival in British India*, Princeton NJ, 1982, pp. 220-1).

One further dimension of the significance of the journal and letters in the history of Christian-Muslim relations in South Asia is their witness to the importance of early 19th-century efforts to translate the New Testament into Indian languages, including Persian and Urdu. ʿAbdulmasīḥ himself was deeply affected by Henry Martyn's translation and, when the Urdu translation of Matthew's Gospel was printed, he began to use and distribute it immediately. This led him into experiences of what might be regarded as romantic adventures of people across vast spaces of culture, regime and religion, who had heard about the Gospel and its teachings but had not been able to access them. 'Pray, Sir, give me one', asked an elderly man at a saint's shrine in Bhagalpur. 'I have greatly desired to see the Gospel, and once met with a copy, but it was in Nagree, and I could not read it' (ʿAbdulmasīḥ, 'Journal' [1814], p. 152; cf. pp. 232, 294, 368-9, 446). Fascinating anecdotes such as these, from the journal of a Christian worker in Agra, need to be understood and evaluated in their own cultural terms. Only in this way can their significance for the history of Christian-Muslim relations be fully appreciated.

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ʿAbdulmasīḥ, 'Journal', trans. D. Corrie, *The Missionary Register* 13 (1825) 195-6

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ʿAbdulmasīḥ, 'Journal of Abdool Messee's visit to Lucknow', trans. D. Corrie, *The Missionary Register* 3 (1815) 400-9

ʿAbdulmasīḥ, 'Extracts from the Journal of Abdool Messeeh, on his return from Calcutta to Agra', trans. D. Corrie, *The Missionary Register* 10 (1822) 340-2

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STUDIES

Nickel, "A religion whose author was meek and lowly"

Powell, *Muslims and missionaries*

Neill, *History of Christianity*

Stock, *History of the Church Missionary Society*, vol. 1

Gordon Nickel

Mrs Meer Hassan Ali

Bridget Meer Hassan Ali

DATE OF BIRTH	About 1781
PLACE OF BIRTH	Uncertain; possibly Addiscombe, Surrey
DATE OF DEATH	10 October 1862
PLACE OF DEATH	Eton

BIOGRAPHY

Information about the life of Bridget Meer Hassan Ali (Mrs Meer) is scanty. She was born in England into the Timms family in 1781 and given the name Biddy (Bridget). Her husband, Meer Hassan Ali, was born into a Shīʿī family that claimed descent from Fāṭima, the Prophet Muḥammad's daughter. He came from India in 1809 to teach languages at the East India Company's officer school at Addiscombe near Croydon. There he met Biddy and, in 1817, they married and moved to India. They lived primarily in Lucknow in his family home, though for a time they lived alone (it would seem) in Kanauj (Kannoge) in the British district of Farrukhabad. There, Biddy obviously enjoyed both the freedom and the respite from the family environment of Lucknow, writing,

> The quiet calm of this habitation, unbroken by the tumultuous sounds of a city, was so congenial to my taste, that when obliged to quit it, I felt almost as much regret as when I heard that the rains had destroyed the place which had been to me a home of peaceful enjoyment. (*Observations*, 1917 edition, p. 276; all references here are to this edition)

She also wrote 'Here I could indulge in long walks without incurring the penalty of a departure from established custom' (p. 287).

Though she frequently mentioned that her husband and father-in-law translated books and other information from Urdu for her, it appears she became reasonably fluent herself. She wrote that, on a visit to Akbar Shāh II (r. 1806-37) and his queen in Delhi,

> Both appeared, and expressed themselves, highly gratified with the visit of an English lady who could explain herself in their language without embarrassment, or the assistance of an interpreter, and who was the more interesting to them from the circumstance of being the wife of a Syaad. (p. 291)

She mentions in passing that she also learnt to write Urdu (p. 219), though her transliteration of Urdu words into English is idiosyncratic.

Her works reveal little about herself, her husband or the family into which she married, though she frequently speaks of her father-in-law, 'the most venerable aged man I ever knew' (p. 15), with appreciation and respect: 'The first impression lasted through our long acquaintance, for he proved indeed a real solace during my pilgrimage in a strange land' (p. 401). She told numerous anecdotes of his life and also recounted many discussions she had with him about Islam and Christianity.

The couple had no children. In 1828, Biddy returned to England alone because, she said, of 'a serious and tedious illness', which meant that she was 'ill-fitted to pursue those researches which might have afforded entertaining material for my pen' (p. 298), though it is not unlikely that in reality she refused to accept her husband's decision to marry a second wife (see Blank, 'British women', p. 6). After her return, little is known about her with certainty. It is thought that she became head of a boys' school and, since she dedicates *Observations* to Augusta Sophia (1768-1840), daughter of King George III (r. 1760-1820), she may have been connected with the princess's household. She died in Eton in 1862.

MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Primary

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K. Blank, 'British women and orientalism in the early nineteenth century. A study of Mrs. Meer Hassan Ali's "Observations on the Mussulmauns of India"', Baton Rouge LA, 2013 (MA Diss. Louisiana State University); https://repository.lsu.edu/gradschool_theses/3533

WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Observations on the Mussulmauns of India

DATE 1832
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

This work (its full title is *Observations on the Mussulmauns of India. Descriptive of their manners, customs, habits and religious opinions made during a twelve years' residence in their immediate society*) is in the form of a series of 27 letters. In the original two-volume edition of 1832, the first volume of 395 pages comprises letters I-XIV and the second volume of 427 pages letters XV-XXVII. The single-volume 1917 edition, which is used here, is 425 pages long. Meer Hassan Ali says that she wrote the work after she returned to England and that it was intended to provide for her close friends 'faithful sketches of the manners, customs, and habits of a people but little known to the European reader'. When these friends remarked that the information contained in the letters 'would be acceptable from its originality, as presenting a more familiar view of the opinions and the domestic habits of the Mussulmaun community of Hindoostaun than any hitherto presented through other channels', she was encouraged to publish it (p. xvii).

Throughout the work she refers to the 'Khoraun', the Hadith and a 'voluminous work' esteemed by Meer Hadjee Shah entitled 'Hyaatool Kaloob', by Mahumud Baakur (this was Muḥammad Bāqir al-Majlisī's [1627-99] *Ḥayāt al-qulūb*, about the prophets of Islam). Apart from these, she relies on her personal observations as well as information given by her father-in-law, of whom she speaks very highly in letter XXVII, her husband, religious scholars and women, some of whom were 'educated syaad' (*sayyid*s, descendants of Muḥammad).

The first letters appear to be loosely grouped according to themes, letters I-XI on Muslim festivals and religious observances, and letters XII-XV on the place of women, marriage, the family and home. But there is no obvious arrangement among letters XVI-XXVII, which in general are each concerned with their own topics: letter XVI on Indian trades, XVII on the seclusion of women, XVIII on difficulties for foreigners caused by insects and climate, and so on. Letters XXIV-VI are on Sufis and other Muslim groupings, and on superstitions. The impression given is that Meer Hassan

Ali chose topics she thought would most engage and interest her readers rather than attempting to give a coordinated account of her experiences.

Meer Hassan Ali says that she 'was allowed the free usage of my European habits and religious principles without a single attempt to bias or control me' (p. 423). She carefully respects this in her accounts of religious beliefs and practices, which are mainly descriptive and without criticism or disagreement. Thus, in letter II she writes on the Muslim teaching about God and Muḥammad:

> They declare to me that their faith compels them 'to believe in one God, and that He alone is to be worshipped by the creature; and that Mahumud is a creature, the Prophet sent by God to make His will known, and declare His power. That to bow down and worship Mahumud would be gross idolatry; and, although he is often mentioned in their prayers, yet he is never prayed to. They believe their Prophet is sensible of whatever passes amongst his true disciples; and that, in proportion as they fulfil the commands he was instructed by God to leave with them, so will they derive benefit from his intercession, on that great and awful day, when all mankind shall appear before the judgment seat of God. (p. 31)

She gives no indication that she rejects any of this. Similarly, with regard to the Qur'an, she writes without comment:

> The Khoraun was not the work of any particular period in the life of Mahumud. It was not compiled into a book until after Mahumud's death, who was totally unacquainted with letters; each chapter having been conveyed by the angel Gabriel to Mahumud, his inspired memory enabled him to repeat, verbatim, the holy messenger's words to his disciples and converts when assembled as was their daily custom. (p. 70)

She even relates Muslim beliefs about Jesus without comment:

> The Mussulmauns say, 'All power belongs to God. [...] Is there any thing too great for His power? Let no man, then, dispute the birth of Christ by a pure Virgin.' They believe that Jesus Christ was the Prophet of God, but they believe not that He is God; and they deem all who thus declare Christ to be God, as unfaithful both to God and to Christ. (p. 90)

The one point on which she expresses some disagreement is the identity of the son taken by Abraham to be sacrificed. Concerning ʿĪḍ al-Aḍḥā (which she calls Buckrah Eade), she writes,

> This event answers our Scripture account of Abraham's offering, but the Mussulmauns say, the son of Abraham so offered was Ishmael, and not Isaac. I have disputed the point with some of their learned men, and

> brought them to search through their authorities, in some one or two there is a doubt as to which was the son offered, but the general writers and most of the Mussulmauns themselves believe Ishmael was the offering made by Abraham. (p. 78; see also pp. 141-2)

It is only at the very end that any strong evangelical sentiment becomes visible: 'My heart's desire for the people I have dwelt amongst is that which St. Paul in the Epistle to the Romans declares to be his prayer to God for Israel, "that they might be saved!"' She concludes with the hope that her account has removed prejudice against the Muslims she has known, 'so that they may be sought and won by brotherly kindness' (p. 425).

SIGNIFICANCE

Meer Hassan Ali's account of her experiences of Shīʿī Islam from what may be termed a 'domestic' perspective was evidently intended to intrigue and interest her circle of readers as much as to inform them. If it had any firm religious purpose, it was also designed to dispel prejudice in their minds by showing that Muslims did not hold many of the superstitions and errors attributed to them in the popular imagination. In attempting this, she was constructing a defence for the Muslims she had lived among, almost without intending to. She was not expressing approval of Islam as a faith, but she was showing that Muslims could follow lives that Christians might find sympathetic and admirable. This was the result of years of intimacy with Muslims in which she was able to see qualities she could not fail to respect; this was unusual among European Christians.

As William Crooke, the editor of the 1917 edition, says, 'The value of the book rests on the fact that it is a record of the first-hand experiences of an English lady who occupied the exceptional position of membership of a Musalman family' ('Introduction', p. xv). It was read and referred to widely in the 19th century, both by general readers and academics (Blank, 'British women', pp. 33-7), and in this way contributed to change Christian attitudes towards Indian Muslims, who stood before them not as implacable foes but as fellow believers.

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Mrs. Meer Hassan Ali, *Observations on the Mussulmauns of India : descriptive of their manners, customs, habits, and religious opinions made during a twelve years' residence in their immediate society*, ed. with notes and introduction by W. Crooke, Oxford, 1917[2] (reproduces the 1832 text in one volume 'without change'); 006213755 (digitised version available through Hathi Trust)

STUDIES

Colbert, 'Biddy Hasan 'Ali Mir'

Blank, 'British women'

Ruth J. Nicholls

William Carey

DATE OF BIRTH 17 August 1761
PLACE OF BIRTH Paulerspury, Northamptonshire
DATE OF DEATH 9 June 1834
PLACE OF DEATH Serampore, India

BIOGRAPHY

William Carey was born and brought up in Paulerspury, Northamptonshire. As a young man, while working as an apprentice shoemaker, he became involved with various Protestant dissenter groups through the influence of a colleague. He eventually chose to become a Baptist, and was baptised in Northampton in 1783. After this, he began to preach to Baptist congregations whilst also working in his trade, before moving to a residential Baptist pastorate in Moulton, just outside Northampton, in 1785. In 1789, he became a pastor in Leicester, by which time he was taking an interest in the world outside Europe – an interest that had been kindled by his reading.

In 1792, Carey published a pamphlet entitled *An enquiry into the obligations of Christians to use means for the conversion of the heathens*, which, although it did not sell widely, led to Carey and other Baptist ministers forming the 'Particular Baptist Society for Propagating the Gospel among the Heathen' in October of that year. The organisation, which was the first evangelical missionary society, was subsequently renamed the Baptist Missionary Society. In November 1793, Carey and John Thomas (1757-1801) left for India as the first missionaries of the society, and went to Bengal. There, Carey worked as the manager of an indigo factor to make up for the shortfall in funds for the mission whilst simultaneously studying Bengali and Hindi, preaching, and working on a translation of the Bible into Bengali. He was married three times, to Dorothy Plackett (d. 1807), Charlotte Emilia Rumohr (d. 1821) and Grace Hughes (d. 1835), and had three sons.

In January 1800, together with the new Baptist arrivals Joshua Marshman (1768-1837) and William Ward (1769-1823; *CMR* 24, 73-8), Carey moved to the Danish settlement at Serampore, up the River Ganges from Calcutta and out of East India Company territory, allowing them to be active in mission work. The three became well-known for their work, both in India and at home in Britain. They baptised their first convert in

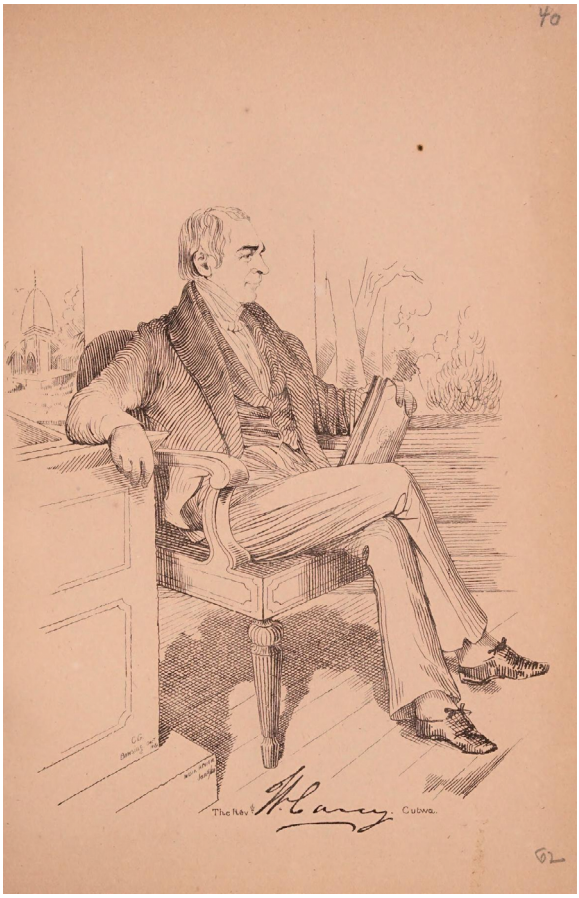


Illustration 4. William Carey

December 1800, though difficulties associated with the caste system led to only limited results, with a modest 1,400 Indians being baptised by 1821. However, Carey's contribution was primarily in translation and language work. He was appointed professor of Sanskrit, Marathi and Bengali at the East India Company's Fort William College in 1801, and was awarded a DD from Brown University (USA) in 1807. Together with Indian collaborators, he translated the whole Bible into Bengali, Oriya, Sanskrit, Hindi, Marathi and Assamese, and parts of it into 29 other languages.

Amongst other work in the early decades of the 1800s, he also produced grammars of Bengali, Marathi, Sanskrit, Punjabi, Telinga and Bhotia, as well as dictionaries of Marathi, Bengali and Bhotia. This linguistic output helped to boost the status of the Baptist Missionary Society, although

relations between the Careys and the society grew increasingly strained in the 1820s and led to the eventual separation of the Serampore Mission from the society in 1827. William died in Serampore on 9 June 1834.

MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Primary

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J.C. Marshman, *The life and times of Carey, Marshman, and Ward. Embracing the history of the Serampore Mission*, 2 vols, London, 1859

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Letters and journals

DATE 1792, 1800, 1836, 1892
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

Carey's writings contain few direct references to Muslims, and he often mentions them together with Hindus without distinguishing between

them. With the exception of a few individuals, they appear to have been particularly impervious to his preaching. In a letter to Andrew Fuller (1745-1815) from Debarta dated 15 February 1794, a few months after his arrival in India, Carey notes with regard to the prospects of conversions among Hindus and Muslims that they are 'numerous, very inquisitive, and very attentive to the Gospel' (Williams and Williams, *Serampore letters*, p. 42), though this enthusiasm did not last. In a letter sent from the College of Fort William some years later on 11 November 1801, he records that the missionaries are 'on every side surrounded with heathens and Mahommedans, who are deaf to the voice of reason, of Scripture, and of God' (p. 69). He records what he describes as idolatrous practices among the local population, but also notes conversions among Hindus and the expected conversion of a Muslim, as well as enquiries from both Muslims and Roman Catholics (Portuguese) about how to be saved. Further, in a letter from Serampore dated 10 March 1803, he mentions continuing difficulties in trying to convert the local population, especially Muslims (p. 82).

The fullest reference to a Muslim individual among Carey's letters is a short paragraph in a letter sent several years after he arrived (the actual year is unclear). He notes progress with a man called Turrickulla from Dinagepore, as reported by a certain Bro' Fernandez, who says that Turrickulla engaged in family prayers whenever he visited the missionaries and even destroyed an *eidgah* ('a wall with steps along one side of it on which people sit to read the Koran') that had been built on his estate (p. 116). This act of destruction and his interest in Christianity had made him an enemy of some people.

More extensive references to Carey's interactions with Muslims and observations of them occur in letters that appear in *Periodical accounts relative to the Baptist Missionary Society* (vol. 1, 1800). One topic is Sufism, which Carey variously terms 'idol worship' and 'superstition'. In a letter dated 6 January 1795, he mentions that Muslims worship the sun (p. 122), suggesting that the cause of Muslim idolatry was pagan (Hindu) influence, and in another, dated 27 September 1795, he notes that, although Muslims and Hindus 'are perfectly unanimous in acknowledgement of one Supreme God' they also revere 'departed saints, angels, or gods', and he describes the shrines they build for them (p. 209). In other letters, such as one from 11 January 1796, he explains that people believe their gods 'have a power to afflict their persons, to spoil their crops, and to kill their children, and will infallibly do this if they neglect to make offerings to them' (p. 227). In letters to his father from the mid-1790s, he describes Muslim processions and rituals that involve individuals being suspended

by hooks through their skin (his lurid descriptions of this religious practice are given in Morris, *Periodical accounts*, pp. 173, 413), and writes of his unsuccessful attempts to stop them and his desire that God will put an end to them (West, 'Evangelizing Bengali Muslims', pp. 112-13).

Carey was concerned with the Hindu caste system and how Bengali Muslims fitted into it. He saw it as an impediment to his mission and observed that, particularly among Muslims, it was 'one of the most cursed engines that ever the devil invented to enslave the souls of men' (Morris, *Periodical accounts*, p. 126), though he recognised Muslim concerns about losing their caste status (West, 'Evangelizing Bengali Muslims', p. 103). In one account, in a letter to a Mr Pearce of Birmingham dated 29 January 1795, he details the difficulties involved in arranging the funeral of his son, particularly that he had to employ four Muslims to dig his grave so that they 'might all have an equal share in the shame'. As a result of doing this work they lost their caste status and villagers were forbidden by the village headman from eating, drinking or smoking with them. As Carey points out, even though Muslims are casteless 'they imagine they have [caste status], and the loss of it is to them as serious a thing as to the Hindoos'. He goes on to say how he called for the village headman and demanded that he should eat, drink and smoke with the men or wait until Carey had called for a judge to settle the matter (Morris, *Periodical accounts*, p. 127; there is a more detailed account in Carey, *Memoir*, pp. 134-5, in the London 1836 edition, which is used here).

Carey's letters understandably contain a number of references to his preaching amongst Muslims. In a letter to the Baptist Missionary Society dated 6 January 1795, he describes a meeting in a Muslim village where he preached about the evil and universality of sin and the holiness of God, and asked his listeners how they 'could possibly escape the wrath to come'. He also contrasted the teaching of the Bible, which commands praying for your enemies, with that of the Qur'an, which commands 'the extermination of all unbelievers'. The result was that his Muslim hearers promised to stop sinful practices such as lying, stealing and sun worship (Morris, *Periodical accounts*, pp. 121-2). This example appears to reflect a pattern used by Carey in his preaching to Muslims, of which he also mentions others (e.g. pp. 162-3). In a diary entry for Sunday 5 April 1795, he records that he preached to 500 Muslims in the morning and 400 in the evening, and they all encouragingly shouted 'Allah' as they left (pp. 196-7). In a letter to Fuller dated 16 November 1796, he records Muslims inquiring about how to be saved and avoid going to hell; some Muslim labourers among them appeared to be particularly interested in what he had to

say (Carey, *Memoir*, pp. 181-2). In a letter to John Sutcliff dated 16 January 1798, he describes how he invited a Muslim fakir, who the crowd claimed had turned water into milk, to eat with him, telling the crowd that 'if he could change water into milk, he could change pork into mutton' (Carey, *Memoir*, p. 219).

Carey appears to have held a generally negative view of the people he worked among, though it is not always clear whether he has Hindus or Muslims in mind. In a letter written on 14 August 1795, he acknowledges that his opinion of them when he first worked among them was better than it should have been, though some other missionaries formed worse opinions than they should have. He finds them perfidious, deceitful and superstitious, though he concedes that the 'theology' of both Hindus and Muslims is 'refined' because they believe in one God (Morris, *Periodical accounts*, p. 213). He regards a Muslim labourer named Yardee, who he particularly hopes will convert, as someone who has 'good natural abilities, and has a great aptness in conveying his ideas' (Carey, *Memoir*, p. 182). Furthermore, Carey shows qualified praise for the Qur'an, saying so in a sermon to Hindus and Muslims on 9 May 1795:

> I also took occasion to observe, that in both the shasters [*shastra*s, Hindu religious treatises] and koran there were many good observations and rules, such as ought to be regarded [. ...] I told them, moreover, that their books were like a loaf of bread, in which there was a considerable quantity of good flour, but mixed with some very malignant poison, which made the whole so poisonous that whoever should eat of it would die: so I observed that their writings contained much good instruction, mixed with deadly poison. (Morris, *Periodical accounts*, pp. 198-9)

Carey's pamphlet *An enquiry into the obligations of Christians, to use means for the conversion of the heathens* (1792) also includes some references to Islam and points to his conceptualisation of Muslims before he went to India and met any. In a description of the religions of the world, he uses the classical categorisation of Christian, Jewish, Muslim and pagan, and includes a table detailing population and religious affiliation by country. In the commentary that follows, he notes the geographical distribution of Muslims and specifies that the Muslims of Persia, as Shī'īs (or in Carey's words 'of the sect of Hali ['Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib]'), are enemies of the Turks and vice-versa (p. 64). Among Muslims, those from Africa are the most ignorant and North African Muslims survive by attacking and plundering their neighbours (p. 65).

He observes that Greek and Armenian Christians living in predominantly Muslim countries are 'more ignorant and vicious than the mahometans themselves' (p. 65) recording, for example, the practice among these Christians of selling individuals into Muslim slavery. He also records that, when Greek Christians in Anatolia convert to Islam, the Turks do not hold them in high esteem but rather see them as hypocrites.

SIGNIFICANCE

James West mentions that, despite the existence of a large body of records concerning Carey and William Ward's mission, little research has been conducted on the Baptist Missionary Society's work amongst Bengali Muslims ('Evangelizing Bengali Muslims', p. 1). Exploration of these records could show that Carey possessed an interest in Islam as a historical tradition with distinctive teachings. However, though the few remarks he includes in his letters about basic Islamic beliefs and the Qur'an suggest that he possessed a modicum of knowledge about it, he seemed less keen to inquire into it than to relay details about Muslims as they responded to his preaching, or failed to, and about some of the practices he witnessed among Muslims in Bengal. The impression he creates in his correspondence, as well as in his pamphlet of 1792, is that he conceived of Muslims not as bearers of a religious tradition of their own but as either potential or renegade Christians.

Although it cannot be suggested that Carey's writings on Islam and Muslims had much influence, they are significant for understanding the history of Christian-Muslim relations in Bengal for a number of reasons. They provide early missionary appraisals of Sufi practices and Christian attempts to grapple with them; they highlight the importance of the Hindu caste system for Indian Muslims and how this shaped Christian interactions with them; and they point to the ways in which Baptist missionaries approached Muslims as part of their work of conversion. In addition, Carey's writings hint at an approach to Islam that is not only critical (at times derogatory) but also appreciative. He was able to criticise certain practices while also acknowledging Muslim monotheism and aspects of the Qur'an.

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MSS. FPC 19 – Letters to his father, brother and sisters
MSS. IN/21 Carey, William, William Ward, Joshua Marshman, and others. William Carey, Joshua Marshman, William Ward, and others to the Baptist Missionary Society Committee, 1800-1827

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James Harry Morris

Edward Gustavus Fraser

DATE OF BIRTH 21 August 1809
PLACE OF BIRTH Cape of Good Hope, South Africa
DATE OF DEATH 5 July 1868
PLACE OF DEATH Dehradun, Uttarakhand, India

BIOGRAPHY

The primary source of information on Edward Gustavus Fraser's life is a chapter in *The memoir of Mrs Valentine*, a biography of his daughter, Henrietta Valentine, by A.J. Cupples. This account paints a portrait of Fraser's apparently open-minded attitude towards Christian denominations other than his own, as testified by the Revd James Williamson of Lucknow, who wrote: 'Mr. Fraser was a most catholic-minded man, and while, from birth and connection, he was a warm Presbyterian, he was ever ready to work with any Christian who held the truth as it is in Jesus' (Cupples, *Memoir*, p. 29).

Edward Gustavus Fraser was born to Scottish parents in the Cape of Good Hope on 21 August 1809. As a boy he suffered severe bouts of illness for which his mother (his father having died soon after he was born) sent him on trips by ship in the hope that the fresh air and sea salt would be curative. One of these trips, when he was a teenager, was to Calcutta, Singapore and Burma, and this made a great impact on him.

Fraser later returned to settle in Calcutta with his mother, and began his writing career at *The Indian Gazetteer*. He soon contributed articles to other newspapers and periodicals in India, mainly focusing on trade, navigation and the socio-political dynamics of the various regions he visited throughout the country. In 1838, he married Henrietta C. Smith, the daughter of a Eurasian indigo-planter in Lower Bengal.

As his career progressed, Fraser's writings increasingly reflected his deepening interest in religious matters. He gradually featured more prominently in religious journals, where he wrote extensively on Christian theology, doctrine, morality and the importance of a personal spiritual life. Often signing these articles with the pseudonym 'X', he became established as one of the leading Christian commentators in the North-Western Provinces of India.

In addition to his writing, Fraser had a distinguished career in public service. After passing the competitive entrance exam for the Indian Civil

Service, he was appointed to the North-Western Provinces, where he held a variety of administrative positions, including assistant magistrate, collector of the city of Banda, and, following the 1857 Uprising, civil judge in Lucknow. His knowledge of Islamic law was extensive, as is stated by the Revd James Williamson:

> The Privy Council in London passed the highest encomium upon some of his decisions, evincing, as they did, an intimate knowledge of the Mohammedan law, and that in the North-West Provinces there was no judge whose decisions were so seldom challenged at home and obtained such praise. (Cupples, *Memoir*, p. 19)

Fraser was widely respected for his integrity, skill in governance and humane approach to famine relief and education reform. He continued both his administrative and literary work until his death in India on 5 July 1868. He left a legacy of public integrity, cross-cultural engagement and theological reflection that influenced both British and Indian audiences.

MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Primary

A.J. Cupples, *The memoir of Mrs. Valentine, Jeypore, with a sketch of her father Judge Fraser of Lucknow*, London, 1882

WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Three short works about Muslims

DATE 1837-40
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

The writings relating to Islam that can be attributed to Fraser are three short articles written under the pseudonym 'X', which is identified in the biography of his daughter as his preferred pseudonym. 'The character and influence of Mahomedanism in India' (five pages), 'Influence of Mahomedanism in India' (four pages) and 'Al-Qur'an. Surat ul Fatihah' (nine pages) were published in the *Calcutta Christian Observer* between 1837 and 1840.

Several themes emerge from these articles, with Fraser's views on Christianity, Islam and Hinduism remaining constant throughout. First, he argues that Muslims are more hostile to Christianity than are Hindus.

He writes that Muslims react with insult and volatility to Christian missionaries, refusing to interact with Christianity beyond superficial politeness, as in the following examples: 'Insult and menace are the constant results of any attempt to probe the consciences of the followers of Islam' ('Character', p. 605); 'to avoid offence they will seldom venture further than to say that Christianity is good for Christians but Mahomedanism is best suited for them' ('Character', p. 605). He claims that such attitudes also affect Christian education in schools, with teachings reportedly undermined by Muslim parents at home: 'The school-master is thwarted in every effort to advance the cause of truth [...] his influence being counteracted by the parents, who jealously watch at home to undo all that has been done at school' ('Character', p. 605).

In addition, Fraser writes that Christian missionaries have limited success with Muslims because their pride is an obstacle: 'The Mahomedan is, through his own pride, incapable of real improvement' ('Character', p. 605). He elaborates that many Christian missionaries prefer to work with Hindus, finding the labour more fruitful and less hostile than evangelism among Muslims: 'Every Missionary with whom I have spoken, seems to think their case almost hopeless [...] the former labour is preferred' ('Character', p. 605).

Another theme is concern about the growth and spread of Islam in India. Fraser claims that it is not a waning faith, but an expanding one: 'The doctrines of the Qur'an are still progressing [...] there are instances every year of fresh conversions being effected' ('Character', p. 606); 'The faith of the false prophet is now more extensively spread over India than it was believed to be at the beginning of the present century' ('Character', p. 607). Fraser traces part of this growth to the Mughal era, when converts to Islam were financially rewarded and Hindus stigmatised:

> [The Mughal] Government [...] gave every encouragement to its own faith and threw every obstacle in the way of the other[. ... M]any were tempted to cast aside idolatry to bring themselves and their families under the advantages obtained by taking part with their conquerors. ('Character', p. 606)

He points to the strength of Muslim religious infrastructure, particularly pious endowments (*waqf*s) and state support, which help to maintain and propagate the faith: 'Its priests abound everywhere [...] in temples [...] by the offerings of visitors and fees at marriages, funerals [...] frequently endowed with large funds; in many cases Government pays for their support' ('Character', p. 607). And further, 'Faith in one God and the prophet

[…] and the propagation of the doctrines of the prophet are the leading topics' ('Character', p. 607).

The 19th-century stigmatisation of Hinduism was also still an issue. Fraser claims Islam was perceived as having greater social respectability than Hinduism and attracted participation from low-caste Hindus, some of whom allowed their children to be absorbed into Muslim households and raised as Muslims: 'I have often met people who did not know to what class they really belonged […] preferred Mahomedanism as being more respectable than Hinduism' ('Character', p. 607). And further, 'The raiyats […] sell their children. The girls are transferred to the *zenana* or the brothel, the boys become the slaves of the Mahomedan gentry' ('Character', p. 607). Addressing his fellow Christians, Fraser points out what he sees as weaknesses in the Qur'an, which can be highlighted in vernacular translations: 'The book cannot stand the scrutiny of men of common sense, when presented in a language with which they are familiar' ('Character', p. 608). His commentary on the style of the Qur'an is quite harsh at times: 'Let every page bear a comment exhibiting its plagiarisms, inconsistencies and follies' ('Character', p. 608). He encourages Christian scholars and missionaries to attack the credibility of Islam directly with coordinated effort, distributing annotated Qur'an translations, tracts and counter-commentaries: 'Let those who have the necessary qualifications maintain a constant and energetic attack upon the Qur'an by means of tracts' ('Character', p. 608).

Fraser also proposes other strategies against Islam: focus on youth education; the buying of freedom for enslaved or sold Hindu children to be brought up as Christians; and creation or leveraging of global Christian networks to fund and support the fight against Islam: 'The liberty of the children might be purchased at small cost […] and having given them a useful and Christian education […] they would at mature age return to their families with the means of instructing those around them' ('Character', p. 607).

He recommends harnessing the entire Christian community in this endeavour: 'Let each [Christian] begin with a plain statement of what has fallen under his own observation […] and we shall […] have the total experience and the whole intellect of the Christian community of India brought to bear on the subject' ('Influence', p. 42). Subscriptions should at the same time be solicited: '[and] every friend of the missionary cause in Great Britain, America, Germany, Sweden and Prussia […] might be invited to contribute' ('Influence', p. 44). Fraser strongly warns against complacency, arguing that Islam continues to thrive due to a lack of Christian opposition: 'That we have been too careless in our endeavours against this

system, may be further witnessed by the circumstance that the writings of [Henry] Martyn and [Samuel] Lee remain unknown to the Musalmans of Bengal and Hindustan' ('Character', p. 609).

Despite all this, while 'Mahomedanism stands like a stone fortress', Fraser argues that once a breach is made, the whole structure could collapse ('Character', p. 608). He ends his writings with impassioned pleas to his fellow Christians, to rise to their 'providential' calling, dismantle Islam's ideological power, and 'bring this dominion of the enemy into subjection to the Saviour's kingdom' ('Character', p. 607).

'Al-Qur'an. Surat ul Fatihah' is tantalising in being no more than a short sample from a translation of the Qur'an without any introduction or explanation about the approach adopted. It comprises a translation of *Sūrat al-fātiḥa* (Q 1), together with comments on individual words and phrases taken from Hadiths (quoting a publication called *Mishcát ul Masábih*, suggesting that this is Arnold Nesbit Matthews's [*CMR* 24, 97-101] *Mishcàt-ul-maśábìh or a collection of the most authentic traditions, regarding the actions and sayings of Muhammed*, a translation of the important compilation by Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-Khaṭīb al-Tibrīzī [fl. 1337], which had been published in Calcutta in 1809-10), the Qur'an commentary of Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Bayḍāwī (d. 1319) and other significant works, together with a few notes by Fraser (under his pseudonym X) himself. It appears to be an impressively thorough and informed piece of work and promises a commentary that would almost certainly have been noticed by scholars both European and Indian.

The editor of the *Calcutta Christian Observer* adds an intriguing note about Fraser's intention in writing the commentary, as follows: 'This paper has been sent to us as a specimen of a new translation of the Qurán with notes. The ultimate object of the translator, should he continue his labors, is to shew the uninspired character of the book' (p. 191). The few personal comments from Fraser in the text (each distinguished by [NOTE, followed by his comment) hint at how he would have gone about this. For example, with regard to a mention by a commentator of Waraqa ibn Nawfal, the cousin of Muḥammad's wife Khadīja who explained to Muḥammad the meaning of his first experiences of revelation, he writes: 'I believe that the Warakah here mentioned was the first who planned the imposture for, if it be true, as is said, that he translated our Scriptures into Arabic, he must have left the originals and his version in the family, and Muhammad by his marriage with Khadija must either have inherited them, or had access to them' (p. 195). In this creative inference Fraser reveals that he accepts the Qur'an is based on Christian scripture and that Muḥammad had direct access to the text, which he was able to read, and deliberately

constructed his own scripture from it. Long-standing explanations from the Christian polemical tradition about the origins of the Qur'an are brought together here, though with no basis except the *a priori* assumption that the Qur'an cannot be the revelation that Muslims claim it is.

Nothing more about the translation has come to light. This short sample reveals how fully acquainted with Muslim commentary works Fraser was, how weighty his translation and commentary would have been, and also how substantial a challenge it would have presented to Muslim readers. Maybe he did not get much further, overcome by the immensity of the task he could see ahead.

SIGNIFICANCE

Although his daughter's biography indicates he had a very open-minded perspective as far as the variations within Christianity were concerned, such ecumenical openness did not extend to attitudes to Islam. As these three short works demonstrate, he was openly critical of Islam. He clearly looked on the faith in terms of its rivalry with Christian mission and, indeed, as a source of spiritual darkness. Such attitudes were consistent with the more polemical approaches of some missionaries of the time in India, such a Karl Gottlieb Pfander (*CMR* 24, 188-236), though there is no evidence of any close interaction between the two. Nevertheless, Fraser seems to have been able to differentiate between a relatively unbiased engagement as a judge with aspects of Muslim law and his clear and energetic commitment to the mission of the Church. These works illustrate aspects of the complex relationship of Christians with Muslims in 19th-century South Asia, where missionary evangelicalism dominated the Christian side while humanitarian concern and willingness to engage and serve was conscientiously expressed.

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X [Edward Fraser], 'Character and influence of Mahomedanism in India', *Calcutta Christian Observer* 6/66 (1837) 605-9; 008635022 (digitised version available through Hathi Trust)

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Rachel Riddell

William Bowley

DATE OF BIRTH Approximately 1780
PLACE OF BIRTH Unknown; India
DATE OF DEATH 1843
PLACE OF DEATH Chunar, north India

BIOGRAPHY

William Bowley was born sometime around 1780 to an English father and Indian mother living in India, and was brought up and spent his whole life there. He served with the Church Missionary Society (CMS) as an evangelist in the Chunar region, south of Benares, from about 1814, and was ordained in 1820, continuing to serve with the CMS for the rest of his life.

He was regarded by his contemporaries as one of the most active and able CMS missionaries and a person of admirable character in both his public and private life. He undertook a translation of Henry Martyn's Urdu New Testament into Hinduee, the name given to the language spoken by the Hindu population in northern India. Published in 1826, this translation made the text accessible to both Hindus and Hinduee-speaking Muslim readers and listeners. He was also instrumental in the production of a book of psalms and hymns in language that Indian Muslims would find agreeable, and he has rightly been regarded as the 'Apostle of the Hindus', by which is meant both Hindus and Muslims. Bowley died in Chunar in 1843.

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Zabu'r aur git. Isaion ki ibadat ke liye 'Psalms and Hymns: for the religious services of Christians'

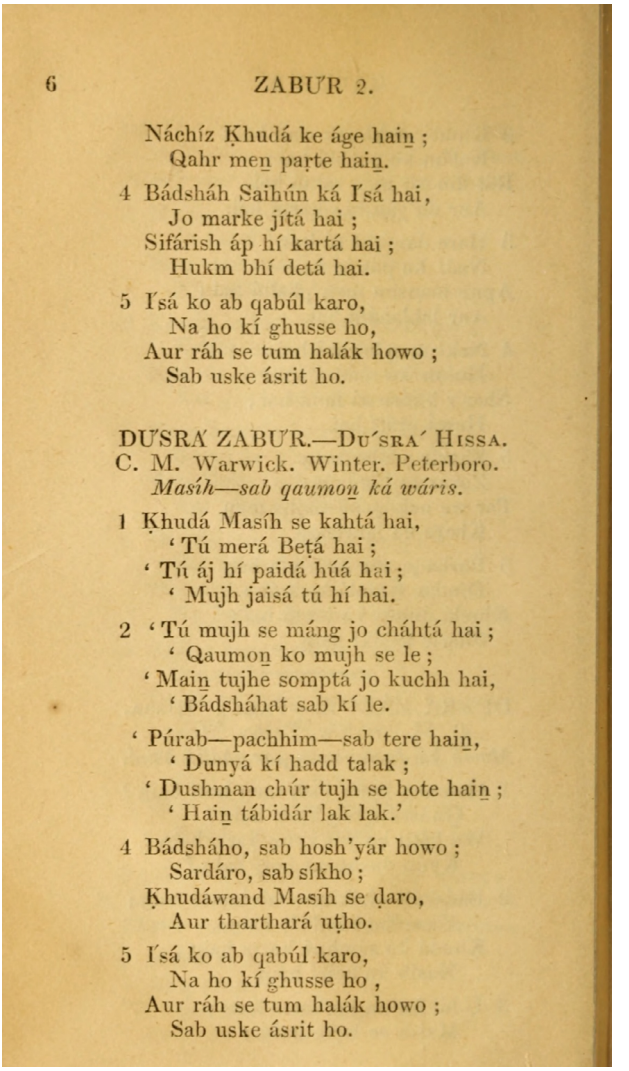
DATE 1842
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Urdu

DESCRIPTION

Zabu'r aur git. Isaion ki ibadat ke liye (*Zabūr aur gīt. ʿĪsā'īon kī ʿibādāt ke liye*, 'Psalms and hymns: for the religious services of Christians') was published by the Allahabad Presbyterian Mission Press in 1842. It contains Urdu translations in Roman characters of the 150 Psalms of the Bible and also 276 hymns. According to the Advertisement, they were provided by a number of individuals, though 'the principal of these [was] the Rev. Mr. Bowley; who has already done so much for the benefit of the native Church of India'. They were intended for chanting and singing, and the titles of suitable chants and tunes are given at the head of each. The hymns are thematically divided into 22 categories such as: praise, Trinity, Christ, Holy Spirit, faith, teaching, new year, judgement, heaven and baptism.

Bowley and the other contributors took great care to make the translations accessible and familiar to Indian Muslims. In particular, he employed Arabic religious terms that would be used by Muslims in everyday speech. Chief among them (printed in Roman script) are: *Isa* for Jesus (Psalms 2 and 69; hymn 9), *Allah* for God (Psalm 118; hymns 22, 116, 140, 229 and 268), *Isawi mazhab* for Christianity (Psalm 67), *behisht* for Paradise (Psalm 119), *Hayy al-Qayyum* for Ever-living and Sustainer of all existence (hymn 13), *Qadir-i Mutlaq* for Omnipotent (hymn 25), *rasul* for messenger (hymn 23), *shariat* for law (Psalm 119), *Masih* for Christ (Psalms 5, 18, 21, 22, 45 and 46), *fajr* for dawn (hymn 199), *fatwa* for ruling or legal decision (Psalms 143, 149; hymn 215) and *Ghaffar* for Most-merciful (hymn 274). In addition, several other terms would be familiar to Muslims, including *Ruh Quds Sharif* for the Holy Spirit, *Khaliq ul-alamin* for Creator of the universe, and *muqir* for someone who professes faith.

Zabu'r aur git and books like it were intended for use in Christian worship, where new converts would gather with long-standing Christians. In late 19th-century India most worshippers were illiterate, and so singing in church services took the form of the congregation repeating verses after



6 ZABŬR 2.

Náchíz Ḳhudá ke áge hain̲ ;
Qahr men̲ parte hain̲.

4 Bádsháh Saihún ká Ísá hai,
Jo marke jítá hai ;
Sifárish áp hí kartá hai ;
Hukm bhí detá hai.

5 Ísá ko ab qabúl karo,
Na ho kí ghusse ho,
Aur ráh se tum halák howo ;
Sab uske ásrit ho.

DŬSRA ZABŬR.—Dŭ´sra´ Hissa.
C. M. Warwick. Winter. Peterboro.
Masíh—sab qaumon̲ ká wáris.

1 Ḳhudá Masíh se kahtá hai,
‘ Tú merá Beṭá hai ;
‘ Tú áj hí paidá húá hai ;
‘ Mujh jaisá tú hí hai.

2 ‘ Tú mujh se máng jo cháhtá hai ;
‘ Qaumon̲ ko mujh se le ;
‘ Main̲ tujhe somptá jo kuchh hai,
‘ Bádsháhat sab kí le.

‘ Púrab—pachhim—sab tere hain̲,
‘ Dunyá kí hadd talak ;
‘ Dushman chúr tujh se hote hain̲ ;
‘ Hain̲ tábidár lak lak.’

4 Bádsháho, sab hosh'yár howo ;
Sardáro, sab síkho ;
Ḳhudáwand Masíh se ḍaro,
Aur tharthará uṭho.

5 Ísá ko ab qabúl karo,
Na ho kí ghusse ho ,
Aur ráh se tum halák howo ;
Sab uske ásrit ho.

Illustration 5. Psalm 2 in Urdu transliterated in Roman characters, employing *Masíh* and *Ísá*

the leader. Over time, they memorised a significant portion of the Psalms and hymns, and made use of them in their personal devotions as well as their congregational worship. The chorus or refrain played a crucial role, because the individual Psalms and hymns were identified and remembered by this rather than by their order in the book.

Copies of books such as this were usually kept at a church for weekly use or whenever the worshippers gathered. Indigenous church leaders, who were literate, and missionaries possessed their personal copies.

SIGNIFICANCE

Zabu'r aur git gives an indication of how new Christians in 19th-century India often expressed themselves. Books such as this included hymns written by Muslim converts to express their experience of conversion as well as hymns that showed how their outlook had changed following their conversion.

PUBLICATIONS

William Bowley, *Zabu'r aur git. Isaion ki ibadat ke liye*, Allahabad, 1842; 009013698 (digitised version available through Hathi Trust)

Yousaf Sadiq

The Qur'an. The translation of Maulvī ʿAbdulqādir

Qurán. Maulavi Abdul Qádir ká tarjuma

BIOGRAPHY

This edition of ʿAbdulqādir's Urdu translation of the Qur'an transliterated into Roman script together with notes in Urdu added by the editors exemplifies how missionaries engaged with the text and highlighted passages to contrast with the Bible. While it does not bear the names of those involved in preparing it, much of the work was evidently carried out by James Wilson, an American missionary (Wherry, *Our missions in India*, p. 62). Wilson arrived in Ludhiana in 1834 and, while there, he composed numerous works on Christianity in Urdu. He was later stationed in Allahabad, where in 1839 the American Presbyterian Mission established a printing press on which it produced tracts about Christianity on a large scale. This edition of the Qur'an was published there, further supporting the possibility that Wilson was involved in the printing press and had some responsibility for it (Warren, *A glance backward*, p. 184).

Wilson was one of the early missionaries sent by the Presbyterian Church in America to Punjab and was among the participants in the well-known Agra debate of 1854 alongside more famous figures such as Karl Gottlieb Pfander (*CMR* 24, 188-236). It appears that his primary goal in producing this edition was to equip missionaries and new converts with arguments for debates with Muslims.

While Wilson composed the footnotes, there is no clear indication of who transliterated the Urdu script into Roman script. The person responsible could have been either Indian or foreign, maybe Wilson, though possibly someone new to this type of work because the script contains numerous spelling inconsistencies. For instance, the name Muḥammad is written as 'Mahammad', and the Arabic form Jibrīl appears as 'Jabrail'.

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Qurán. Maulavi Abdul Qádir ká tarjuma
'The Qur'an. The translation of Maulvī ʿAbdulqādir'

DATE 1844
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Urdu

DESCRIPTION

Towards the end of the 18th century, Shāh ʿAbdulqādir (1753-1814), son of the great Muslim moderniser Shāh Walī Allāh Dihlavī, made a translation of the Qur'an in idiomatic Urdu. Entitled *Mūḍiḥ-i Qur'ān*, it was first printed in 1829 and quickly became the standard Urdu translation in northern India. *Qurán. Maulavi Abdul Qádir ká tarjuma* is a transcription of this Urdu translation into romanised script. Published by the Presbyterian Mission Press of Allahabad, this 1844 edition removed ʿAbdulqādir's annotations to the text and replaced them with footnotes. According to the title page, these were written by 'a Christian author' (*ḥāshiya Naṣārā muṣannif kī*). His name is not mentioned, though he is likely to have been James Wilson, as is suggested above.

The edition begins with a 30-page preface, followed by Shāh ʿAbdulqādir's Urdu translation in Roman script, 400 pages long, and a short concluding summary and glossary.

The Christian scholar's annotations in the footnotes primarily consist of critical remarks on Islam and the Qur'an, and the preface provides insights into his perspective on Islam. He argues there that not every successful

person is necessarily chosen by God; rather, the reader must examine whether the person was truly appointed by God. This is obviously an allusion to Muḥammad. He then moves on to a discussion of the authenticity of the Bible, asserting that it has remained uncorrupted.

The author also addresses the emergence of Islam, claiming that the advent of Muḥammad was foretold in the Book of Daniel (ch. 8), where the appearance of a deceitful and mighty king is mentioned. The author interprets this to mean that Muḥammad is not described as a prophet but as a king who, like the others mentioned in this chapter, represented a punishment sent by God to sinners.

After situating the rise of Islam within this framework, the author discusses the social and political conditions during Muḥammad's time, and offers reasons for the rapid expansion of Islam. In the final section of the preface, he focuses more on Christian criticisms of Islam, emphasising Muḥammad's unfamiliarity with the New and Old Testaments, the violent teachings of Islam, Muḥammad's inability to perform miracles and other criticisms.

At the conclusion of the preface, the author explains the rationale behind publishing this transliterated Urdu translation. Its purpose is to enable readers to compare the Qur'an with the Bible and to demonstrate that the Qur'an borrowed from earlier scriptures, so proving that it cannot be divinely inspired. Notes of this kind can be found throughout the chapters, where the Christian author consistently attempts to disprove qur'anic statements and show the superiority of Christianity. An example is where the Christian author adds a footnote to Q 2:2, which states that the Qur'an is a book in which there is no doubt. The author comments that there is no reason for the Qur'an to make such a statement other than that the Prophet Muḥammad, whom the Christian author assumes to be the author of the Qur'an, included this phrase because he harboured doubts about his mission.

Some of the footnotes appear to be inspired by George Sale's (1697-1736) English translation of the Qur'an, which was published for the first time in 1734 and enjoyed great popularity among Christian missionaries. For instance, a comment on the disconnected letters (*al-muqaṭṭaʿāt*) at the beginning of Q 2 – *alif lām mīm* – suggests they are meaningless, noting that Muslim scholars themselves remain uncertain about their significance and have proposed 16 different interpretations. The author further speculates that these letters were not part of the original qur'anic text but were later additions by scribes and represent the phrase *Amar li Mahammad*, as he puts it ('at the command of Muḥammad'), an interpretation that agrees

with what George Sale cites in his 1734 English translation of the Qur'an as 'the conjecture of a learned Christian' (*Preliminary discourse*, section 3).

The Christian commentator was also acquainted with Islamic exegetical discourse on certain verses. For instance, when he interprets the term *rūḥ al-qudus* ('Holy Spirit') in Q 2:87 as a direct reference to the biblical Holy Spirit, he contends that its traditional Muslim identification as Gabriel reflects an effort by Muslim exegetes to counter Christian claims regarding the Trinity. The footnotes are heavily infused with Christian themes, often aiming to find qur'anic support for Christian doctrines. For instance, the commentator links Q 4:171, which describes Jesus as the *kalima* (word) and *rūḥ* (spirit) of God, to Jesus's divinity, arguing that even the Qur'an implies that Jesus pre-existed as God's Word and Spirit. He emphasises that no other prophet is described this way, interpreting the verse as evidence of Jesus's divine status in the Qur'an. Throughout the commentary, his critical remarks against the Qur'an frequently serve to bolster Christian claims. In the epilogue, he asserts that the Qur'an was heavily influenced by the Bible and other religious texts, concluding that it offers little that will genuinely enlighten readers.

SIGNIFICANCE

The 1844 edition has several notable features uncommon for Urdu translations circulating in northern India at the time. Aside from being published in Roman script, one particularly significant feature was the introduction of verse numbering. In contrast, earlier editions of Shāh ʿAbdulqādir's translation published by Muslims did not include consistent verse numbers; in the 19th century, Muslims primarily referred to sections (Urdu and Arabic *rukūʿ*) and parts (Urdu *sipāra*) when identifying qur'anic passages. This 1844 edition is probably the first Urdu edition to include consistent verse numbering.

Since the 1844 edition was primarily designed for Christian missionaries, its influence on subsequent editions in the region is difficult to determine though some later Urdu translations, such as that of Sayyid Aḥmad Khān, followed this verse numbering. What is known is that this work inspired another edition of ʿAbdulqādir's Urdu translation, also published by missionaries in Roman script in 1876 (T.P. Hughes and E.M. Wherry, *The Qurán, tr. into Urdú language by Abdul Qádir ibn i Shah Walí Ullah*, Ludhiana, 1876). This later edition, which deviates in its transliteration from the 1844 edition, indicating that it was a new edition and not a reprint, briefly mentions the 1844 version, noting that it contained controversial notes, which is why the 1876 edition omits them. Nonetheless, the

1844 translation certainly had an impact on missionaries in British India. For instance, it is referred to by E.M. Wherry in his English Qur'an commentary, suggesting that, although its immediate impact appears to have been limited, it holds significance for its role in shaping the trajectory of subsequent Christian missionary scholarship on Islam.

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Kamran Ahmad Khan

George Uglow Pope

DATE OF BIRTH 24 April 1820
PLACE OF BIRTH Bedeque, Prince Edward Island, Canada
DATE OF DEATH 11 February 1908
PLACE OF DEATH Oxford

BIOGRAPHY

George Uglow Pope was an Anglican missionary who worked for 40 years in Tamil Nadu, India, and was known for his expertise in Tamil language and literature. He was born on Prince Edward Island, Canada, to which his father John Pope, a merchant and later missionary, had brought the family. They returned to England in 1826 and, as a schoolboy of 13 years, in Oldham Street Wesleyan Chapel, Manchester, George heard the farewell address of a missionary who was about to depart for Madras to begin ministry among Tamil speakers. He said to himself, 'When I am done with school I also will go to Madras, and will learn Tamil' ('Presentation', p. 780). He began learning the language when he was 17 and, at the age of 19, he travelled to India to start his missionary work with the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG). After arriving in Madras (present-day Chennai), he furthered his knowledge by studying under the great Tamil scholar Ramanuja Kavirayar (1780-1853) and he also started to learn Telugu and Sanskrit.

Pope married Mary Carver in 1841 and was ordained deacon in the Church of England in 1843. He was later ordained priest in India. Mary died in 1845 at Tuticorin (now Thoothukudi), and four years later Pope married his second wife, Henrietta Page, in Madras. He began to write and publish on the Tamil language with *A catechism of Tamil grammar* in 1842. His original Tamil work, written to explain and defend the deity of Christ to Muslims, *Kiṟistuttatuvattīpikai* or 'The scripture doctrine', was published in 1848, though he may have written it earlier than this. During his time in India, George worked in the Tirunelveli region, in Madras, Tanjore (Thanjavur), Sawyerpuram, Ootacamund and Bangalore (Bengaluru), as a teacher and pastor, and he continued to publish an extensive series of grammars and translations. In recognition of this, he was awarded the degree of Doctor of Divinity by the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1864.

After 42 years of missionary and educational labour in various parts of southern India, Pope returned to England in 1881. In 1883, he became the Oxford diocesan secretary of the SPG, and was a lecturer in Tamil and Telugu at Oxford University from 1884 to 1896. He received an honorary MA in 1886 and a Gold Medal from the Royal Asiatic Society in 1906.

Pope was one of the most outstanding European scholars of Tamil, often ranked as 'the first of Tamil scholars' (Cotton, 'Pope, George Uglow', p. 126). He was widely known and is still remembered for his translations of ancient Tamil works (see e.g. Muthiah, 'Who was George Uglow Pope?'). 'He was, indeed, a model missionary. He loved his people and the people loved him', wrote his colleague M. de Z. Wickremasinghe. 'It was no doubt this spirit, rather than the mere exigencies of mission work, that led him to a thorough study of Dravidian literature' ('Rev. G.U. Pope', p. 634). Among his best-known translations are: *The 'Sacred Kural' of Tiruvalluva Nayanar* (London, 1886); *The Naladiyar or four hundred quatrains in Tamil* (Oxford, 1893); *The Tiruvasagam, or 'Sacred utterances' of the Tamil poet, saint and sage Manikka-Vacagar* (Oxford, 1900); and *Manimekhalai, a great epic and one of the five great classics of Tamil* (Madras, 1911).

George Pope died in Oxford in 1908 at the age of 87.

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Kiṟistuttatuvattīpikai
The scripture doctrine

DATE 1848 or earlier
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Tamil

DESCRIPTION

Kiṟistuttatuvattīpikai was Pope's response to those who denied the divinity of Jesus Christ. Its full title is *Kiṟistuttatuvattīpikai.itil: nammuṭaiya iraṭcakarum āṇṭavarumākiya iyēcukkiṟistuvinuṭaiya tanmaiyaikkuṟittup paricutta vētatilaṭaṅkiyirukkiṟa upatēcaṅkaḷ vivarikkappaṭṭum vēta utāraṇaṅkaḷinālē rūpakārappaṭuttappaṭṭumirukkiṉṟana* (rendered by Pope as 'The scripture doctrine', but more literally 'A treatise on Christology: in this book, biblical doctrines about the nature of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ are explained and expounded through examples from the Holy Bible'). It was published in 1848, though V. Thiruvaranganar suggests that, judging by the standard of its language, it must have been written 'during the early days of his acquaintance with Tamil' ('Dr. G.U. Pope', p. 19).

Kiṟistuttatuvattīpikai comprises 12 chapters, together with an introduction and conclusion, running to 220 pages. Each chapter has an introduction and a precise summary at the end. In the introduction, Pope notes

the wide circulation of Socinian writings that reject major Christian doctrines, including the Trinity and the divinity of Christ, and confuse Indian Christians (p. iv). He has therefore written *Kiṟistuttatuvattīpikai* to help native Indian teachers in their arguments against Muslims, who 'read and respect the Holy Scriptures but interpret them on Socinial principles'. He notes that he was helped by the works of Bull, Waterland, Pearson, Dr. T. Jackson, Dr. J.P. Smith, and Dr. Wardlaw in the course of writing it (p. iv). The book is an attempt to explain Christology so that its readers will understand the significance of Jesus's role in the salvation of humankind.

In ch. 1, Pope states that humans cannot know Christ through any innate knowledge of their own but only through revelation, and he gives a detailed account of what the Bible says to show it testifies that he is the Son of God. In ch. 2, he gives the testimonies of early Church Fathers, all of whom agree with the Bible, and, in ch. 3, he insists that the Bible is the touchstone by which the doctrinal teachings of early scholars should be judged. He emphasises that the Bible is authentic and must be studied properly.

In ch. 4, Pope sets out the biblical passages that speak about Jesus's pre-existence and his role in creation, thus supporting his divinity, and, in ch. 5, he presents the Old Testament references to Jesus, citing Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Tertullian and Origen, who affirmed that it was Christ who spoke with and through the Old Testament prophets. He agrees that the 'Angel of the Lord' in the Old Testament is none other than the Christ, who is Lord Jehovah, and argues that, although Jesus and God the Father are different in person, Jesus has the same divine nature, authority and character as the Father and did things that only God could do. The names given to Jesus establish his eternal divinity. In ch. 6, Pope gives a list of biblical passages that contain these names and, in chs 7 and 8, he shows that Jesus had all the characteristics of God and did work that can be done only by God.

In ch. 9, Pope argues that Jesus is worthy of worship because of his divine nature and character. He sets out New Testament passages about the worship of Jesus and declares that men and women today must worship Jesus as God in the same way as the angels, Apostles and others who worshipped him in times past. In ch. 10, he lists the biblical verses that support these arguments by saying that Jesus Christ is God and has both a divine and a human nature, and he urges that it is wrong to pay heed to any teachings or doctrines that deny the divinity of Jesus. In ch. 11, he asserts that worshipping Jesus as God is an essential teaching for evangelical faith and concludes that any teaching that says Christ is not worthy of praise is

a wrong doctrine, and, in ch. 12, he explains the incarnation of Christ and the hypostatic union of the divine and human natures within him.

In the conclusion, Pope emphasises that Christ is God and possesses all the divine characteristics. Humans must exalt Christ in every possible way because to dishonour him is tantamount to disrespecting God. Citing the words of the ancient Tamil poet, 'No fruit have men of all their studied lore, save they the "Purely Wise One's" feet adore' (p. 191), Pope asserts that, unless people praise and worship Jesus as God there is no point in studying the teachings about Jesus. Having the mind of Christ, he urges, Christians should be humble and faithful to God till their last breath in order to fulfil the will of God the Father.

SIGNIFICANCE

Kiṟistuttatuvattīpikai was the first explanation of the nature of Jesus written in Tamil that intended to refute the arguments of Socinians and Muslims against Jesus's divinity. There are currently no indications that it was widely read or influenced later debates or authors.

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Arputharaj Samuel

Gnanasigamony Munishi

Gnanasigamony Sastriar, Ñāṉacikāmaṇi muṉiṣi

DATE OF BIRTH 6 October 1813
PLACE OF BIRTH Tanjore; present-day Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu
DATE OF DEATH 25 November 1877
PLACE OF DEATH Tanjore

BIOGRAPHY

Gnanasigamony Sastriar was the eldest son of the celebrated Tamil evangelical Christian poet Vedanayagam Sastriar (1774-1864). His name Gnanasigamony means in Tamil 'The crest-jewel of wisdom', and he fulfilled this by being known for his wisdom and boldness in expounding the Christian scriptures through songs and preaching. He completed his studies under the Revd John Caspar Kohloff (1771-1844) at Vediarpuram school, Tanjore (now known as St Peter's Higher Secondary School), and then started working as a Tamil teacher in Vediarpuram school and also in the Tanjore seminary, both of which had been established by the noted German Lutheran missionary Christian Friedrich Schwartz (1726-98). In Tanjore seminary, Gnanasigamony taught the Tamil language to European missionaries. He also travelled to various places for public performances of *catur* (an art of extempore story telling that could last many hours). The king of Mysore honoured him with the title *Cuvicēṭa purāṇa piracaṅkiyār* ('Preacher of the evangelical epic').

Two works of dialogue with other faiths by Gnanasigamony's father, Vedanayagam Sastriar, possibly set the context in which he himself also wrote. Sastriar published a booklet entitled *Mahammatu mārkkattār campāṣaṇai* ('A conversation with the people of Mohammedanism', probably late 1822), in which he recounted a conversation he had had with a Muslim called Marub Saib on 26 May 1822, and also *Neca Nirupam* ('Epistle of love', 1827) a response to a Hindu tract entitled *Kiṟistumata kaṇṭaṇa vaccira taṇṭam* ('A condemnation of the Christian religion'), written at the request of European missionaries.

Gnanasigamony is known for two polemical works: in 1850, the Madras Religious Tract Society published *Iru camaya campantam* with the English title *The identity of popery and heathenism*, and in 1855 they published *Mēciyā mahattuvam* with the title *The glory of Christ*. In addition, he is credited with three other books: *Tirittuva viḷakkam* ('Explanation of the Trinity'), *Nāstika kaṇṭanam* ('Against atheism'), and *Makamatu camaya caṅkāram* ('Destruction of the religion of Muḥammad'). Sadly, there is no trace of the last of these.

Gnanasigamony continued to give *catur* performances until his death in Tanjore at the age of 64.

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Mēciyā mahattuvam
'The glory of Christ'

DATE 1853
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Tamil

DESCRIPTION

Mēciyā mahattuvam. Atāvathu Iyēcu meyyāṉa parāparaṇākiya ekōvāvāy irukkiṟareṉpatu ('The glory of Christ, i.e. that Jesus is the true God Jehovah') is a Christian response to *Kiṟistumata kaṇṭaṇa vaccira taṇṭam* ('The rod for correcting, or confuting, Christianity' or 'A diamond club for destroying Christianity', before 1838), a polemical book written by a Muslim named Musthan Saib. According to Gnanasigamony, an attar merchant named Musthan Saib selected some questions from a book written by William Roberts (1768-1838), an Indian Unitarian author, and presented them as his own questions. Although *Mēciyā mahattuvam* primarily gives a response to Saib's questions, it answers the doubts of Unitarians as well. The work comprises 247 pages and is divided into 27 chapters in its 1864 printing. Each chapter starts with a direct quotation of one of Musthan Saib's questions that raise doubts about the Christian belief in the divinity of Jesus Christ. Gnanasigamony then rephrases Saib's question to ensure that he has understood it properly before he provides his answer. At the end of each chapter, he presents some counter questions related to Saib's objections and invites the reader to respond and judge by considering both sides of the arguments.

In chs 1-5, Gnanasigamony seeks to refute Saib's allegations that Jesus was merely a created human being and thus cannot be God, and in chs 6-12, he answers questions that cast doubt on the divine nature of Jesus. In chs 13-21, he responds to Saib's derisive questions attacking Christian belief concerning the relations between Christ's human nature and his divine nature. Ch. 23 gives an account of the appalling death of a Muslim who blasphemed against Jesus, and indirectly serves as a warning to Saib. In chs 22 and 24, Gnanasigamony counters Saib's sceptical questions concerning Jesus's crucifixion and resurrection. In the next two chapters, where he responds to Saib's allegation regarding Jesus's priesthood and his mediating role between humanity and God, he shows that Jesus is more than a human high priest and the eternal mediator. He succinctly contests Saib's

allegation that Jesus was only a human with the argument that, if Jesus is not God, he cannot be the high priest and the mediator as Christian scripture describes. In the final chapter, he replies to Saib's doubts concerning the authenticity of the Gospel, first pointing to the greatness of the Gospel by saying that it contains all that the Old Testament teaches. Further, he refers to Jesus's 'I am' statements in the Gospel of John and says that he is *Vēta kāraṇar* (the source of the scripture).

To sum up, *Mēciyā mahattuvam* attempts to provide answers to some of the most common Muslim accusations against the Bible and Christianity. It also exposes the weaknesses of Saib's questions by providing answers from the biblical context of the verses to which Saib has referred in his attack against Christ's divinity. As Gnanasigamony explains how the Bible supports the Christian doctrine of Jesus, he attempts to prove that the questions raised by Saib are unfounded and against the very message of the Bible that Saib himself has used.

Mēciyā mahattuvam was probably one of the first books written by a native Indian to make a Christian defence against Muslim polemical works. It was 'the original work on the Muhammadan controversy' (Murdock, *Catalogue*, p. 158) written by a Tamil scholar. Gnanasigamony admits that Saib's *Kiṟistumata kaṇṭaṇa vaccira taṇṭam* is capable of affecting Christians who are feeble in their faith and he shows his concern for them by employing a dialogue format and a reader-friendly style. At the time he wrote, scholarly treatises on religious and philosophical subjects were far beyond the reach of ordinary readers because they were written as poems that the common person could not understand or enjoy. Gnanasigamony's approach, providing answers to the questions posed by Saib, appeals to the common reader to consider the validity of the questions and the answers.

Though Gnanasigamony does not mention the names of any other books or authors, apart from John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's progress*, he claims in his preface (p. vi) that he has consulted many works written on the same topics as his own. While he complains that it is 'presumptuous' for Saib to have used the Gospel instead of the Qur'an to invalidate the Christian belief in the divinity of Jesus Christ, he himself uses Muslim works in his defence of the Christian position. Interestingly, to support his case for the virgin birth and the divine nature of Jesus, he refers to common Muslim beliefs about Jesus's birth and cites the expression *rūḥ minhu* ('a spirit from [Allāh]' in Q 4:171, p. 152) that is applied to ʿĪsā. Further, he quotes a Muslim Tamil poem that contains a prayer addressed to Jesus, in which the poet (he states that the poet was well-known, but does not give his

name) mentions Maryam's conception of ʿĪsā by the spirit of God and also the sinless nature of ʿĪsā, who performed miracles and was given the *Injīl* (pp. 153-4). The unknown Muslim poet addresses his prayer to ʿĪsā and says that he is the one true God. Further, when Gnanasigamony writes about the greatness of the Gospel, he questions Saib's position, asking what caused him to reject the Gospel, which was revered by his Muslim predecessors as scripture (pp. 229-30). He answers Saib's accusations with the same scripture passages that Saib has used to attack Christian belief about the divinity of Jesus.

SIGNIFICANCE

Following the publication of *Mēciyā mahattuvam* in 1853, a Sri Lankan Tamil Christian author named Simon Casie Chitty (1807-60) wrote another polemic against Musthan Saib's book in 1854. This was *Kutarkkatikkāram* ('Refutation of improper arguments'), which was described by D.E.P. Hettiaratchi in 1927 as 'an answer to a gross libel on Christianity' ('Some literary undertakings', p. 7). Apart from this description, nothing more about Chitty's book is known, but since Gnanasigamony and his family were quite popular among Sri Lankan Tamils, as they often visited the country, it is not improbable that *Mēciyā mahattuvam* set a precedent and motivated Chitty to write a similar refutation.

PUBLICATIONS

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Ñāṇacikāmaṇi muṇiṣi, *Mēciyā mahattuvam*, Madras, 1864[2] (without any major changes)

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Devanesan, *Vētanāyakam cāstiriyār*, pp. 154-64

D.P.E. Hettiaratchi, 'Some literary undertakings of the late Simon Casie Chitty', *Journal of the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain & Ireland* 30/80 (1927) 455-60

Gnanadickam Sastriar, *Vētanāyakam cāstiriyār*, p. 32

Murdoch, *Catalogue*, p. 158 (contains a brief description of the work)

Arputharaj Samuel

Karl Gottlieb Pfander

Carl; Charles

DATE OF BIRTH 1803
PLACE OF BIRTH Waiblingen, Würtemberg, Germany
DATE OF DEATH 1865
PLACE OF DEATH England

BIOGRAPHY

Karl Gottlieb Pfander was a German Christian missionary who is best known for his work in South Asia over a period of 19 years, and especially for his appeal to Muslims written in Persian titled *Mīzān al-ḥaqq*. Sources on his life and work are relatively abundant and include his own letters from the field, mission reports and records, mission histories, and descriptions of his behaviour and writings from first-hand observers in South Asia (both supporters and opponents; see Powell, 'Muslim-Christian confrontation', pp. 90-1). His life, methods, writings and legacy portrayed in these sources have probably been contested as vigorously as those of any other participant in Christian-Muslim engagement in South Asia during the 19th century.

Pfander was born in Waiblingen in the Württemberg region of Germany. He was brought up in the Pietist tradition, came to faith at the age of 16, and showed an interest in Christian mission from an early age. In 1821, he began his studies at the Basel Missionary Seminary and, while engaged in biblical and theological studies, showed ability in languages, including Arabic. He also began his study of the Qur'an.

In 1825, the Basel Missionary Society assigned Pfander to evangelistic work in Shusha, in the province of Karabagh, present-day Georgia, where he visited people in the bazaars and distributed the New Testament and tracts in Turkish and Persian. He also sought to increase his knowledge of Persian and Arabic, and in this effort went as far as Baghdad, where he stayed for some time. As a result of the contacts he made, he felt a pressing need for literature that dealt in more detail with the questions that most frequently emerged in conversations about religion. When he requested such literature from his more senior Basel mission colleagues, they assigned him to prepare the material he needed himself ('The

Mizan-ul-haq, Miftah-ul-asrar, and Tariq-ul-hayat', p. 47). He completed the manuscript of *Waage der Wahrheit* ('Balance of truth') in German in 1829.

In 1833, Pfander married Sophia Reuss, who died in 1835. He worked to produce a Persian version of *Waage*, which was published as *Mīzān al-ḥaqq* in 1835 and distributed in Persia and Russia. He also composed two further treatises in German, translated into Persian as *Miftāḥ al-asrār* ('The key of mysteries') and *Ṭarīq al-ḥayāt* ('The way of life'), but these were not published because the work of the Basel missionary team in Shusha was brought to an end by the Russian government in 1836.

By 1838, Pfander had settled in Calcutta and was accepted as a worker of the Church Missionary Society (CMS), 'after lengthy negotiations related to episcopal ordination' (Ledderhose, 'Pfander', p. 598). One of his first projects was to publish *Mīzān* and *Miftāḥ* in Calcutta in 1839, followed by *Ṭarīq* in 1840. In 1841, he married Elizabeth Emma Swinbourne, and was posted in the same year to the CMS mission in Agra ('Movements among Mahommedans', p. 252). For the next 17 years, Pfander's work consisted largely of preaching publicly in city markets in local languages, running the mission schools, arranging translations and new editions of his works, and replying to South Asian Muslims' written responses to what he had written.

In Agra, Pfander published his three treatises in Urdu (*Mīzān*, 1843; *Miftāḥ*, 1843; *Ṭarīq* 1847). His books in Persian and Urdu were distributed widely in South Asia and started to draw written responses from Muslim scholars. Pfander wrote replies to these responses, his Urdu *Ḥall ul-ishkāl* ('Solution of ambiguity', 1847) being an answer to *Kitāb-i istifsār* ('Book of questions', by Āl-i Ḥasan, Lucknow, 1845, a Muslim response to his own *Mīzān*), and *Kashf al-astār* ('Unveiling of the curtain', by Muḥammad Hādī, Lucknow, 1845, a Muslim response to Pfander's *Miftāḥ*). All four of Pfander's books saw repeated printings throughout the 19th century, often in new editions, and continued to be recommended in Christian bibliographies well into the 20th century (Weitbrecht, *Descriptive catalogue*, pp. 65-71; Wherry, *Muslim controversy*, pp. 2-14). Some modern writers have called Pfander a 'polemicist' (e.g. Ahmad, *Islamic modernism*, p. 26; Daniel, 'Polemics', p. 7244), but a plain reading of his books in fact shows that he was probing the roots of Islamic faith and life only in a relatively short section of *Mīzān*.

Pfander's *Ḥall* led to a public discussion with the author of *Kashf* held in Lucknow in 1848 (Pfander, 'Movements among Mahommedans',



Illustration 6. Karl Gottlieb Pfander

pp. 252-3). A better-known public discussion was held in Agra in 1854. Pfander felt obliged to accept the challenge (Pfander, 'Movements among Mahommedans', p. 254) from Raḥmatullāh Kairānavī, who had published two books against his writings, *Izālat al-awhām* ('Removal of delusions', 1852-3) and *Aṣaḥḥ al-aḥādīth fī ibṭāl al-tathlīth* ('Most clear sayings in refutation of the Trinity', 1854), though the meeting foundered on the second day through disagreements over the status of the Bible. A number of widely divergent accounts of the debate were published soon after, including Pfander's own *Ikhtitām dīnī mubāḥasah kā* ('Conclusion of the religious discussion') in the following year (Powell, 'Maulānā Raḥmat Allāh Kairānawī', pp. 54-8; Powell, *Muslims and missionaries*, pp. 242-62; but cf. Becht, 'Offenbarungsschrift und Offenbarungträger', pp. 138-41; Neill, *History*, pp. 459-60).

During the same year as the Agra discussion, Christians among the British civil servants in Peshawar were asking the CMS to send workers, and Pfander was assigned to establish the mission there in 1855 (Stock, *History*, pp. 208-13). Pfander wrote about his ministry routine in 1856, 'I preach regularly four evenings a week in the bazaars of the military station and twice in the morning in the city, partly in Hindustani, partly in Persian' (Ledderhose, 'Pfander', p. 599). He also completed a written response to the most recent written attacks by Muslims in Delhi and Agra. In 1858, the CMS assigned Pfander to Istanbul as its first worker on site there. He oversaw the translation of his books into Turkish and released his *Mīzān* after a Turkish anti-Christian polemical work, *Shams ul-hagigat* ('The sun of truth') was published in Istanbul in 1862. Pfander went on to

write a separate book, *Raf' al-shubahāt* ('Dissipation of doubts') to answer the particular accusations levelled in this work. The copies of Pfander's new book, however, were confiscated by the Turkish government in July 1864, when the Turkish police attacked the premises of the CMS, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel and the Bible Society, and closed them (*Church Missionary Intelligencer* [1864] pp. 212 and pp. 222-3; Stock, *History*, p. 154).

From Istanbul, Pfander and Elizabeth went to England, Elizabeth's home. She was ill when they arrived, but it was Pfander who died suddenly on 1 December 1865. Stephen Neill wrote that he 'desired that no biography of him should be written' (*History*, p. 526 n. 11), but a good deal has nevertheless been written about him, and his life and writings have raised a range of issues for a number of his biographers. During the 19th century and into the early 20th, evaluations of his life were mainly positive and even laudatory. Later in the 20th century, however, several influential evaluations painted a rather negative portrait, some with a touch of disdain. Discussions of Pfander's significance have revolved around four main issues: his contribution to Christian-Muslim engagement as a German Pietist; the scholarly characterisation of his work; the question of his involvement in colonialism; and the relationship of his writings to Orientalism.

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Mīzān al-ḥaqq
Waage der Wahrheit
'The balance of truth'

DATE 1835
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Persian

DESCRIPTION

Pfander's *Mīzān al-ḥaqq* is a Christian appeal to Muslim readers to accept the authenticity of the Bible, to read it and to consider its teachings. Pfander composed it in German in 1829 while working as a missionary with the Basel Missionary Society in Shusha (then in Karabagh under Russian rule but close to the Persian border at the time; now part of Georgia). He did not himself plan to write the book, but was given the

task when he asked his mission colleagues for literature to aid him in his evangelism among Muslims and was instead assigned to write the book himself ('The Mizan-ul-haq, Miftah-ul-asrar, and Tariq-ul-hayat', *Church Missionary Intelligencer* 10 [1859] 47-8, p. 47).

Pfander completed his handwritten German draft, titled *Waage der Wahrheit* and running to 413 pages, in 1829 while he was in Shusha. After producing Armenian (1831) and Azeri (1832) versions of the text, he then set to work on a Persian translation, *Kitāb mīzān al-ḥaqq*, published in typeset script in Shusha in 1835. This original Persian version is 272 pages long, including a final section titled *Ḥikāyā* ('Narratives'), containing the testimonies of seven converts to Christianity (pp. 234-72). Pfander published a second Persian edition 316 pages long in Calcutta in 1839, after he had moved to India in 1838. This is the edition on which the following description is based. The Persian *Mīzān* circulated in Persia in the late 1830s and widely in South Asia during the 1840s and after. An Urdu translation appeared in 1843. The work turned out to be one of the best examples of a type of Christian-Muslim written engagement that takes seriously the truth or falsehood of religious claims, including the central beliefs of the partner, while inviting the partner to a friendly, respectful and reasonable conversation.

Mīzān opens with an Introduction which, after offering general considerations on human happiness and the limits of human reason, proposes a set of five criteria for determining a true revelation of God (pp. 1-15). The first is that a true revelation must satisfy the cravings of the human soul for eternal happiness. The other criteria require that a true revelation must not go against the human conscience that God has given; must not go against the holiness of God; must represent God as being one, eternal, almighty, omniscient, gracious and creator of the heavens and the earth, since these traits of God are recognisable when observing the universe; and cannot contain logical contradictions. The book is then divided into three parts. The first makes a case for the authenticity and reliability of the Bible (pp. 15-49), and the second sets out, on the basis of the first part, the major Christian teachings (pp. 49-188). The third part raises questions as to whether Muḥammad can be judged a true prophet of God, and whether the Qur'an can be called the word of God (pp. 189-270).

Part I aims to bring Muslim readers to an understanding that the Torah and Gospel referred to in the Qur'an are both genuine and extant, and are in fact the same scriptures that Christians use in modern times. In ch. 1 he briefly presents the Qur'an's respectful testimony to the Torah and Gospel as a declaration that these are indeed inspired books and the word of God

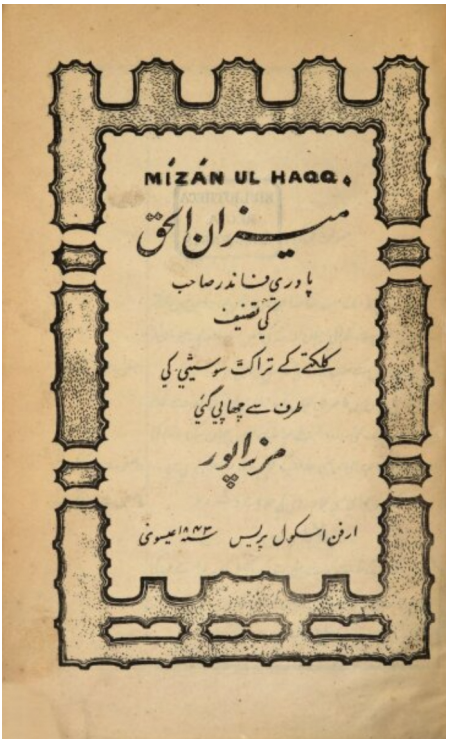


Illustration 7. Title page of the first Urdu edition of *Mīzān ul-ḥaqq*

(pp. 15-18). On this basis, Pfander urges Muslim readers to accept and read the Bible. He argues in ch. 2 that the relationship of the Gospel to the Torah is not one of abrogation but rather accord (pp. 18-31), offering as support the commandments of Jesus in the Gospel accounts that not only affirm the Torah but also deepen its meaning. The implications Pfander draws from this are that the Qur'an does not therefore abrogate the Torah and Gospel, and that the doctrines and precepts of the Gospel remain in force for Muslims, as for all nations of the world.

Ch. 3 (pp. 31-49) begins with a list of several traditions about the formation of the Qur'an that suggest uncertainty and doubt. These come from *Mishkāt al-maṣābīḥ*, the collection of authoritative Hadith by Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-Khaṭīb al-Tibrīzī (fl. 1337), which is an expansion and revision of the earlier *Maṣābīḥ al-sunna* ('Lamps of the *sunna*'), compiled by Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn al-Baghawī (d. 1122). Pfander's intention here is to show that, while Muslims cannot actually explain when and

how the Torah and Gospel were allegedly corrupted, the Muslim sources themselves offer a story of Muslim tampering with the Qur'an. He follows this with a series of questions that probe the reasonableness and feasibility of accusations against the Bible, such as the likelihood that Jews and Christians could have conspired together to falsify the Torah in their possession in exactly the same way. Pfander then makes the case that the Muslim accusation that Jews and Christians changed their scriptures in response to the appearance of Muḥammad can be dealt with directly by reference to extant biblical manuscripts dating from pre-Islamic times. He mentions the existence of the *Vaticanus*, *Alexandrinus* and *Ephraemi* codices, some from as early as 250 years 'before the hijra' (p. 39), and points out that it is possible to compare texts of the Bible dating from before and after the rise of Islam in order to detect any changes. He also appeals to the witness of the many biblical quotations contained in the writings of the Church Fathers, also pre-dating Islam. The traditions of Islam tell a story of the destruction of manuscripts of the Qur'an, Pfander writes, while in modern Europe ancient manuscripts of the Bible are treasured and kept in public places such as libraries for all to see. Why then accuse the Bible of having been corrupted and falsified? Pfander suggests that the accusation was invented by Muslims when they became aware that the contents of the Bible contradicted much of Islamic teaching.

Part II begins with a survey of the books of the Bible, what they contain, and how they are arranged (pp. 49-59). Pfander then takes up the biblical precepts and doctrines that he asserts are incumbent on Muslims on the basis of his arguments in Part I. Ch. 1 gives a brief explanation of the attributes of God and God's will for humankind (pp. 59-66), ch. 2 introduces an extensive passage on the fallen state of humankind (pp. 66-92), ch. 3 the way of salvation through the Messiah (pp. 92-128), and ch. 4 the way in which humans may obtain that salvation (pp. 128-44). Pfander appeals to the witness of the individual conscience and heart to argue that no one perfectly keeps God's law, but rather everyone knows of sin and impurity within. God will punish the guilty according to their transgressions. Since humans are not able to bear the consequences of their sins, they must look for a way of deliverance. God in his love and mercy made the way (ch. 3), and that is through the death and resurrection of Jesus. From Adam through Abraham, Moses and the prophets of the Old Testament, God signalled the salvation to come. Here, Pfander also briefly addresses questions about Jesus's deity, divine sonship and incarnation, matters that he claims must be accepted by faith because they go beyond

human understanding. Salvation is obtained by faith, he asserts in ch. 4, and that too is a gift of God's grace. Pfander explains the work of the Holy Spirit according to the New Testament, and from there offers a number of simple illustrations of 'three in one' to make a case for the divine Trinity. The work of the Holy Spirit includes bringing about the new birth of the believer.

Pfander next asserts in ch. 5 (pp. 144-61) that the Holy Spirit also motivates and empowers the true Christian to do good works in obedience to God. The Christian follows God's law from love and thankfulness and, when in need or difficulty, looks not to the government but only to God. Pfander describes Christian prayer as a continual conversation with the heavenly Father, having no set external form. Christians live at peace with all people, and their charity is extended to all, including enemies. They work faithfully in their trade or profession to earn their living while they strive for spiritual completeness. Christians are certainly not perfect, but they live with the hope that, after they die, Jesus will raise them from the dead and they will live in his presence with joy.

At this point in the progress of Part II, Pfander returns to the theme of Part I, evidently to use the content of the preceding five chapters to argue further that the Bible is the word of God. In a series of seven points, he asserts that the Bible satisfies the cravings of the human heart, produces changes in one's heart and life, and sets out the attributes of God as no other writing can (ch. 6, pp. 161-73). That the Bible shows itself to be the word of God in its deep spiritual content and tone, in prediction and fulfilment, in the miracles of Jesus and in his resurrection from the dead, and in the spread of the Christian faith by peaceful preaching.

Part II ends with an expansion on this final point – how the Christian faith first spread (ch. 7, pp. 173-88). Beginning with the New Testament history of the Church in the Acts of the Apostles and the epistles, Pfander attempts to trace the story up to the end of the third century. He cites references to Christians in Roman authors and points out qur'anic verses that mention the *ḥawāriyyūn* ('disciples', e.g. Q 3:52). He also indicates how Muslim commentators variously identified the unnamed apostles in Q 36:13-27 as Paul, John and Peter. Pfander writes explicitly that believers were never commanded to spread the religion of the Messiah by means of holy war. In fact, the Christian faith spread everywhere and Christians were persecuted and martyred, but they never rebelled. After Constantine made Christianity legal in the fourth century, the quality of Christian discipleship began a downward trend.

Part III moves beyond affirmation of Christian teaching and the reliability of the Bible to consider the claims Islam makes for Muḥammad and the Qur'an. In addition to the five criteria laid down in the introduction, Part III proposes four new criteria for determining true prophethood. Among these, Pfander asserts that the personal character and actions of anyone professing to be a prophet must be examined. He first looks at the claims of Muslim scholars that Muḥammad was foretold in the Bible (ch. 1, pp. 191-201), quoting the prediction attributed to Jesus in Q 61:6. He considers and responds to claims that particular verses refer to Muḥammad: Deuteronomy 18:15, 18; Psalm 45:3, 4; Isaiah 42:1-4, 11; Isaiah 21:7; John 14:16, 17, 26; and Mark 1:7. Pfander concludes that none of these verses prefigures the career of Muḥammad and offers in their place the predictions of Jesus in Matthew 24:24-6 and 7:15 that false prophets would appear.

Ch. 2 addresses the question of whether the excellence of the language and style of the Qur'an prove that it is the word of God (pp. 201-6). Pfander dismisses the power of this alleged proof in a series of four points, among them the assertion that any who want to claim this distinction for the Qur'an in Arabic would need to become proficient in many other languages in order to compare the Qur'an with the scriptures in other religions that their devotees claim to have miraculous eloquence. Another point shifts it to the subject of the following chapter – it is possible that unworthy content may be expressed in language that some would consider extremely elegant.

Pfander begins ch. 3, on the contents of the Qur'an (pp. 206-35), by noting what he considers positive material, which he says Muḥammad learned from Jews and Christians. Then he examines the qur'anic narratives about biblical characters, evaluating them against the biblical accounts. He indicates many errors as well as the inclusion of stories and traditions from outside the Bible. He writes that the Qur'an contains many things that conflict with the most important truths of the Gospel, and gives a series of eight examples, largely related to the deity of Jesus and his redemptive death but also including Jesus's command to love one's enemies and do good to them. He determines at this point, on the basis of the Qur'an's contradictions of biblical teaching, that the Qur'an cannot be the word of God. But then he adds two longer 'proofs'.

Pfander judges that the contents of the Qur'an are unable to satisfy the desire of the human soul for salvation and assurance, returning to a criterion set out in the Introduction. In this connection, he asserts that Muḥammad cannot be the mediator that Muslims confess him to be,

because he was a sinner. The Qur'an's commands to fight and kill give a false idea of God according to the standard of the New Testament, and these commands even contradict other parts of the Qur'an. The portrayal of heaven in the Qur'an is also at variance with the holiness of God, and many verses seem to circumscribe the free will of humans. Pfander closes the chapter with a critique of Islamic teachings on abrogation and multiplicity of meanings, and offers a lesson on principles of interpretation.

Ch. 4 sets out to examine the personal character and conduct of Muḥammad, with the stated aim of testing the Muslim claim for his prophethood (pp. 235-57). Pfander first discusses at length whether Muḥammad performed miracles or foretold future events. He argues that the Qur'an does not support a claim of miracles, quoting several passages that deny this ability to the 'messenger'. On this basis, he judges Muslim extra-qur'anic claims for miracles to be ascribing falsehood to the Qur'an and presents a series of arguments against the claim that Muḥammad split the moon. Pfander writes that mere traditions about supposed miracles cannot be accepted as evidence, and then later contrasts this with what he considers the evidence of eyewitness testimony to the miracles of Jesus described in the Gospel. He also denies that there was any evidence that Muḥammad possessed the gift of prophecy in the sense of foretelling events.

Pfander then opens the subject of Muḥammad's wives and devotes particular attention to Q 33 and the traditional Muslim story of Zayd and Zaynab. Quoting Q 33:37 and citing Muslim commentaries on the verse, he asserts that such passages portray Muḥammad as being full of sensual desires and he also cites verses that could not have been revealed by a holy God. These verses are entirely Muḥammad's own composition, writes Pfander, and they put in doubt other passages that claim to be from God. For example, he writes that Muḥammad recited Q 2:217 as a justification for the attack on the Quraysh caravan narrated in early Muslim sources as the beginning of violence. Pfander also refers to several assassinations attributed to Muḥammad in early Muslim narratives, as well as to the massacre of the Jewish tribe of Banū Qurayẓa. He bases his statements about Muḥammad on the Qur'an and popular Muslim commentaries, on Hadith collections in use at the time, and on the *Sīra* of Ibn Isḥāq and other popular Muslim accounts, which he names. (Later editions and translations of *Mīzān* also refer to the 1843 work by Gustav Weil, *Mohammed der Prophet*, noting that Weil based his book on the same Muslim materials.) Pfander claims that, according to the Muslim narratives, the decisions Muḥammad

made show instability of character. Pfander credits the temporal success of Islam to the desire among Muḥammad's followers for conquest, spoil, dominion and prosperity.

Ch. 5 follows on from this last point to address the remarkable territorial expansion of Islam, from the story in the Muslim narratives of the attack on the Quraysh caravan at Badr through the conquest of Mecca and on to conquests of wider territory under the caliphs Abū Bakr and ʿUmar (pp. 257-70). Pfander also recounts the conquests of Arabia, Syria, Egypt and Persia. But the evaluation of the nature of these events as the Muslim sources represent them is by no means obvious, and Pfander understands the Arab conquests to be the spread of Islam by the sword. He characterises the acceptance of Islam by individuals or groups as being out of fear of attack, self-interested desire for booty or other advantages associated with being Muslim. Having been coerced into Islam, he continues, Muslims are now compelled to remain in the religion upon pain of death. But truth cannot be proved by the sword, he claims, and people cannot be forced to love God. This evidently leads him to an assertion that a religion that permits its members to use compulsion and war in order to bring in others cannot be from God. He then reminds the reader of his description of the early spread of Christianity in the last chapter of Part II and allows the comparison to stand.

Pfander concludes the book by rejoicing in the spread and number of Christian missionaries in the world and the fruit of their witness, which he calls a sign of the last days. He then makes a direct appeal to Muslim readers to accept the gospel invitation he has presented (pp. 267-70). Early Persian editions of *Mīzān*, like the original German draft, attached a set of seven narratives about converts to Christianity in various nations (pp. 271-316 in the second Persian edition, including an account of ʿAbdulmasīḥ [*CMR* 24, 136-47], pp. 303-9).

SIGNIFICANCE

Mīzān al-ḥaqq is one of the best-known writings on Christian-Muslim relations, certainly in South Asia in the 19th century and since, but perhaps also in the full fourteen centuries of Christian-Muslim engagement. It is the first work of Christian-Muslim dialogue written by a European Christian and fashioned through extensive interaction with Muslims in territories where they were numerous, to be published in local Muslim languages and distributed widely among Muslim readers in Asia. Very soon after the publication of the first Persian edition, Pfander, en route to India, heard that the book 'had excited great attention' in Persia, as reported by

William Muir, who recorded anecdotal evidence of widespread reading and discussion of the book at early stages of its distribution in north India ('The Mahommedan controversy', *Calcutta Review* 4 [1845] 418-75, pp. 446-7; 'Biographies of Mohammed for India. The Mohammedan controversy', *Calcutta Review* 17 [1852] 387-421, p. 418). Later, after observing Pfander's work for three years in Peshawar, Herbert Edwardes wrote, 'The Moslem doctors of Turkey, Persia, Affghanistan, and India, have never had such a bone to pick as Pfander's "Mizan-ul-Haqq"' ('The late Rev. Charles Gottlieb Pfander, D.D.', p. 101). In 1875, 'Imāduddīn wrote that *Mīzān* had been 'very widely circulated and very generally read' ('The results of the controversy in north India with Mohammedans', *Church Missionary Intelligencer* 10 [1875] 276-80, p. 276). It continued to be printed throughout the 19th century in many translations and multiple editions and was recommended in Christian bibliographies (e.g. H.U. Weitbrecht, *A descriptive catalogue and review of Urdu Christian literature, 1886-1901*, Lahore, 1902, p. 68). Just a few years into the 20th century, E.M. Wherry estimated that it 'aroused more discussion among Muhammadans than any book written in [the 19th] century' (Wherry, *Muslim controversy*, p. 1). In 1932, and also writing from India, L. Bevan Jones concurred with that estimate and qualified it with 'any book written for Muslims' at all (*The people of the mosque*, London, 1932, p. 238).

The book is crucial for understanding Christian-Muslim relations on the eve of the 20th century because it was written out of a practical knowledge of traditional Muslim accusations against the Bible, what Ignaz Goldziher later diagnosed as the *Kernpunkt* of Muslim polemic ('Über muhammedanische Polemik gegen Ahl al-kitâb', *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 32 (1878) 341-87, pp. 363-4). The first section makes a positive case from the Qur'an for the genuineness and credibility of the Bible and briefly answers the accusations of abrogation and corruption. If appropriate and meaningful dialogue is to take place, the participants would need to allow the contents of both Bible and Qur'an into the conversation. But dialogue could not even begin if Muslims refused to give credence to the Bible on the basis of the accusation that it was corrupt, falsified or abrogated. The priority given to this subject in *Mīzān* seems to have been justified by subsequent developments: both written and public Muslim responses to Pfander's writings primarily attacked the authenticity of the Bible (Kairānavī, *Izālat al-awhām*, *Iʿjāz-i ʿĪsavī*, *Iẓhār al-ḥaqq*; see Powell, 'Maulānā Raḥmat Allāh Kairānawī', pp. 51-7; Schirrmacher, 'Muslim apologetics', pp. 78-81). Even decades later, writes Avril Powell, and despite any intervening Christian responses, the Indian *'ulamā'* 'continued to

affirm that the *tahrīf* issue was central to their objections to Christianity' ('Muslim-Christian confrontation', p. 89).

Muslim refutations, however, did not generally pick up on what Pfander wrote about the Qur'an and Muḥammad in Part III of *Mīzān*. Instead, the response from Muslim scholars in India tended towards rationalist objections to Christian doctrines and arguments from European biblical criticism. Pfander's use of Islamic sources for the story of Muḥammad and the sayings attributed to him has rarely been examined or even noted in Western scholarship, and possibly never with nuance. Clinton Bennett suggests that Pfander's knowledge of Islam, 'based primarily on the Qur'an, was probably more accurate than that of many of his contemporaries, who relied only on European sources' ('Legacy', p. 77). Pfander's knowledge of the earliest sources available to him in Persian and Arabic could reasonably be seen as an academic advance or a movement towards meaningful engagement with his Muslim interlocutors. Curiously he has seldom been granted credit for either. In *Mīzān*, he claimed to be passing on the account from the Muslim narratives, while in his brief *Remarks on the nature of Muhammadanism, traditions* (Calcutta, 1840), he worked comfortably with both Sunnī and Shīʿī collections of Hadith. His use of these foundational sources is not the perpetuation of medieval polemic based on ignorance and fear, but can rather be understood as a pioneering reading of the sources in their original languages and sometimes in manuscript, in the light of the most recent academic research, along with a Christian response. Whether or not Pfander could be 'fundamentally sympathetic to Muhammad or to Islam' after becoming familiar with the sources, as Norman Daniel seemed to require (*Islam and the West, the making of an image*, Edinburgh, 1960, p. 287), could appropriately be kept separate from the fact that he did show considerable familiarity with them.

Perhaps because of its notoriety and the response it drew, *Mīzān* has attracted a number of influential characterisations ranging from the very positive to the rather negative. Muir, writing in India in the midst of the expanding circulation of the book in Persian and Urdu translations, judged it to be of 'extraordinary value' ('The Mahommedan controversy', p. 435), praising its contents, arguments, style and printed appearance, and even recommending the immediate printing of ten thousand copies (pp. 444-6, 465, 475, 540). At the CMS, the book was known as 'a mild, temperate, and very able vindication of Christianity from the misrepresentations of Mohammedanism. It is defensive, and, of necessity, controversial, and in a becoming spirit' ('Dr. Pfander's works', *Christian Missionary Intelligencer* 15

(1864) 222-4, p. 222). And an official of the East India Company wrote from the North-West Frontier that

> [n]ext to the New Testament itself, it is the book most likely to be of use among Mohammedans. The contrast between Christianity and the religion of Islam is made so strong and in such moderate language, that it seemed to create an anxiety for future inquiry and investigation. (quoted in Muir, 'The Mahommedan controversy', p. 446)

On the other hand, Bevan Jones wrote in 1932, 'Despite the vogue Pfander's writings once had, it has to be admitted that they chiefly serve today as a guide to something better'. In particular, he faulted Pfander for including negative criticisms of Islamic teachings and of the character of Muḥammad (*The people of the mosque*, pp. 238-9). Even so, *Mīzān* continued to be printed through the second half of the 20th century, especially in the revised edition produced by William St Clair Tisdall in 1910 (Powell, *Muslims and missionaries*, p. 297). Christine Schirrmacher suggests that, in the modern Muslim world, *Mīzān* 'continues to excite debate' and reports publication of Arabic and English editions as recent at 1986 ('Muslim apologetics', p. 76).

Mīzān attracted a number of responses and refutations from Muslim writers, including a government official at Agra as early as 1845 in a book titled *Kitāb-i istifsār* ('Book of questions') (Muir, 'Biographies of Mohammed for India', pp. 411-17; Stock, *History*, vol. 2, p. 170; Powell, *Muslims and missionaries*, pp. 226-7); from ʿAlī l-Baḥrānī in his *Kitāb lisān al-ṣidq* (1890; U. Ryad, "Alī l-Baḥrānī", *CMR* 18, 555-8); into the 20th century from ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Muḥammad al-Jazīrī in 1934. In Iran, at least five responses were published in the 19th century: *Mīzān al-mawāzīn fī amr al-dīn* (1871) by Najaf ʿAlī Khān Dānish Tabrīzī (d. 1891) (*CMR* 20, 222-4); *Qiwām al-umma fī radd shayāṭīn al-kufra* (1873) by Āqā Najafī Iṣfahānī (d. c. 1914) (*CMR* 20, 236-9); *Hidāyat al-mustarshidīn, fī radd al-muḍillīn* (1888) and *Hidāyat al-jāḥidīn* (1888) by Muḥammad Taqī Kāshānī (d. 1903) (*CMR* 20, 257-60); and *Ḥusām al-dīn dar ithbāt-i taḥrīf-i Tawrāt u Injīl* (1891) by Muḥammad Khān Kirmānī (1846-1906) (*CMR* 20, 272-5). The best-known response came from Raḥmatullāh Kairānavī in his *Izālat al-awhām* (1852-3), *Iʿjāz-i ʿĪsavī* (1854-5) and *Iẓhār al-ḥaqq* (1867-8). Less well-known is the book's influence on the conversions of a number of Indian Muslims to Christianity and on their subsequent writings, among them Ṣafdar ʿAlī ('The two converts', *Church Missionary Intelligencer*, new series 2 (1866) 41-51, p. 46; Powell, *Muslims and missionaries*, p. 289) and ʿImāduddīn Lāhiz ('The results of the controversy in north India with Mohammedans',

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Kitāb Miftāḥ al-asrār
'The key to mysteries'

DATE 1836
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Persian

DESCRIPTION

Pfander wrote *Miftāḥ al-asrār* to make a case for the deity of Jesus and the doctrine of the Trinity. Written in German in about 1836 and translated into Persian by Pfander himself while he was serving as a Basel Missionary in Shusha, Karabagh, it is 89 pages long in the first edition, which was published in Calcutta in 1839. After writing *Mīzān al-ḥaqq*, he felt that the deity of Christ required a more complete and explicit treatment than he had provided in Part II of that work ('The Mizan-ul-haq, Miftah-ul-asrar, and Tariq-ul-hayat', *Church Missionary Intelligencer* 10 [1859] 47-8).

Together with an introduction of ten pages, *Miftāḥ* comprises two parts. The first sets out the teaching of the Bible on the deity (*ulūhiyyat*) of Jesus Christ in three chapters (32 pages) and the second sets out the teaching on the Trinity (*taʿlīm-i taslīs*) in three further chapters (47 pages). In the introduction, Pfander briefly mentions the high regard shown to ʿĪsā in the Qur'an and adds that the truth about the identity of Jesus is not determined by reason alone but is accepted from revelation, by which he means the Old and New Testaments. He affirms that the concepts of Jesus's deity, his divine Sonship and the Trinity are mysteries (*asrār*), and the key (*miftāḥ*) to these is faith in the word of God, the Bible.

Pfander's case for the deity of Jesus in Part I (pp. 11-42) begins with the words of Jesus in the Gospel accounts about his identity. In ch. 2 he presents evidence for the deity of Jesus in the other writings of the New Testament, and in ch. 3 he cites passages from the Old Testament that Christians have understood to be prophecies about the deity of Jesus. He first advances Gospel passages in which Jesus claims divine attributes for himself, uses the term 'God' (*Khūdā*) for himself or permits it to be used of him by others (pp. 11-21), and then quotes passages in which Jesus refers to himself as the Son of God, together with others in which an angel or a voice from heaven calls Jesus by this title. Among the verses he cites and explains are the 'I am' sayings in the Gospel of John, where Jesus claims for himself an identity Pfander considers far above the merely human.

In ch. 2 (pp. 21-31), Pfander complements the evidence of the Gospel accounts with passages in the writings of the Apostles that declare the deity of Jesus, explaining what these mean when they call Jesus 'Son of God'. In ch. 3, he argues that the Old Testament shows Christ as the eternal Word and the revealer of the divine nature, and also that the universe was created through him (pp. 31-42).

Part II, on the Christian doctrine of the Trinity (pp. 42-89), starts with an assurance to the Muslim reader that Christians believe in only one God. Understandably, this is repeated throughout ch. 1 (pp. 42-54). Although the names 'Father', 'Son' and 'Holy Spirit', under which God reveals Himself, express differences in person, there is still only one God. Pfander's 'proof' of the divinity of the Holy Spirit is an exposition of verses and passages in the Bible that refer to the three Persons of the Trinity. After he has made his case from scripture, he then shows in ch. 2 that the idea of Trinity in Unity is in no way absurd (pp. 54-72). Unity in multiplicity is found in nature, and the idea of a Trinity is not foreign to other religions. The doctrine is in accord with sound reason and the highest intelligence, yet it remains a mystery.

Pfander adds in ch. 3 (pp. 72-89) that the discussion of the Son of God and the Holy Spirit must include theological considerations such as divine attributes. This is because a doctrine of absolute unity in simplicity would lead to the paring away of attributes such as knowledge, will and power from God. He asserts that the divine attributes of justice, holiness and love are most clearly revealed in Jesus Christ and he finally appeals to his readers to accept the deity of Jesus so that they may benefit from his atoning sacrifice and his intercession for humankind.

SIGNIFICANCE

Just a few years after *Miftāḥ* was first published in Calcutta in 1839, William Muir wrote a description and analysis of the Persian text in the *Calcutta Review* ('The Mahommedan controversy', pp. 437-42). He generally found Part I satisfactory but was not able to say the same about Pfander's arguments in Part II to 'reconcile the mystery of trinity in unity with the conclusions of sound reason' (p. 439). He understood Pfander to be making the case 'that there are marks in creation which do plainly indicate the Trinity of the Creator', though he himself thought that the illustrations Pfander offered proved nothing, and to claim too much from them invited ridicule. As Muir himself saw the matter, it was very unlikely that humans would think of the doctrine of the Trinity without the assistance of revelation. Writing more than 150 years later in 1993, Avril Powell faulted the book for opposite reasons (*Muslims and missionaries*, pp. 139-43). To her, Pfander's emphasis on the importance of revelation for understanding the deity of Jesus and the doctrine of the Trinity was a 'rejection of human reason' (p. 41). E.M. Wherry and many other Christians in the 19th century, however, appreciated Pfander's distinctions and found the book 'to provide all that is required on this subject at present' (*Muslim controversy*, p. 13).

In this work, Pfander chose as foundation for his case the teaching of the Bible rather than philosophical arguments. A purely biblical presentation addressed to Muslims may now seem entirely familiar, but in 1839 it would have been one of the first published in Muslim languages. Pfander's choice of foundation probably reflects his German Pietist heritage, and the approval of Wherry and other Christians seems to indicate a sense of common evangelical perceptions. His approach also shows a practical knowledge of Christian-Muslim conversation, related to the strategy of arguing for the deity of Jesus first of all from Jesus's own words, as noted by Muir:

> This is a very suitable arrangement, as the Mahommedans always ask first for Christ's own assertions, pretending that no statements of another party are to be received towards the proof of that which our Saviour himself did not even affect to claim. ('The Mahommedan controversy', p. 438)

Miftāḥ went through many printings and multiple editions in both Persian and Urdu from the 1840s into the 20th century, when it continued to be recommended in Christian bibliographies (Weitbrecht, *A bibliography for missionary students*, London, 1913, p. 67; Wherry, *Muslim controversy*, pp. 9-13). In 1912, William St Clair Tisdall translated and revised it into an edition by which it has since been known to English readers.

A Muslim reply to *Miftāḥ* entitled *Kashf al-astār li-kasri Miftāḥ al-asrār* ('The curtain drawn aside to show the "Key of mysteries" shattered') was published in 1845 by Sayyid Muḥammad Hādī (nephew of the Lucknow *maulvī* Āl-i Ḥasan). Muir gave a substantial description of this work as well as a discussion of the theological issues involved ('The Mahommedan controversy', pp. 466-75). A few years later, Raḥmatullāh Kairānavī published an Urdu tract attacking Pfander's explanation of the Trinity in a work titled *Aṣaḥḥ al-aḥādīth fī ibṭāl al-tathlīth* ('Most clear sayings in refutation of the Trinity', Delhi, 1854; Powell, *Muslims and missionaries*, pp. 226-9).

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Ṭarīq al-ḥayāt
'The way of life'

DATE 1836
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Persian

DESCRIPTION

Pfander wrote *Ṭarīq al-ḥayāt, a treatise on sin and redemption, with especial reference to the false views entertained by the Muhammedans on these doctrines* in 1836, when he was in Shusha, Karabagh (it was published in Calcutta in 1840). Running to 194 pages in the Persian original, more than twice as long as his earlier *Miftāḥ al-asrār* (1839) but shorter than his better-known *Mīzān al-ḥaqq* (1836), it focuses on Christian teachings about sin and salvation. His reason for writing it was that he felt the doctrine of sin and redemption 'required a more complete and explicit treatment than the plan of the Mizan would allow' ('The Mizan-ul-Haq, Miftah-ul-Asrar, and Tariq-ul-Hayat'; cf. Muir, 'The Mahommedan controversy', p. 442; Powell, *Muslims and missionaries*, p. 138).

Ṭarīq is divided into three parts, together with an introduction of six pages, which portrays the unhappy condition of humanity, makes an initial case that this condition is due to sin and asserts that the true meaning of sin must be sought in the word of God. In Part I (pp. 6-61), Pfander sets out his understanding of the origin and nature of sin, and its consequences; in Part II (pp. 61-153), he explains the way of escape from sin and its consequences, including the ways proposed by Islam and other faiths; and in Part III (pp. 153-94), he describes the fruits or results (*natā'ij*) of the salvation offered by Jesus Christ.

Pfander opens Part I with an explanation in ch. 1 of the sin of Adam and Eve according to Genesis and the understanding in Christian tradition of the effects of this as set out in the Old and New Testaments (pp. 7-42). He examines the particular biblical insight that the real evil of human sin lies in intention, distinguishing this from the Islamic concept of minor and

major sins (*ṣaghīra wa-kabīra*). Sin is universal, he writes, and has even touched the prophets of God. In ch. 2, he traces the dreadful consequences of sin in this world and the next (pp. 42-62), asserting that the denial of sin is a rejection of the witness of the senses on the one hand and the holiness of God on the other.

The substantial Part II presents various ways through which humans have sought to escape sin and its consequences. It begins with a general consideration of human reasoning about God's mercy, repentance and reformation, which Pfander argues cannot be real reasons for forgiveness or remission of sins (pp. 62-76), and then surveys the ways of salvation proposed by the Zoroastrians, Hindus and Buddhists (pp. 76-110), and finally the Muslims (pp. 110-27). He judges that all these are false promises that doom their devotees to disappointment. Part II ends with a detailed explanation of the way of salvation taught in the Gospel (*nijāt dar Injīl*, pp. 127-53). Here, Pfander particularly emphasises the atonement for sin that God has provided for humanity in the crucifixion of Christ.

In Part III, he describes in detail the fruits of salvation through Jesus Christ (pp. 153-92). Forgiveness of sins and reconciliation with God, he asserts, lead to a life of sincere prayer, meaningful communion with God, and hope of everlasting glory and happiness. The book closes with an appeal to the reader to accept the 'way of life' set forth in the Gospel (pp. 192-4).

SIGNIFICANCE

Pfander's inclusion, along with the views of other faiths, of a careful and detailed explanation of Christian teaching on the themes of sin and salvation in the scholarly terminology of Muslim leaders in 19th-century India was a significant contribution to Christian-Muslim engagement. Protestant and Pietist teachings about sin and salvation had already been presented to Muslims in south India in the writings of German Pietist missionaries such as Bartholomäus Ziegenbalg (1682-1719) and Benjamin Schultze (1689-1760), but not in the Muslim heartland of the north before Pfander.

Ṭarīq al-ḥayāt appeared in many printings and multiple editions in Persian and Urdu from 1840 until its English translation and revision by W. St Clair Tisdall in 1912. It received high praise from readers who shared Pfander's beliefs, including in a review written in India by the British civil servant William Muir, who wrote in 1845 that it 'stands unrivalled as an exposition of Christian doctrine in Persian' ('The Mahommedan controversy', p. 444). Muir considered the book's subject 'of extreme importance

[…] above all to the Mahommedan' because of what he perceived to be Islam's 'loose and imperfect ideas of sin in general' and lack of a concept of '*inward* sin' in particular (p. 442). He commended Pfander's method of describing the Christian doctrine thoroughly before making a comparison with corresponding tenets in Islam (p. 443), though his praise was most effusive for Pfander's use of Persian:

> The *Tariq ul Hyat* displays an uncommon exuberance of language and richness of diction – a perfect facility in the Persian idiom, and a degree of ease in adopting elegant and appropriate illustration, which astonishes the Mahommedans of this country, and perplexes them to account for the *Padre*'s accomplishments. (p. 444)

At the beginning of the 20th century, the American missionary E.M. Wherry agreed with Muir about the style and language of *Ṭarīq al-ḥayāt* and wrote 'it is hard to find a book better suited to be placed in the hands of any earnest Muslim' (*Muslim controversy*, p. 8).

On the other hand, Avril Powell has written disparagingly about Pfander's 'Pietistic evangelical stance' in *Ṭarīq*, asserting that he was 'incapable' of getting beyond a 'Eurocentric' and 'Orientalist' perspective (*Muslims and missionaries*, p. 144). She also seeks to contrast what it contains about 'sin and salvation' with medieval Christian apologetic – a view that might legitimately be queried (G. Nickel, 'Jesus', in A. Rippin and J. Mojaddedi (eds), *The Wiley Blackwell companion to the Qur'an*, 2nd edition, Oxford, 2017, 288-302, pp. 293-9). Pietists and other evangelicals did not conceive of their approach as an innovation, but rather looked to biblical revelation as the source of their teachings on these subjects in line with traditional Christianity. In terms of Muslim-Christian relations, however, it is difficult to understand why individual Christian contributions to serious theological engagement should be discounted simply because they do not match all other eras and expressions. Pfander's explanations of Christian teaching on sin and atonement were common understandings among a wide variety of communions in England, Europe and North America, and also among civil servants and missionaries in India, during the 19th-century (D.W. Bebbington, 'Atonement, sin, and empire, 1880-1914', in A. Porter (ed.), *The imperial horizons of British Protestant missions, 1880-1914*, Grand Rapids MI, 2003, 14-31, pp. 16-18), and are even more widespread today in the churches of Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Muir suggested that there were ideas within *Ṭarīq* to which an Indian Muslim of his day would not want to respond because they were 'most foreign to his purposes and desires' ('The Mahommedan controversy', p. 444). Indeed, there seem to have been no responses to the work written in South

Asia. However, this was not the case in Iran, where at least three responses were published in the 19th century: *Nuṣrat al-dīn* (1850) by Muḥammad Karīm Khān Kirmānī (d. 1871) (*CMR* 20, 213-18); *Sabīl al-najāt* (1884) by Sayyid Muḥammad Ḥusayn Marʿashī Shahrastānī (1840-98) (*CMR* 20, 244-8); and *Anīs al-aʿlam fī nuṣrat al-Islām* (1894) by Mīrzā Muḥammad Ṣādiq Fakhr al-Islām (d. 1914) (*CMR* 20, 335-7).

PUBLICATIONS

Archives Basel, Basel Mission Archives – G.37a Carl G. Pfander, *Kitāb Ṭarīq ul-ḥayāt*, Calcutta, 1840

K.G. Pfander, *Kitāb Ṭarīq al-ḥayāt*, Agra, 1847[2]; Tarik_ul_hayat_a_treatise_on_sin_and_red (digitised version available through Google Books)

K.G. Pfander, *Kitāb Ṭarīq ul-ḥayāt. The Way of Life in Urdu*, Lodiana, 1847 (Urdu trans.); 103022520 (digitised version available through Hathi Trust)

K.G. Pfander, *Kitāb Ṭarīq ul-ḥayāt. The Way of Life in Urdu*, Agra, 1853 (Urdu trans.)

K.G. Pfander, *Ṭarīq ul-ḥayāt*, Lahore, [s.d.] (Urdu trans.)

K.G. Pfander, *Tariq ul hayat*, London, 1862[4]

K.G. Pfander, *Ṭarīq ul-ḥayāt*, Ludhiana, 1875[4] (Urdu trans.)

K.G. Pfander, *Ṭarīq ul-ḥayāt*, [s.l.], [s.d.] (fifth Urdu edition, see Weitbrecht, *Descriptive catalogue and review of Urdu Christian literature, 1886-1901*, Lahore, 1902, p. 71)

K.G. Pfander, *Ṭaríqu 'l-hyát* (*'The path of life'*), trans. and revised by W. St Clair Tisdall, London, 1912 (English trans.); Pfander/Tariqul (digitised version available through muhammadanism.org)

STUDIES

Powell, *Muslims and missionaries in pre-Mutiny India*

Remarks on the nature of Muhammadanism, traditions

DATE 1840

ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

Remarks on the nature of Muhammadanism, traditions is a booklet of 38 pages that Pfander wrote to provide information about the Hadiths

that played a large part in the doctrines of Islam in Persia and India, as he had personally discovered. He drew the traditions he included from the *Mishkāt al-maṣābīḥ* of al-Tibrīzī (fl. 1337) and from three works of the Persian scholar Muḥammad Bāqir al-Majlisī (d. 1699), *Ḥayāt al-qulūb*, *Ḥaqq al-yaqīn* and *ʿAyn al-ḥayāt*.

Pfander states his intentions for the book at the outset as being to offer a counterbalance to what he considered the presentation of only the 'fair side' of Islam (p. 3). The Hadiths and theological writings, he feels, will reveal the negative side of the religion. The main part of the book then sets out descriptions and translations from the chosen sources under the headings 'God' (pp. 6-9), 'Creation' (pp. 9-22), 'The nature of sin' (pp. 22-5), 'The means of forgiveness of sin' (pp. 25-31), 'The nature of the punishment of Hell' (pp. 31-4) and 'Paradise' (pp. 34-49). The book ends with a sharp evaluation and appeal to the reader.

Pfander judges that, according to what the Hadiths teach, knowledge of God in Islam has no practical value – it leaves the heart unaffected and unaltered. God is far off and there is no relationship with Him such as that of a child to a father (p. 6). While the sources mention the moral attributes of God, they seem to treat these lightly, and Muslim prayer is ritual in nature, a heavy burden rather than a delight (pp. 7-8). Traditions about creation seem to highlight the appearance and huge size of angels. They also emphasise that Muḥammad was the first created being (p. 11) and make plentiful claims about his sinlessness and his miracles (pp. 11-17).

The heart of Pfander's discussion of the traditions would appear to be the section on sin and the means of forgiveness (pp. 22-30). He finds little awareness of the holiness of God and of the actual nature of human sin; it is an external act, so lying is permitted under certain conditions, especially in the Shīʿī sources, and evil thoughts are not counted as sin (pp. 23-5). Pfander describes the means of forgiveness in the traditions as 'God's mercy, faith in God and Muḥammad, and repentance' (p. 26), but writes that these are found inadequate by Muslims, who add the intercession of Muḥammad, good work, and repetition of phrases and verses (p. 26). He quotes the tradition from *Mishkāt* that relates that Muḥammad alone among the prophets was found worthy to intercede with God (pp. 26-7).

About Hadiths on Paradise, Pfander writes, 'All is sensual enjoyment there' (p. 34). He translates multiple traditions from the Shīʿī works *Ḥaqq al-yaqīn*, *ʿAyn al-ḥayāt* and *Ḥayāt al-qūlūb* about all the women who will be given to men in the garden, about eating and drinking, including wine, about birds and trees and other features of 'Behesht' (pp. 34-8), and he

finds that the corresponding Sunnī traditions in *Mishkāt* 'are the same and of no better nature' (p. 38). In fact, his sense that the 'improper' ways in which paradise is referred to (p. 38) seems to set the tone for his very negative judgement on Islam in the closing pages of the book (pp. 39-40). He claims to have proved the 'assertions' he made at the start about the 'dark side' of Islam, and urges his Christian readers in Calcutta to ensure that 'the light of the Gospel, reflected in the holy walk and conversation of true believers [...] be made to shine upon [Muslims] in its unadulterated heavenly splendour' (p. 41).

SIGNIFICANCE

Remarks was Pfander's earliest publication for English readers, appearing more than 25 years before the English translation of his Persian *Mīzān al-ḥaqq*. It therefore provides an insight into the thought of a well-known and widely characterised figure in Christian-Muslim relations at an early point of his work in 19th-century India. From the first page to the last, Pfander is concerned about issues of truth, which he judges according to the criteria of his own Christian faith. He combines this with a facility in the languages of Islam and an attention to the details of Muslim texts that he feels are important for a balanced understanding of the doctrines of Islam. The timing of this description of Muslim traditions in English in 1840 is noteworthy. The Hadith collection *Mishkāt al-maṣābīḥ* had been translated into English in India in 1809-10 by A.N. Matthews (*CMR* 24, 97-101), but little use had been made of it by Western scholars before Pfander's booklet (see p. 3). Aloys Sprenger's discussion of Muslim traditions (*Das Leben und die Lehre des Moḥammad nach bisher grösstentheils unbenutzten Quellen*, Berlin, vol. 3, pp. lxxvii-civ) was published only in 1865, and William Muir's critique of Sprenger's discussion – from India – appeared after this ('Value of early Mahometan historical sources', *Calcutta Review* 46 [1868] 349-90). Ignác Goldziher's famous *Muhammedanische Studien* had to wait until 1889, and it was only in 1905 that E.M. Wherry wrote that the English reader who wanted to become familiar with Muslim traditions was still limited to Matthews's *Mishcát ul Masábih* (*Muslim controversy*, London, 1905, pp. viii-ix). As for Shī'ī traditions, Pfander may have been the first to translate and describe the collections of Muḥammad Bāqir al-Majlisī into Western languages. Along with these sources, which he found to be recently published and popular in Tehran, Pfander presented information about common Muslim beliefs and practices that he had heard of and observed from living among Muslims in Karabagh, Persia, and India over the course of 15 years.

Pfander's Pietist understanding of Christianity seems to be reflected in the attention he gave to the nature of sin, the means of forgiveness, punishments and rewards. In 1840, he also published his Persian *Ṭarīq al-ḥayāt*, subtitled 'A treatise on sin and redemption, with especial reference to the false views entertained by the Muhammedans on these doctrines'. His Pietist background probably influenced him to take his investigation of Muslim traditions deeper than others: for example, he suggests that prayer in the form of bowing on one's knees 'in the closet' before God to pour out one's heart and ask forgiveness for one's sins 'and strength from on high to walk in His paths', may well be unknown among Muslims (p. 8). He also distinguishes Christian prayer from Sufi 'internal contemplation' that aims at 'absorption of the mind into the Divine Being' (p. 8). Simply because religious practices are known by the same term across religions does not mean that they are the same in reality.

PUBLICATIONS

K.G. Pfander, *Remarks on the nature of Muhammadanism, traditions*, Calcutta, 1840; BV001627534 (digitised version available through *MDZ*)

K.G. Pfander, *Remarks on the nature of Muhammadanism, traditions*, London, 1858[2]

Ḥall ul-ishkāl
'The solution of ambiguity'

DATE 1847
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Urdu

DESCRIPTION

Ḥall ul-ishkāl (in full, *Kitāb Ḥall ul-ishkāl, dar javāb Kashf ul-astār wa Kitāb-i istifsār maʿa murāsalāt taʾlīf kashīsh Fānḍar ṣāḥib*, '*"The solution of ambiguity"* in response to "*The curtain drawn aside*" and "*The book of questions*", with exchange of letters, written by pastor Pfander') is an Urdu book published by Pfander in 1847 to answer the responses of three Indian Muslims to the Persian translation of his *Mīzān al-ḥaqq* (1839) and *Miftāḥ al-asrār* (1839). It is a short compendium of Christian-Muslim written engagement in mid-19th-century India, involving Pfander and William Muir (CMR 24, 666-96) together with the Muslim scholars Sayyid Āl-i Ḥasan (c. 1801-early 1870s, Powell, *Muslims and missionaries*, pp. 181 n. 79,

186), Sayyid Muḥammad Hādī (1813-58) and Sayyid ʿAbdullāh Sabzvārī (about whom Pfander 'could discover no details', Powell, *Muslims and missionaries*, p. 171). In addition to Pfander's correspondence with Āl-i Ḥasan and Sabzvārī, *Ḥall* includes his replies to Hādī's Persian *Kashf al-astār li-kasri Miftāh ul-aṣrār* ('The curtain drawn aside to show the "The key of mysteries" shattered', Lucknow, 1845) and Āl-i Ḥasan's Urdu *Kitāb-i istifsār* ('Book of questions', Lucknow, 1846).

Ḥall begins with Pfander's response to *Kashf al-astār*, which runs to 84 pages, after which follows an Urdu translation of Muir's remarks on *Kashf* (pp. 85-92; from 'The Mahommedan controversy', *The Calcutta Review* 4 [1845] 418-75, pp. 466-75). Next come 'Ten perfect questions' put to Pfander by Sabzvārī of Lucknow with Pfander's replies (pp. 93-8), and then Pfander's reply of 65 pages to *Kitāb-i istifsār* (pp. 99-164). The work concludes with an appendix of 62 pages containing the entire correspondence between Pfander and Āl-i Ḥasan written between 1844 and 1845.

In *Ḥall*, Pfander defends the explanations of the contents of the Bible and Christian teaching on the deity of Christ, the divine Sonship of Jesus and the Trinity that he had given earlier in his *Miftāḥ al-asrār* (especially in response to the critique of *Kashf al-astār*) and in his replies to Sabzvārī's 'Ten perfect questions'. He also repeats the case for the authenticity and reliability of the Bible made earlier in the first main section of his *Mīzān al-ḥaqq* – fully ten of the 18 'questions' in *Kitāb-i istifsār* attacked the genuineness and authority of the Bible. In fact, Pfander also needed to defend the Bible in his response to *Kashf al-astār*: on the basis of Sayyid Muḥammad Hādī's claim that the deity of Jesus and the Trinity were 'impossible', *Kashf* declared the New Testament text corrupted.

A third theme of *Ḥall* is answers to objections to the Christian doctrine of new birth. Muir's detailed English description and evaluation of *Kashf al-astār*, included in *Ḥall* in Urdu translation, appeared remarkably soon after the publication of *Kashf* ('The Mahommedan controversy', pp. 465-75). In the same essay, Muir also included a brief description of Pfander's correspondence with Āl-i Ḥasan attached at the end of *Ḥall* (pp. 449-50). Several years after the publication of *Ḥall*, Muir offered a commentary on *Kitāb-i istifsār* ('Biographies of Mohammed', *The Calcutta Review* 17 (1852) 378-421, pp. 411-17). The letters between Pfander and Āl-i Ḥasan had also been printed, in both Roman Urdu and English translation, in the Urdu monthly paper *Khair Khvāh-i Hind*, and the correspondence with Sabzvārī had appeared in English translation in the *Calcutta Christian Intelligencer*. In the preface to his response to *Kashf al-astār* (*Ḥall*, pp. 1-5), Pfander challenges the book's claim to be a 'shattering' (*kasr*) of his *Miftāḥ* and

a successful argument that all questions of truth should be decided by human understanding. This thesis of *Kashf*, that 'no one can believe what his mind fails to comprehend', goes against Islam itself, writes Pfander, but even so, he dedicates the first part of his response to 'intellectual objections' (*Ḥall*, pp. 5-29). This line of attack on both his *Mīzān* and his *Miftāḥ* proved to be a major element in the refutations and correspondence, and Pfander was obliged to respond in *Ḥall*.

In describing the correspondence between Pfander and Āl-i Ḥasan, Muir wrote that Āl-i Ḥasan's approach was typical of 'the most sensible and intelligent Mussulmans': 'they erect blinded reason into a sovereign judge, before which every thing must bow, and they find that a very summary and convenient mode of despatching the claims of Christianity' ('The Mahommedan controversy', p. 450). Further on in his review of *Kashf*, Muir suggests that this approach is not used by Muslim opponents out of conviction but rather as a kind of temporary pose 'assumed for the nonce' to refute Christian arguments, because 'they dare not apply the rule to their own faith' ('The Mahommedan controversy', p. 470; *Ḥall*, p. 89). Avril Powell has also picked up on Āl-i Ḥasan's 'scholastic mode of argument' in his correspondence with Pfander and in his *Kitāb-i istifsār*, and on Pfander's response in *Ḥall* (Powell, *Muslims and missionaries*, pp. 188-9), helpfully locating the polemical approach of *Kashf al-astār* in the particular philosophical atmosphere among the *'ulamā'* in Lucknow in the early 1840s (pp. 173-7). Hādī, she explains, put aside the traditional Muslim apologetic and polemical approach to highlight instead 'an overriding philosophical argument about the role of reason in determining religious truth' (p. 173). By contrast, she characterises Pfander's approach as a 'reduction of the role of reason to a mere common sense "checking" function on the injunctions of revelation' (p. 174). With his Muslim interlocutors, Pfander made the case that 'the nature of the relevant test [...] should be "spiritual" not "rational"' (*Muslims and missionaries*, pp. 176-7).

Accurate understanding of this written exchange is assisted by the account of his interaction with Hādī's *Kashf* that Pfander wrote at the very time that he was composing his rejoinder ('Letter'). Writing from Simla during a break from his usual busy schedule in Agra, Pfander says that he has read *Kashf* carefully, quoting extensively from it in his letter. In light of this account, Powell's characterisation of Pfander's approach to reason could possibly leave a false impression. In thinking through Hādī's arguments, Pfander disagrees not with the use of reason but with Hādī's insistence on the unassailable supremacy of reason. As great as reason is, writes Pfander, reason also has limits beyond which it cannot go. No human

logical formulation has the power to judge revelation when it comes to the deity of Jesus or the relationship between Father, Son and Holy Spirit in the Godhead (see Muir, 'The Mahommedan controversy', p. 470). Pfander notes that while Hādī has denied to Christians the right to believe that some affirmations about God are 'mysteries' (*asrār*), Hādī has himself acknowledged that there are some things that reason cannot judge, 'and in regard to them the doctors of law say that because such and such a question is beyond the province of reason, therefore it must be believed on the authority of hearing, i.e. of revelation and tradition' ('Letter'). Instead of this, Pfander wants Hādī to face the 'historical' question that he posed in *Mīzān*: whether the text of the Bible has been altered since positive and respectful expressions about *Tawrāt* and *Injīl* were made in the Qur'an. One other important indication of the nature of the exchange from this letter is Hādī's attempt on the one hand to deny Christian belief in the deity of Jesus on the basis that it is impossible and that the Bible has been corrupted, and on the other hand to claim that Muḥammad is attested to in biblical passages such as Isaiah 42, Psalm 2 and even Isaiah 53 ('Letter').

SIGNIFICANCE

Ḥall ul-ishkāl may be one of the best examples of written engagement between Christians and Muslims in which deep theological disagreements are carefully considered and answered in the language and idiom of the other. Muir described Pfander's reply to *Kashf* as 'brief and pertinent', and judged the attacks in *Istifsār* to have been 'ably noticed and well refuted' by Pfander ('Biographies of Mohammed', p. 417). In the new century, E.M. Wherry acknowledged that *Ḥall* possessed some value as 'a discussion with the learned doctors of Islam', but suggested that, by 1905, the book was no longer suited to the conditions 'which at present exist in connection with the Muslim controversy' (*Muslim controversy*, p. 14).

Ḥall highlights a dimension of Pfander's writings that is often overlooked or perhaps even deliberately neglected amid negative criticism of his faith and methods. Before he wrote it, he had presented Christianity to north Indian Muslim leaders in three Persian treatises and Urdu translations of them (1839-46), in doing this arguably honouring their languages and seeking to express Christian teaching in their scholarly idiom. He had addressed his readers directly and invited written responses. (In his 1846 letter, Pfander writes that in July 1842 he sent his books to the *mujtahid* of Lucknow, Sayyid Muḥammad Naṣīrābādī, with an invitation to respond.) He was very probably the only European Christian who entered India in the 19th century with the ability not only to present Christian teaching to

the Muslim mind in Persian and Urdu, but also to welcome, read and comprehend Muslim first-language critiques of his books and to offer written replies to those critiques.

The Muslim written responses to Pfander's books to which he replies in *Ḥall* show that attacks on the integrity of the Bible were central to Muslim polemic in South Asia in the middle decades of the 19th century. Prior to Pfander's defence of the Bible in *Mīzān al-ḥaqq*, South Asian Muslims were the inheritors of a millennium of well-developed accusations against the Bible from medieval Islam (see Metcalf, *Islamic revival in British India: Deoband, 1860-1900*, Princeton NJ, 1982, p. 220) in which the charge of *taḥrīf* was the nub of Muslim polemic (Goldziher, 'Ueber muhammedanische Polemik gegen Ahli Kitâb', *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 32/2 (1878) 341-87, pp. 344, 364). In the 1840s, refutations of Pfander followed the way of rationalist assault, exemplified by *Kashf* and *Istifsār*. Muir lamented that, as long as Pfander's opponents refused to acknowledge the limits of reason in theological matters and declined to apply this rule evenly to their own faith, 'we have little hope from Mahommedan discussion' ('Mahommedan controversy', p. 470).

For a realistic understanding of Christian-Muslim relations in India in the middle of the 19th century, it is important to recognise that *Kashf* and *Istifsār* were not objections to the judgements on the Qur'an and Muḥammad that Pfander had expressed in his *Mīzān*, but were rather attacks on the case for the authenticity of the Bible he had made in *Mīzān* and his commending of the deity of Jesus on the basis of the Bible in *Miftāḥ*. The effect of the Muslim attacks was, on the one hand, to forbid the use of the Bible in the encounter and, on the other, thereby to rule Christian expressions of faith out of order. Muslim accusations of *taḥrīf* continued throughout the 1850s, through the twin strategies of the use of European 'higher' criticism and the challenge to public debate (see *Ikhtitām dīnī mubāḥasah kā* below). Muslim writers in India continued to push this particular polemic into the 20th century and indeed into modern times, when, among contemporary Muslims, the doctrine of the textual corruption of the Bible is 'virtually unchallenged' (K. Zebiri, *Muslims and Christians face to face*, Oxford, 1997, p. 6).

Beyond the Muslim disagreement with Pfander's books, *Ḥall* also portrays an unusual – perhaps unique – combination of a German missionary and a British civil servant who both knew Arabic, Persian and Urdu, were able to read and understand Muslim religious writings and describe and analyse them for others in English, and could compose direct responses

to Muslim interlocutors in their preferred language. Muir expressed open admiration for the German apologist in 1845: 'Let him not forget the singular advantages and talents he possesses – nor abandon his post of champion of Christianity among the Mahommedans' ('The Mahommedan controversy', p. 450), and he later provided scholarly logistical support to Pfander with his *Testimony borne by the Coran to the Jewish and Christian Scriptures* (Agra, 1855) and his massive four-volume *Life of Mahomet* (London, 1857-61, see vol. 1, preface, p. iii). Powell states that by 1845 Muir had been 'co-opted to lend scholarly assistance to Pfander' (*Muslims and missionaries*, p. 177), but without providing any evidence that Muir's support was less than completely genuine (cf. *Muslims and missionaries*, p. 147). Though from different national backgrounds, the two individuals represented Christian communities in Europe that had already considered high claims for reason and rationalism in the wake of the Enlightenment and had formulated their own concepts of the relationship of reason to revelation. The scholastic arguments in the books and the correspondence written by the Lucknow *'ulamā'* were thus remarkably familiar. Pfander and Muir did not agree with assertions about the autocratic supremacy of human reason, but that is not the same as saying that they devalued reason or interacted with Muslims irrationally.

PUBLICATIONS

K.G. Pfander, *Hall ul-ishkāl, a reply to Kashf-ul-astar and Kitab-i-istifsar*, Agra, 1847; 23161204 (digitised version available through e.rara.ch)

Archives Basel, Basel Mission – Archives C.VI.g.1 *Kitāb Ḥall al-ishkāl, dar javāb Kashf al-astār wa Kitāb-i istifsār ma'a murāsalāt ta'līf kashīsh Fandar Ṣāḥib*, Akbarabad, 1847 (English title given: *Hall-ul-Ishkal; a reply to Kashf-ul-astar and Kitab-i-istifsar*)

Archives Birmingham, Cadbury Research Library – Church Missionary Society Archive CMS:CI1/O227/15 C.G. Pfander, letter to Rev. J. Innes, Simla, 24 August 1846 (draft held at Basel Mission Archives)

STUDIES

A.A. Powell, *Muslims and missionaries in pre-Mutiny India*, London, 1993, p. 172

B.D. Metcalf, *Islamic revival in British India*, Princeton NJ, 1982

Gordon Nickel

Ikhtitām dīnī mubāḥasah kā
'Conclusion of the religious discussion'

DATE 1855
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Urdu

DESCRIPTION

Over time, various versions of the story of the public debate held between Karl Gottlieb Pfander and Raḥmatullāh Kairānavī (1810-91; *CMR* 24, 253-60) in Agra in April 1854 have become better known than the writings of the debate partners themselves. *Ikhtitām dīnī mubāḥasah kā, main dō khat pādrī Fāndar ṣāḥib ne maulvī Raḥmatullāh aur Muḥammad Wazīr Khān ṣāḥib kō mubāḥasah ke bāb main likhe hain* ('Conclusion of the religious discussion, together with two letters that Padrī Fāndar wrote to Maulvī Raḥmatullāh and Wazīr Khān with regard to the discussion') is Pfander's own published Urdu statement about it, in 155 pages, written during the year that followed. According to this, Kairānavī and his 'second', Muḥammad Wazīr Khān, challenged Pfander to a public debate during the early months of 1854, first through his younger missionary colleague Thomas Valpy French (1825-91; *CMR* 24, 338-44) (Powell, *Muslims and missionaries*, pp. 240-2). Pfander agreed to participate, though reluctantly ('Movements among Mahommedans', p. 254), and French became his assistant in the debate, which was held in Agra on 10 and 11 April 1854.

The book's subtitle indicates which particular *mubāḥasah* ('discussion') is being referred to in its mention of the names of Pfander's opponents. Some Western repositories cite the work as *Ikhtitámi múbáhisa*, which can be rendered as 'the last discussion' (e.g. Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Google books). This is a mistake based on the transliteration of the Urdu book title. The letter 'i' at the end of *Ikhtitámi* is a preposition to make it a possessive compound, and in transliteration it should come after a space or hyphen. *Ikhtitām-i mubāḥasah* would thus be the correct transliteration of the Urdu for 'Conclusion of the discussion'.

Ikhtitām is not a report of the 1854 debate, but rather contains materials from Pfander's wider interfaith conversation with Kairānavī and Wazīr Khān, which includes reflections on – and even a continuation of – the debate. It was published in 1855 at the Secundra Orphan Press, Agra, and its contents are presented in three sections: the *muqaddima*, or preface (pp. 1-8); the substance of the discussion between Pfander and his interlocutors set out in 11 *maqāṣid* or resolutions (pp. 9-116); and an appendix

containing a letter to Kairānavī and a letter to Wazīr Khān (pp. 117-54). On the final page is a list of spelling mistakes and corrections.

Pfander begins by noting recent publications written by Kairānavī with the help of Wazīr Khān (pp. 1-2). Much of the contents of these new books, he claims, he has already answered pre-emptively in his *Mīzān al-ḥaqq* (1839) and *Miftāḥ al-asrār* (1839) and especially in his *Ḥall ul-ishkāl* (1847), his response to two earlier works of Muslim polemic, *Kashf al-astār* (1845) and *Kitāb-i istifsār* (1845). What is new in the books, he writes, is Kairānavī's use of material from European authors, whom Pfander considers atheists and apostates, and the views of heretical Christian groups. He writes that, because Kairānavī has not answered the arguments that Pfander raised related to abrogation and other issues, he will now present that material in this book.

The 11 resolutions presented in the main part of *Ikhtitām* can be roughly divided into five key concerns, the most prominent being the authenticity of the Bible and Muslim theories of abrogation. Pfander also addresses the subject of biblical manuscripts (*maqṣid* 6), the identity of Jesus (9 and 10), and the status of the Qur'an and Muḥammad (11). Fully four of the *maqāṣid* defend the authenticity and genuineness of the *Tawrāt* and the *Injīl* as the word of God (2, 3, 4, and 7). Pfander responds to the Muslim argument that Jesus's Apostles were not prophets, and thus to the Muslim accusation that the writings of the New Testament authors do not qualify as divine revelation (pp. 15-22). Rather, he asserts, the Apostles were ordained by Jesus himself; they were able to perform miracles, and whatever they taught or said was the teaching of Jesus and the word of God. He argues that Jesus's Apostles were prophets like the prophets of the Old Testament – and in some respects exceeded them. Further on this point, Pfander explains what he means by his use of the term *ilhām* ('inspiration') (pp. 33-44). God's word came to the prophets through a voice, in a vision or dream, or directly to the prophet's heart. Since these words were given to the prophets through inspiration, he argues, they are divinely revealed. Prophets and Apostles are not infallible in other aspects, but they are infallible when it comes to the writing of the message and its propagation. Here Pfander is basically giving a Christian doctrine of scripture, and he takes the term *ilhām* from the Urdu translation of 2 Timothy 3:16 (p. 35). (Powell explains how the term *ilhām* became a source of confusion between Pfander and Wazīr Khān in their correspondence following the debate; see 'Muslim-Christian confrontation', p. 84-5).

Pfander also highlights passages from the Qur'an that are positive and respectful towards the *Tawrāt* and the *Injīl* (pp. 61-7), as he had done

earlier in his *Mīzān ul-ḥaqq* (1839, pp. 15-18). His challenge to Kairānavī and Wazīr Khān is that they should accept the pre-Islamic scriptures that the Qur'an describes as the word of God. If they insist that the *Injīl* referred to in the Qur'an is a different book from the present Gospel, the onus is on them to produce a copy. Also, from *Mīzān*, Pfander repeats his list of other 'evidence' that the *Tawrāt* and the *Injīl* are the Word of God (pp. 23-33), including the claims that the *Injīl* satisfies the heart and spirit of the believer; that it leads to repentance, forgiveness, salvation and cleansing of the heart; and that it connects believers to God through Jesus Christ.

Three resolutions relate to Islamic theories of abrogation, which was the designated topic on the first day of the April 1854 Agra debate (Pfander, 'Movements among Mahommedans', p. 254; Powell, *Muslims and missionaries*, p. 245). Pfander argues that the Torah was not abrogated by the Gospel (pp. 9-14). He quotes extensively from Gospel passages in which Jesus cited the Old Testament, thereby showing that he accepted the earlier scripture and did not doubt it. Here Pfander needed to contend with the accusations of the second-century Christian philosopher Justin Martyr that the Jews altered the text of the Septuagint (cf. Powell, *Muslims and missionaries*, p. 249). Islamic theories of abrogation start with the effort to resolve contradictions within the Qur'an and extend to the claim that successive scriptures cancel one another with time (J. Burton, 'Abrogation', *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'ān*, ed. J.D. McAuliffe, Leiden, 2001, vol. 1, 11-19, p. 11). Pfander deals with the claim that he had heard from Muslims through substantial faith conversation, as he had done earlier in *Mīzān* (1839, pp. 18-31), and as he had reported from the debate ('Movements among Mahommedans', p. 255; but cf. Powell, *Muslims and missionaries*, p. 246): the argument that the *Injīl* is abrogated (*mansūkh*) by the Qur'an just like the Gospel (allegedly) abrogates the Torah (pp. 44-7). Pfander addresses this claim from the witness of Christ and his disciples, quoting Luke 21:33 and Matthew 24:35 where Jesus said his word would never be changed or abrogated by anything till the end of the world. He also cites Galatians 1:8 and 1 Peter 1:23-5 to argue that nothing will be considered gospel (*euangelion*) except what Christ gave. Christian teaching about the abrogation of the Torah, Pfander explains, cannot be compared to the Muslim concept of abrogation: the Torah itself has not been replaced, but rather what it contains about rituals such as sacrifices is not applicable after the redemptive death and resurrection of Jesus. Further, personal likes or dislikes of Gospel content, or the opinions of Muslim scholars that some verses do not make sense, do not amount to proof of abrogation or alteration (*taḥrīf*). Pfander wants to say that the personal likes or dislikes

of Muslim scholars are not a standard, nor is it valid to say that a particular verse is beyond a particular scholar's understanding. Instead, he believes that the standard is for Muslim scholars to prove that a particular verse was not revealed in the Bible (pp. 67-9). Here he repeats his debate challenge to Muslims to either present a copy of the *Injīl* that they hold to be the *Injīl* referred to positively in the Qur'an, or accept that the Gospel presently in the possession of the 'People of the Book' is the same as the Qur'an's *Injīl* ('Movements among Mohammedans', p. 256).

Beyond the material on abrogation, the *Ikhtitām* resolution that relates most closely to the Agra debate is Pfander's discussion of manuscripts of the New Testament (pp. 47-61). In Muslim tradition, the accusation of malicious alteration of manuscripts is closely connected to the claim that the original *Tawrāt* and *Injīl* contain mention of Muḥammad, and that not finding mention of Muḥammad in the present Torah or Gospel accounts must mean that Jews and Christians erased the references (H. Lazarus-Yafeh, 'Tawrāt', *EI2*, Leiden, 2000, vol. 10, 393-5, p. 394). Pfander reminds the reader that he dealt with Muslim claims about biblical references to Muḥammad in *Mīzān* (1839, pp. 191-201). Wazīr Khān and Kairānavī have not been able to produce a single biblical manuscript containing mention of Muḥammad, Pfander concludes, so they are now using European biblical criticism's references to differences between biblical manuscripts to claim that the Bible was changed. These European writers themselves say that the manuscript differences are merely textual variants that do not affect the authenticity of the Bible (cf. 'Movements among Mohammedans', p. 256). Rather, Pfander argues, these are copyist errors of the kind that appear in all ancient manuscripts, including manuscripts of the Qur'an. He invites Muslim scholars to conduct a text-critical study of the oldest manuscripts of the Qur'an.

The three remaining resolutions touch on topics that Pfander had thoroughly covered previously in *Mīzān*, *Miftāh al-asrār*, and *Ṭarīq al-ḥayāt*: the identity of Jesus, especially his deity (pp. 69-76) and his standing as unique Saviour (pp. 76-80); and Pfander's denials of Muslim claims that the Qur'an is the word of God and that Muḥammad is the apostle of God (pp. 80-116). These topics had originally been planned for discussion in the debates, but the impasse over the text of the Bible on the second day of the debate prevented this discussion from proceeding. Pfander wrote from Agra in a letter on 1 May 1854 that he considered *Ikhtitām* 'an opportunity for publishing our account [of the discussion], to which we shall add a discourse on the important subjects that have been left untouched by the breaking-up of the discussions at this point' ('Movements among

Mohammedans', p. 257). Finally, Pfander includes at the end of *Ikhtitām* two letters he wrote to his Muslim interlocutors during the months after the debate. The first letter, to Kairānavī, was written on 11 September 1854 (pp. 117-23). Its central concern is a disagreement between Pfander and Kairānavī about the details of the 10-11 April discussion, and follows an exchange of correspondence between them that includes one particular letter in which Kairānavī asked Pfander and French to agree to his version of the event (cf. 'Movements among Mohammedans', p. 257; Powell, *Muslims and missionaries*, p. 255). Pfander writes that Kairānavī had not accurately presented the debate arguments made by French and Pfander, and conversely claims that Pfander had not recorded all the accusations made by Kairānavī and Wazīr Khān in an earlier letter because he had already proved to them during the debate that these issues were raised out of their ignorance. After reproducing the letter, Pfander comments that, since September 1854, he has seen two Muslim accounts of the debate, the Persian *Al-baḥs al-sharīf fī asbāt al-naskh wa-l-taḥrīf* of Wazīruddīn ibn Sharafuddīn (1854), and the Urdu collection *Pahlā hissa mubāḥasah-i mazhabī kā* by ʿAbdullāh Akbarābādī (1854) (pp. 123-4). Pfander rejects both accounts as representing only the Muslim perspective and writes that the Persian account deliberately skips the responses he gave during the debate.

The second letter, substantially longer than the first, was written to Wazīr Khān on 14 August 1854 in response to a letter from Wazīr Khān that Pfander had received on 8 July 1854 (pp. 125-54). This letter is similarly contentious, but also includes some interesting discussion of the debate issues themselves. According to Pfander, Wazīr Khān claimed that Pfander had accepted the abrogation of the Bible and that Wazīr Khān had proved the alteration of the *Injīl*. No, Pfander attempts to clarify to Wazīr Khān: You presented scholarly mention of textual variants between New Testament manuscripts, perhaps largely caused by copyists' errors, which do not affect the message of the Gospel. Unless you can produce a copy of the Gospel that, according to you, is the exact copy that God revealed, and by this prove the existing Gospel to be altered, mention of textual variants will not help you.

Pfander appeals to Wazīr Khān for a more equitable consideration of the issues in two areas: Wazīr Khān is pressing Pfander to accept every statement that Wazīr Khān cites from European critical scholars. Wazīr Khān had added 30 more titles of European publications to the 14 titles he had cited earlier. Pfander replies that he does not accept the witness of scholars he considers atheists or heretics, noting that in the same way

Muslims also do not accept witnesses who disagree with Sunnī mainstream teaching. Second, Wazīr Khān uses mention of textual variants between New Testament manuscripts to make accusations of alteration. But even in Muslim tradition, Pfander notes, there are reports of Qur'an manuscripts that needed to be destroyed because of discrepancies, as well as writings by some Muslim scholars that asserted that the present number of suras and verses in the Qur'an and their arrangement are not correct.

SIGNIFICANCE

The Agra debate of 1854 has often been portrayed as one of the best-known single events in Christian-Muslim relations in South Asia in the 19th century, from both sides of the discussion (e.g. Stock, *History*, p. 170; Paul, *Lights in the world*; C.W. Troll, 'New light on the Christian-Muslim controversy of the nineteenth and twentieth century', *Die Welt des Islams* 34 (1994) 85-8, p. 86). Since the publication of Avril Powell's narrative of the debate in 1976, the event seems to have taken on a kind of mythical dimension through its interesting 'cast of characters' (Schirrmacher, 'Muslim apologetics', p. 74) and its backdrop of British political and military domination just a few years before the Uprising of 1857.

Ikhtitām is probably the least known of Pfander's writings, as well as perhaps the least studied. There is no record of further Urdu editions and printings after 1855, and the book has not been translated into English. E.M. Wherry does not mention it in his *Muslim controversy* (1905) nor does H.U. Weitbrecht in his *Descriptive catalogue and review of Urdu Christian literature* (Lahore, 1902) or *Bibliography for missionary students* (London, 1913). Even so, it presents information that is essential for an accurate picture of what happened in the 1854 debate. Powell calls it 'the only direct rejoinder on the missionary side in the pre-1857 era' (*Muslims and missionaries*, p. 261), but she does not describe its contents (see also 'Muslim-Christian confrontation', p. 91) and seems to present the debate largely on the basis of Muslim portrayals in such publications as Wazīruddīn ibn Sharafuddīn's *Al-baḥs al-sharīf fī asbāt al-naskh wa-l-taḥrīf* (1854, reprinted in Muhammad Taqī 'Usmānī, *Bā'ibal se Qur'ān tak*, 3 vols, Karachi, 1968, vol. 1, pp. 186-9, 191; cf. Powell, 'Maulānā Raḥmat Allāh Kairānawī', pp. 53-8, and *Muslims and missionaries*, pp. 242-55). In other words, Powell did not take *Ikhtitām* significantly into account in the composition of her influential narrative. Dieter Becht suggests that for this reason the historical value of her narrative is 'doubtful' ('Offenbarungsschrift und Offenbarungträger', p. 139).

Becht suggests a number of points on which popular Muslim portrayals might be questioned if other materials are given even weight. These go beyond details such as the number of attendees or the debate topics of the first and second days. Pfander would not have agreed with the Muslim accusation that the genealogy of Jesus in Matthew 1 is faulty, writes Becht, while Pfander and French were not unprepared for the debate because of their alleged ignorance of critical theological schools, which is how Becht understands Powell's thesis. Both freely acknowledged the existence of textual variants in biblical manuscripts and, on the second day, French was easily able to refute the Muslim assertion that numerous textual variants prove the corruption of the Bible ('Offenbarungsschrift und Offenbarungträger', pp. 140, 138; cf. Neill, *History*, p. 344). As T.G. Clark, who was present at the debates, wrote later the same year, the 'various readings' in biblical manuscripts are 'known, of course, to every scholar at home, and, as a fact, now almost to every Bible reader' ('Agra-discussion betwixt Mohammedan doctors and the missionaries', *Home and Foreign Record of the Free Church of Scotland* [October 1854] 64-6, p. 66). Eugene Stock later wrote, 'The points adduced are familiar enough to even elementary Bible students in Europe' (*History*, p. 170). This also seems to mesh with resolution 6 in *Ikhtitām* (pp. 47-61). However, continues Becht, it seems certain that Kairānavī and Wazīr Khān misinterpreted the fact of textual variants between manuscripts as evidence of falsification of the biblical text.

This last point deserves further clarification towards understanding Christian-Muslim engagement as it has continued to the present day: controversial discussion of scriptural manuscripts shows no signs of abating – and now it often takes place on social media. The central concern of the alleged victory of Kairānavī and Wazīr Khān – what Clark called 'the whole gist of the discussion' ('Agra-discussion', p. 65) – was questions about the textual integrity of the Bible, especially the New Testament. Material in *Ikhtitām* on this subject is supplemented by a report of the debate exchanges in a letter Pfander wrote within three weeks of the event ('Movements among Mahommedans', pp. 253-8). On the second day of the debate, 11 April, Kairānavī denied that the *Injīl* mentioned in the Qur'an was the Gospel in use among Christians in the 7th century ('Movements among Mahommedans', p. 256) or that any biblical manuscripts that could be dated to before the rise of Islam existed, a claim he continued to make in his Arabic *Iẓhār al-ḥaqq* in 1867-8 (see Beirut edition, 1998, vol. 1, pp. 501, 507). In subsequent correspondence with Pfander, Wazīr Khān also insisted that none of the surviving New Testament codices dated from earlier than the 9th or 10th century (Powell, 'Muslim-Christian

confrontation', p. 86). In fact, not only were pre-Islamic manuscripts of the Bible known in 1854, but Pfander had already informed Indian Muslim readers about the *Vaticanus* (from the 4th century), *Alexandrinus* (from the 5th century) and *Ephraemi* (also from the 5th century) codices – dated to as early as 'two hundred and fifty years before the *hijrat*' – in his 1839 Persian *Mīzān* (pp. 39-40).

In the debate, Kairānavī went on to assert that the 'various readings' in manuscripts of the New Testament, as mentioned by European scholars, 'were a sufficient proof that the gospel is not now what it originally was, but that great alterations and additions had been made' ('Movements among Mahommedans', p. 256). In response, French explained the significance of 'various readings' in critical scholarly literature and argued that, although there were differences in letters and words between the New Testament manuscripts, no important doctrine or fact was affected by this – and that the contents of the Gospel were therefore now the same as they were originally. French read out testimonies from the writings of Benjamin Kennicott (1718-83), Johann Griesbach (1745-1812) and Samuel Tregelles (1813-75) to the integrity of the New Testament contents, and described the abundance of ancient manuscripts as a proof that the New Testament had not been interfered with by Christian rulers, reminding the audience that, according to Muslim tradition, the Caliph ʿUthmān had burned all the manuscripts of the Qur'an that did not agree with his edition (see al-Bukhāri, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, book 61, *Faḍā'il al-Qur'ān, bāb jamʿ al-Qur'ān*). French further explained that, through the careful collation of all ancient New Testament manuscripts, biblical scholars had corrected mistakes and again emphasised that none of the uncertain passages that remained affected any doctrine or command found in the Gospel (p. 256).

Wazīr Khān then argued that, if five or ten mistakes in New Testament manuscripts were acknowledged by European scholars, the true number may be many hundreds or thousands. French and Pfander replied that the entire text had been carefully examined in all the ancient manuscripts, and the number of mistakes were as the European scholars reported them. Kairānavī, for his part, would not shift from his assertion that the variant readings mentioned by European scholars must mean that the Gospel had undergone extensive alteration, and so Christians no longer possessed the original Gospel. According to Pfander, this is where the discussion broke down ('Movements among Mahommedans', p. 256-7). Pfander challenged Kairānavī either to agree that the contents of the Gospels were unaltered and thus allow those contents to be admitted into the discussions proposed for the following days, or to produce proofs 'that the doctrines,

commands and facts, as now contained in the Gospel, are different from those contained in the copies that existed before Mahommed' (p. 256). Kairānavī declined both alternatives, to which Pfander responded that he had thus made it impossible to proceed. The meeting broke up, and some of the Muslims began to use Pfander's response as a pretext for declaring that they had won the discussion (p. 257).

In his letter, Pfander acknowledges failing to advance certain points that did not occur to him at the time and writes that he regretted letting Kairānavī 'get off' from having to prove his assertion that the Gospel had been extensively altered and [was] not the original ('Movements among Mahommedans', p. 257). Pfander also describes the substantial correspondence from Kairānavī in the first weeks following the public discussion and his own willingness to reopen the discussion on the point at which it had faltered. That correspondence ended with Pfander's letter to Kairānavī included in *Ikhtitām*.

The impasse in Pfander's engagement with Kairānavī and Wazīr Khān, signalled in his final letters to them in *Ikhtitām* and reflected in the title of the book itself, also deserves some consideration. Pfander and French relied on the logical flow of their challenge that the Qur'an speaks positively and respectfully of the Torah and Gospel, that the scriptures of which the Qur'an speaks are the same as those that Jews and Christians possess today, and that Muslims should therefore admit the contents of these scriptures into the discussion. If not, Muslims should produce proofs 'that the doctrines, commands, and facts, as now contained in the Gospel, are different from those contained in the copies that existed before Mahommed' ('Movements among Mahommedans', p. 256). Kairānavī and Wazīr Khān advanced European scholarly discussions of textual variants in biblical manuscripts on the premise that these were proof of *taḥrīf*, by which they meant corruption or deliberate falsification of the texts (Powell, 'Muslim-Christian confrontation', pp. 81-4; *Muslims and missionaries*, p. 248). Pfander and French considered this a misunderstanding of the significance of textual variants. If neither side was willing to budge, further discussion became impossible (cf. Powell, *Muslims and missionaries*, p. 252). But how could a meaningful dialogue proceed if one side would not permit the other to bring in its own scriptures? Powell describes Wazīr Khān's approach as 'demanding that *munāẓarah* "rules" should prohibit any argument or evidence taken from the Bible itself because it was a corrupt text' ('Muslim-Christian confrontation', p. 84; for Kairānavī, see Powell, *Muslims and missionaries*, p. 255). From the Christian side, Pfander suspected a connection between the Muslims' accusations of *taḥrīf* and

their goal to keep the New Testament out of the discussion ('Movements among Mahommedans', p. 258). Wazīr Khān's method of arguing for *taḥrīf*, writes Powell, 'had the longer-term effect of stultifying all discussion between Muslims and Christians for the next few decades' ('Muslim-Christian confrontation', p. 84). Powell also writes that Kairānavī's books *I'jāz-i 'Īsavī al-mulaqqab bih miṣqalah-i taḥrīf* (1854-5) and *Iẓhār al-ḥaqq* (1866-7) were 'narrowly polemical works, conditioned in content and argument by the time and circumstances in which they were compiled, specifically to reinforce the "victory" over the missionaries which had been claimed at the Agra *munāẓarah*' (*Muslims and missionaries*, p. 271).

The impasse was also provoked by a number of extreme assertions to which it was impossible for the opposing side to give assent. Besides prohibiting Christian use of the Bible and denying the existence of any pre-Islamic manuscript of the Bible, Kairānavī and Wazīr Khān claimed that, if a single error is detected at any place in a document, even a single verse or a single word, its occurrence is 'sufficient to condemn a whole book or document' (Powell, 'Muslim-Christian confrontation', p. 84; *Muslims and missionaries*, p. 252). Powell understandably calls this a 'rigid criterion', and one wonders whether Wazīr Khān and Kairānavī would have agreed to apply the same criterion to the Qur'an. Indeed, it seems that some versions of the debate story neglect the efforts of Pfander and French to find a way out of the impasse by appealing to roughly equivalent circumstances between the two sides. Pfander, French and their opponents actually shared a similar kind of belief in the revelation of the scriptures (Neill, *History*, p. 344; cf. Bennett, 'Victorian images', p. 119; Metcalf, *Islamic revival*, pp. 5-6, 15). After acknowledging copyists' errors in manuscripts of the Bible, Pfander suggested that such errors appear in all ancient manuscripts, including manuscripts of the Qur'an. French reminded his interlocutors that Islamic tradition itself reports discrepancies among manuscripts, the destruction of variant manuscripts, and the incompleteness of the Qur'an ('Movements among Mahommedans', p. 256). Regarding European scholarship on Bible manuscripts, in *Ikhtitām* Pfander invites Muslim scholars to conduct a text-critical study of the oldest Qur'an manuscripts (pp. 59-61). When confronted by Wazīr Khān with D.F. Strauss's *Das Leben Jesu* (Tübingen, 1835-6), Pfander sent him a copy of Aloys Sprenger's *Life of Moḥammad* (Allahabad, 1851) (Powell, 'Muslim-Christian confrontation', p. 86, *Muslims and missionaries*, p. 256). Strauss famously rejected the historical reliability of the Gospel accounts, and Sprenger similarly distrusted the earliest Muslim narratives about Muḥammad. (Powell writes that Strauss's theory

about the events of Jesus's life being merely mythological, 'if scandalous in Europe, would certainly be even more uncongenial and puzzling to a Muslim reader as an explanation of a revealed religion' ['Muslim-Christian confrontation', p. 87]).

Pfander admits that he is not willing immediately to accept the writings of European 'atheists and apostates' about the Bible, but in *Ikhtitām* he asks Wazīr Khān whether Muslim scholars are able to agree with scholarship that contradicts mainstream Sunnī teaching (*Ikhtitām*, p. 59). One might say that these apparent attempts to appeal for a level scholarly playing field were important to Pfander because he wanted the Bible to be admitted into the discussion – and if so, the point was crucial for Christian-Muslim engagement. In any case the attempt does not seem to have been reciprocated. Powell insightfully writes that, in Wazīr Khān's approach, 'No time was to be wasted on seeking or evaluating either equivalence or difference on doctrinal questions' ('Muslim-Christian confrontation', p. 80). And this lack of evenness extended to the study of the scriptural text as well. Hava Lazarus-Yafeh writes that, although Muslim scholars such as Kairānavī were quick to use European biblical criticism against the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament, this 'never brought about a corresponding study of the Qur'an' ('Some neglected aspects of medieval Muslim polemics against Christianity', *Harvard Theological Review* 89 [1996] 61-84, p. 66; cf. A. Neuwirth, 'Qur'an and history – a disputed relationship. Some reflections on Qur'anic history and history in the Qur'an', *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 5 [2003] 1-18, pp. 3-4). Pfander's invitation to Muslim scholars to conduct for themselves a text-critical study of the Qur'an has not been picked up in any significant way. John Wansbrough wrote in 1977, 'As a document susceptible of analysis by the instruments and techniques of Biblical criticism [the Qur'an] is virtually unknown' (*Quranic studies, sources and methods of scriptural interpretation*, Oxford, 1977, p. ix). And to the present day, according to Majid Daneshgar, Muslim scholars largely refuse to consider anything written by European scholars of the Qur'an ('I want to become an Orientalist not a colonizer or a "de-colonizer"', *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion* 33 (2021) 173-85, pp. 183-4). In the meantime, academic scholarship on the origins of the Qur'an has raised a large number of issues seemingly equivalent to those attaching to the biblical texts, as well as questions that are in some ways even more intransigent (cf. S. Shoemaker, *Creating the Qur'an, a historical-critical study*, Oakland CA, 2022).

From the Muslim side, one of the issues that might have led to an impasse was the way in which interlocutors would speak about the Qur'an

and especially about Islam's messenger. Pfander included in *Ikhtitām* (pp. 80-116) some of the negative judgements on Muslim claims for the Qur'an and Muḥammad that he had originally set out in his *Mīzān* (1839, pp. 191-257), material he would probably also have presented in the debate had it continued beyond two days. In correspondence with Pfander after the debate, Kairānavī proposed that, should the debate resume, Pfander and French should not speak disrespectfully of Muḥammad in their arguments. Pfander replied that he would continue to speak about Muḥammad and the Qur'an in the way 'we should think proper', but that 'we would not unnecessarily hurt his own and his friends' feelings' ('Movements among Mahommedans', p. 257). Some have faulted Pfander specifically for his denials of Muslim claims for Muḥammad (e.g. L. Bevan Jones, *The people of the mosque*, London, 1932, pp. 238-9), though whether or not such written denials of Muslim claims are considered legitimate expressions in Christian-Muslim encounter, the context of ordinary engagement at the time was one in which Muslims commonly and freely denied orthodox Christians' beliefs in the deity of Jesus, his divine sonship, and his redemptive death on the cross (J. Ridgeway, 'Missionary work, as regards Mohammedans, impossible, if controversy be interdicted', *Church Missionary Intelligencer* 15 [1864] 220-2, p. 221). Kairānavī in particular mounted an extensive and aggressive attack on the deity of Jesus both before and after the debate in his books *Izālat al-awhām* (1852-3), *Aṣaḥḥ al-aḥādīth fī ibṭāl al-tathlīth* (1952), and *Iẓhār al-ḥaqq* (1866-7) (M.P. Kamil, 'Islam and Christianity in 19/20th century South Asian debates', *International Journal of Asian Christianity* 5 (2022) 208-23, pp. 217-20).

A key narrative element in the popular characterisation of the debate is that Kairānavī and Wazīr Khān outwitted their Christian opponents, caught them off guard, beat them at their own game, used their own weapons against them and so on and that, as a result, the Christians were exposed and humiliated. There is even a suggestion that the CMS was embarrassed by Pfander and sought to remove him from Agra. Becht objects to this portrayal: 'Rather, as an experienced missionary [Pfander] was asked to set up a new mission station [in Peshawar] together with the young and inexperienced R. Clark' ('Offenbarungsschrift und Offenbarungträger', p. 141). Clinton Bennett also gives short shrift to the rumour: 'There is no real evidence that the CMS lost confidence in Pfander or disapproved of his attitude toward Islam' ('Legacy', p. 80). Indeed, there seems to be no sense of shame or embarrassment in the CMS letters of 1854 ('North India Mission covering 1844-1886', CI1M13, 1853-5); in Pfander's reception in Peshawar in 1855 (H. Edwardes, 'Recollections of Dr. Pfander', *Church*

Missionary Intelligencer, new series 2 [1866] 100-2); in his 1858 placement in Istanbul as the first CMS worker there ('The Mizan-ul-Haq, Miftah-ul-Asrar, and Tariq-ul-Hayat', p. 48; S. Koelle, letter from Constantinople, 13 October 1866, *Church Missionary Intelligencer*, new series 2 [1866] 384; Stock, *History*, pp. 151-3); in the writings by the Agra debate witnesses and the later converts Ṣafdar ʿAlī ('The two converts', *Church Missionary Intelligencer* [1866] 41-51, pp. 46-51 on Ṣafdar ʿAlī; 'From Safdar Ali, inspector of schools in the circle of Jubbulpore', *Church Missionary Intelligencer*, new series 2 [1866] 215-22; *Niyāz nāmah*, Allahabad, 1867) and ʿImāduddīn (*Hidāyat al-Muslimīn*, Lahore, 1868; 'Progress of Christianity in India', *Church Missionary Intelligencer*, new series 6 [1870] 69-77, pp. 70-4, from ʿImāduddīn's autobiography; 'The results of the controversy in north India with Mohammedans', *Church Missionary Intelligencer* 10 [1875] 276-80); or in later reminiscences of French's role in the debate (J.D.M., 'Bishop French as a C.M.S. missionary', *Church Missionary Intelligencer* [1891] 804-14, pp. 806-9). Bennett also notes, perhaps suggesting a different direction, that Pfander was honoured in 1856 with a Lambeth Doctor of Divinity degree and ordained in Anglican orders by the bishop of Calcutta ('Legacy', p. 80). For his part, Pfander accepted the prospect of Muslim accounts of the discussion published 'in their own way' and seems untroubled by this in his letter of 1 May 1854. Instead, he writes that he saw the Muslim assertion of victory as an opportunity to publish in what became *Ikhtitām* 'our account' and to present 'the important subjects that have been left untouched' ('Movements among Mahommedans', p. 257) by the breakup of the discussion.

Perhaps still unexplored in relation to this narrative theme is the possibility of a cultural difference in the perception of honour and shame. Kairānavī and Wazīr Khān were rooted in a shame and honour culture. As the letters at the end of *Ikhtitām* make plain, it was very difficult for them to acknowledge that they were not aware of the basics of textual criticism, and were also not willing to examine the Qur'an by the same text-critical principles they wanted to apply to the Bible in the debate. Instead of acknowledging these challenges, they changed the subject to a dispute about the 'correct version' of the debate (see 'Movements among Mahommedans', p. 257-8; Powell, *Muslims and missionaries*, pp. 255-7).

Another misconception, which Becht specifies in his dissertation, is the idea that Pfander deliberately strove to be controversial in the sense of taking a combative, confrontational or 'abrasive' stance ('Offenbarungsschrift und Offenbarungträger', p. 141), a common characterisation of his conduct

in the 1854 debate. The debate as it actually developed was not a Christian attack on Muslims or Islam. On the contrary, the two days of discussions were a Muslim attack on the authority and authenticity of the Bible, particularly the New Testament. Pfander's books had already been in circulation in north India in Persian and Urdu for 15 years. As they are described above, his major writings were 'mainly "edifying" and non-polemical' ('Offenbarungsschrift und Offenbarungträger', p. 141; 'The Mizan-ul-Haq, Miftah-ul-Asrar, and Tariq-ul-Hayat', p. 48). Pfander had not published anything new in the seven years preceding the debate, and his letters of 1853-4 show him busy with other concerns ('North India Mission covering 1844-1886', CI1M13, 1853-5; cf. Powell, *Muslims and missionaries*, p. 240). He did not desire or call the debate; rather, Kairānavī and Wazīr Khān visited French while Pfander was away in order to ascertain the weakness of the Christian claims and probe possible divisions between the missionaries (Powell, 'Muslim-Christian confrontation', p. 80). Then they challenged Pfander to public debate and he accepted only reluctantly, writing on 1 May, 'I could not do otherwise than accept the proposal, although I was well aware that generally very little good is done by verbal public discussion' ('Movements among Mahommedans', p. 254). If, however, the term 'controversy' is understood in its particular 19th-century meaning of 'calm investigation of conflicting religious systems' (Ridgeway, 'Missionary work', p. 220), Herbert Edwardes's tribute is rather striking: 'Pfander was the very man for a controversy. He not only was the essence of good nature, but *looked* it, and it was difficult for any one to be angry with him for more than a passing moment' ('Recollections', p. 101). Two other important sources of essential information about the 1854 discussion, written in the decades following and not so far taken into account in assessments of the debate and its issues for Christian-Muslim relations, are Ṣafdar 'Alī's *Niyāz nāmah* ('Humble petition', Allahabad, 1867) and 'Imāduddīn's *Hidāyat al-Muslimīn* ('Guidance for Muslims', Lahore, 1868), both by Muslims who became Christians after the debate and attributed their conversions to what they had experienced in the course of it (see Powell, 'Muslim-Christian confrontation', p. 89).

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Gordon Nickel and Waseem Raza

Muḥammad Wazīr Khān

DATE OF BIRTH Unknown; probably early 19th century
PLACE OF BIRTH Unknown
DATE OF DEATH Unknown; presumably later 19th century
PLACE OF DEATH Unknown

BIOGRAPHY

Muḥammad Wazīr Khān was an Indian Muslim medical doctor who is best known for his participation in Muslim-Christian discussions in Agra in 1852-5, including a public debate in April 1854, and his subsequent correspondence with his debate opponent, the Christian missionary Karl Gottlieb Pfander (1803-65; *CMR* 24, 188-236). He assisted the Muslim polemicist Raḥmatullāh Kairānavī (1818-91; *CMR* 24, 253-60) in the months leading up to the discussion, and served as his second in the debate itself. Wazīr's innovations in anti-Christian polemic have been judged by some scholars to have influenced the patterns of Muslim-Christian interaction in north India and even across the Muslim world.

Little is known of Wazīr's life during his early years and after he left India in 1857 (Powell, 'Muslim-Christian confrontation', pp. 77, 80, 92; Powell, *Muslims and missionaries*, pp. 234-8). A Sunnī Muslim from a family of Afghan background that had settled near Patna in Bihar, he took his medical training at the Calcutta Medical College in the early 1840s, qualifying in 1845, and then joined the East India Company's medical service in the North-Western Provinces. In 1851, he was posted to the Thomason Hospital Medical College in Agra. At this point, he began intensive reading on Christianity. Some sources have suggested that he visited London for medical studies, and there collected Christian theological works, but firm evidence for this is lacking (Powell, 'Muslim-Christian confrontation', p. 82; but cf. Powell, 'Maulānā Raḥmat Allāh Kairānawī', p. 46). The works that he later cited were all available in the libraries of the Agra and Delhi Anglo-Oriental Colleges.

From 1852 to 1855, Wazīr participated in a Muslim effort to defend Islam and challenge the activity of Christian evangelists in Agra. He also gained a reputation among Sufi circles centred on the royal mosque there (see 'Imāduddīn, *Mohammedan brought to Christ*, pp. 9-11; 'Imāduddīn, 'Progress of Christianity', pp. 71-2).

How Wazīr connected with Kairānavī is not known, but one account suggests that he asked the *maulvī* to come to Agra from Delhi to prepare for a public debate with Pfander (Powell, *Muslims and missionaries*, p. 234-5). With his knowledge of English, Wazīr came to act as intermediary between Kairānavī and the European literature about Christianity and the Bible that they then used in the 1854 debate. He probably contributed significantly to the books *Izālat al-awhām* ('Removal of delusions', 1852-3), *Aṣaḥḥ al-aḥādīth fī ibṭāl al-tathlīth* ('Most clear sayings in refutation of the Trinity', 1854), and *I'jāz-i 'Īsavī al-mulaqqab bih miṣqalah-i taḥrīf* ('Christian inimitability, labelled The burnisher of distortion', 1854-5), though Kairānavī is credited with all three (Schirrmacher, 'Muslim apologetics', p. 76; cf. 'Movements among Mahommedans', p. 253). At the beginning of 1854, Wazīr and Kairānavī went to visit another missionary in Agra, Thomas Valpy French (1825-91; *CMR* 24, 338-44), hoping, suggests Powell, 'to engage him in conversation of a kind which would allow assessment of weaknesses in the Christian claims and of possible divisions between the missionaries' ('Muslim-Christian confrontation', p. 80; cf. Wazīr al-Dīn, *Taqrīr*, pp. 1-19). They then challenged Pfander to a public debate, which took place in Agra on 10 and 11 April 1854.

Avril Powell describes Wazīr as a 'natural debater' and an 'exceptionally gifted' linguist, and suggests that his letters to Pfander written between May and August 1854 and published in *Murāsalat-i mazhabī* offer a firm basis for judging his scholarly qualities ('Muslim-Christian confrontation', pp. 79, 81, 82). Two years later, Wazīr chose to exchange 'the pen for the musket' (p. 78). During the Indian Rebellion of 1857, he was a key figure in the Agra uprising of July 1857 and fought against British rule in both Delhi and Oudh. He then left for Mecca in 1858, at which point information about him fades.

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Murāsalat-i mazhabī. Dūsrā ḥiṣṣa mubāḥasah-i mazhabī kā
'Religious exchange of letters'

DATE 1854-5
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Urdu

DESCRIPTION

Murāsalat-i mazhabī. Dūsrā ḥiṣṣa mubāḥasah-i mazhabī kā ('Religious exchange of letters. Second part of the religious debate') is a book in Urdu compiled by 'Abdullāh Akbarābādī in 1854-5 containing the correspondence between Muḥammad Wazīr Khān and Karl Gottlieb Pfander. Its title page proclaims a qur'anic verse across the top, 'Surely the party of Allah are victorious' (Q 5:56).

The letters between Wazīr and Pfander run from p. 4 to p. 116 between a short introduction and a long response to the letters from Wazīr (pp. 116-200). There are 26 letters in all, 15 from Wazīr and 11 from Pfander, posted between 15 May and 17 August 1854. Many of the letters are only a single page or even shorter, but several are longer, well-developed pieces. The first letter, from Pfander to Wazīr, dated 15 May 1854 (p. 4), accompanied a package of three English books, including *The life of Moḥammad* by Aloys Sprenger (Allahabad, 1851). Pfander requests Wazīr to translate the books unto Urdu, and Wazīr's response of 20 May (pp. 5-10) introduces a theme that continues throughout the correspondence. Wazīr writes that he would much rather translate *The life of Jesus* by David Strauss (*The life of Jesus, critically examined*, London, 1846, English translation of *Das Leben Jesu*, 1835-6), a three-volume set he had reportedly placed on the table before him in view of his Christian opponents during the Agra debate (Powell, 'Muslim-Christian confrontation', p. 86; cf. Clark, 'Agra-discussion', p. 66). Wazīr followed this in his second letter (1 June, pp. 12-21) by summarising seven points Strauss made about the genealogy of Jesus at the beginning of the Gospel of Matthew (pp. 16-18) and demanding that Pfander should answer them.

Another substantial letter is Wazīr's third (9 June, pp. 24-47), in which he indicates books of the Bible that he does not consider inspired and touches on disagreements among Christians about the extent of the Bible's inspiration. More pointed assertions in this letter are his claim that the

Bible extant in 1854 did not contain the 'original *Injīl*' and his denial that the Gospel writers and Paul were divinely inspired. When Pfander challenges Wazīr to compare the New Testament extant in the 7th century with the present version (fourth letter, 22 June, pp. 48-55), Wazīr refuses and later, in his response to the letters, insists that no New Testament codexes can be dated to earlier than the 9th or 10th centuries. In the third of his longer letters (his fourth, 8 July, pp. 55-75) Wazīr continues to argue that Strauss's objections to the genealogy of Jesus in Matthew are valid and to demand an answer from Pfander. This seems to bring on a long series of short letters (pp. 75-90), of which few are longer than one page (Wazīr's fifth to thirteenth letters and Pfander's fifth to ninth letters). Among these, Wazīr acknowledges that he had not actually read the many European works he quoted in his letters (or in the Agra debate) (p. 83).

Pfander finally offers his longest letter (his tenth, pp. 90-112, 14 August) in response to Wazīr's letter of 8 July. He argues that none of the differences to be found between biblical manuscripts affect any essential Christian doctrine, and suggests to Wazīr that deeper knowledge of Hebrew, Greek and Latin is required before pronouncing too insistently on textual issues. Pfander also challenges Wazīr to produce a copy of the exact Gospel that Wazīr considers God to have revealed. Unless Wazīr can do this so that it can be compared with the existing Gospel, his accusation of alteration has no foundation. (Pfander included this letter of 14 August in *Ikhtitām dīnī mubāḥasah kā* [1855], pp. 125-54, his own book about the Agra debate and his subsequent correspondence with Kairānavī and Wazīr). This seemed to bring on a sequence of short final letters (pp. 113-16, 15-17 August) in which the two correspondents send back each other's letters unopened.

In addition to their basic religious disagreements, Wazīr and Pfander give indications of some strong feelings in the longer letters and also in the rapid-fire series of short letters. Avril Powell notes some *ad hominem* comments by Wazīr about Pfander's second marriage to an English woman (pp. 10-14) and Pfander's pronunciation of qur'anic Arabic (p. 31; Powell, 'Muslim-Christian confrontation', p. 81). Wazīr evidently 'felt free to abandon all his earlier restraint in using ridicule, sarcasm, and insinuations of a personal nature in order to cast a very unflattering light on Pfander's character and motives' (Powell, 'Muslim-Christian confrontation', p. 80). His 84-page response, written and appended to the letters after the correspondence ended, picks up on many of the issues between Pfander and himself to build up arguments that he had not been able to complete – or perhaps that had not occurred to him – in the months May-August 1854.

SIGNIFICANCE

The significance of *Murāsalat-i mazhabī* lies mainly in its relation to the history of Muslim efforts to condemn the Bible for *taḥrīf* ('corruption' or 'falsification'). In Avril Powell's estimation, expressed in her article 'Muslim-Christian confrontation', which is the best scholarly discussion of the Wazīr-Pfander letters, they 'constitute a detailed, and perhaps unrivalled, source for following the dynamics of Muslim-Christian interchange at this early stage of encounter in nineteenth-century India' (Powell, 'Muslim-Christian confrontation', p. 91). Muslim accusations concerning the Bible had been a central part of the traditional Muslim response to Christianity for a millennium before the April 1854 debate and continued to be the main issue after the Agra phase, but Wazīr introduced a fundamental change in strategy and arguably also in tone. He was the first Muslim scholar to use publications by academic scholars in Europe and North America in his allegation that the Bible was textually corrupt. Among his favourite sources for this purpose was T.H. Horne's *Introduction to the critical study and knowledge of the holy scriptures* (London, 1818).

By this means, Wazīr found a way to achieve what he considered a victory over Pfander, though the actual result was to create an impasse in Christian-Muslim engagement. After Wazīr, writes Powell, 'most Muslim polemicists' chose to follow his demand that debate rules 'should prohibit any argument or evidence taken from the Bible itself because it was a corrupt text'. In other words, the content of the Christian faith could not be allowed into the conversation. 'Wazir Khan's method of arguing on *tahrīf*', Powell continues, 'had the longer term effect of stultifying all discussion between Muslims and Christians for the next few decades' ('Muslim-Christian confrontation', p. 84). Accusations of *taḥrīf* in the Bible continued to be central to the Muslim *'ulamā'*, but discussion of the actual contents of the two faiths became neglected – or perhaps avoided – in favour of a narrow concentration on textual issues related to the Bible ('Muslim-Christian confrontation', p. 89).

Wazīr's strenuous effort to strengthen and extend Muslim accusations of *taḥrīf* seems to vindicate the pre-emptive opening section of Pfander's *Mīzān ul-ḥaqq* (1839, pp. 15-49) on the authenticity and reliability of the Bible, together with his response to 1840s repudiations in *Kitāb ḥall ul-ishkāl* (1847), his book on the April 1854 Agra debate and its immediate aftermath (*Ikhtitām dīnī mubāḥasah kā*, 1855), and also William Muir's *The testimony borne by the Coran to the Jewish and Christian scriptures* (Agra, 1856). When Pfander left India, two Indian converts from Islam took up the cause, Ṣafdar ʿAlī (*Nıyāz nāmah*, Allahabad, 1867) and ʿImāduddīn Lāhiẓ

(*Hidāyat al-Muslimīn*, Lahore, 1868), writing from an '"inside" knowledge of Wazīr Khān's arguments' (Powell, 'Muslim-Christian confrontation', p. 89). Ṣafdar in particular reacted to statements in Wazīr's third letter related to the understanding of abrogation (pp. 28-39; *Niyāz*, pp. 262-3; cf. Becht, *The book and the Prophet*, p. 404). Though both Wazīr and Pfander were skillful linguists, many of the disagreements between them concerned differences in their understanding of key terms and concepts such as *taḥrīf*/corruption, *ilhām*/inspiration, *injīl*/gospel, and *ḥawārī*/apostle (Powell, 'Muslim-Christian confrontation', pp. 81-6). For example, Wazīr's typically Muslim assertion that the *injīl* is a book revealed to 'Īsā leads him not only to deny that the New Testament contains the original Gospel but also to call the four canonical Gospel accounts 'conjectural' (*farḍī*). Wazīr also mocks Pfander with a long list of apocryphal gospels (p. 42). In his response, Pfander explains that Christians consider these apocryphal books heretical (*bidʿatī*) and draws Wazīr's attention to a challenge: 'Please bring forward the Gospel that was in use among the Christians of Muhammad's time, not books from the heretics' patch whether they called them Gospel or some other name' (p. 50).

Powell notes that, during the Agra debate, this was the particular question that Kairānavī was unable to answer (according to reports on both sides) (*Muslims and missionaries*, p. 253). Wazīr does not attempt to respond to Pfander's challenge in his subsequent letters to Pfander, but towards the end of the *Murāsalat*, in his later response, he offers a summary of early 19th-century European opinions about the dating of Codex Alexandrinus (pp. 182-5). He then issues his own ultimatum: Is Pfander's statement correct that the Alexandrinus dates from 200 years before Muhammad, or am I correct that the codex dates from after the 7th century? (p. 185). It turns out that Pfander was right (B.M. Metzger and B.D. Ehrman, *The text of the New Testament*, 4th ed., Oxford, 2005, p. 34), but European scholars before 1855 could not give unanimous confirmation. An example of differences in understanding connected to *taḥrīf* might be Wazīr's perception of the vocabulary of Western academic biblical studies. Did the European scholarly understanding of scribal/clerical errors in biblical manuscripts, various readings, text-critical variants, 'textual corruption', and the distinction between textual criticism and literary criticism justify Wazīr's accusation of *taḥrīf-i lafẓī*? (cf. Becht, *The book and the Prophet*, p. 119).

Wazīr's opening gambit in his first letter to counter Sprenger's *Life of Moḥammad* with Strauss's *Life of Jesus* also provides an indication of a fascinating period of scholarship in both India and Europe. If Pfander had a

motive for sending Sprenger's book, it was probably so that Wazīr would see how an academic scholar (living in Calcutta at the time) presented Muḥammad on the basis of early Muslim sources. Strauss, on the other hand, was useful to Wazīr because he was a European 'Christian' scholar questioning the historical truth of the Gospel text. Sprenger was involved in the discovery of manuscripts of some of the earliest Muslim narratives about Muḥammad and the publication of their contents. Pfander may have wanted Wazīr to deal with this portrait, but Wazīr's interest in Strauss did not extend beyond the questions Strauss asked about the genealogy of Jesus in Matthew (Powell, 'Muslim-Christian confrontation', pp. 87-8). It is therefore possible that, while Pfander wanted Wazīr to account for the portrait of Muḥammad as it was presented in the earliest surviving Muslim narratives of Islamic origins, Wazīr wanted to preclude discussion of the original Gospel account of Jesus.

Powell suggests that Wazīr 'missed the main point' of Strauss's book or 'deliberately chose to ignore it'. Strauss's case was that the Gospel account of Jesus was historically unreliable but could be viewed as myth. To a Muslim reader, such an explanation of a revealed religion would certainly be 'more uncongenial and puzzling' than even to the most traditional Christian in Europe ('Muslim-Christian confrontation', p. 87). Strauss's burden was also to argue that the miracles of Jesus in the New Testament were mythical additions with little basis in fact, whereas Islam has generally been quite content with the miracles of Jesus (Q 3:49; 5:110). An additional question that occurs is how Wazīr and Kairānavī might have felt about European scholars bringing a similar materialistic approach to Islam and the Qur'an – as indeed eventually took place.

Pfander wrote in his report of the Agra debate (on 1 May 1854) that Wazīr studied the European Bible commentaries and critical writings 'not, indeed, with any view of learning the truth, but only to obtain materials for refuting it' ('Movements among Mahommedans', p. 253). Becht similarly finds that Western writings were only cited 'to attack the validity of the Bible' (*The book and the Prophet*, p. 118), and Powell suggests that books like *I'jāz-i 'Īsavī* that feature Wazīr's research were 'narrowly polemical works, conditioned in content and argument by the time and circumstances in which they were compiled, specifically to reinforce the "victory" over the missionaries which had been claimed at the Agra *munazara*' (*Muslims and missionaries*, p. 271). The tone of the *Murāsalat* also indicates a dimension of Muslim antipathy beyond mere 'controversy' (in the sense of interfaith disagreement about religious truth claims). Wazīr wanted to restore the confidence of the local Muslim community after 13

years of Pfander's open-air preaching and Christian publishing in Agra. He assumed that 'great harm could be done to the missionary cause' by his use of critical writings by Christians in Europe (Powell, 'Muslim-Christian confrontation', p. 82). His approach was to give no quarter: 'No time was to be wasted on seeking or evaluating either equivalence or difference on doctrinal questions' ('Muslim-Christian confrontation', p. 80). This was in contrast to Pfander and French's efforts to try to maintain fairness both in the debate itself and in Pfander's *Ikhtitām* (see *CMR* 24, pp. 222-36). But Powell hints at something further when she observes that public debates 'gave Indians a rare opportunity to ridicule and satirize the European sahibs' ('Muslim-Christian confrontation', p. 88). As political tension grew in the years leading up to the Indian Uprising of 1857, Wazīr became disillusioned and even dejected, and then emerged as an active participant in the fighting in Agra, Delhi and Oudh before finally leaving India for Mecca in 1858. Declarations of 'victory' or 'conquest' (*ghalaba*) in interfaith debate, a claim that Powell records extensively ('Maulānā Raḥmat Allāh Kairānawī', pp. 54, 57; *Muslims and missionaries*, pp. 245, 249, 250, 252, 255, 271; 'Muslim-Christian confrontation', pp. 84, 88), can prove a chimera. Perceptions may change. Twenty years after the Agra debate, 'Imāduddīn, the *maulvī* whom Wazīr had assigned to preach against Pfander in Agra's royal mosque during the early 1850s, wrote confidently that 'the controversy has virtually been completed, and that too successfully [...] the Christians have obtained a complete victory, while our opponents have been signally defeated' (Imad-ud-Deen ['Imāduddīn Lāhiz], 'The results of the controversy in north India with Mohammedans', *Church Missionary Intelligencer* 10 [1875] 276-80, p. 276).

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Powell, 'Muslim-Christian confrontation'
Powell, 'Maulānā Raḥmat Allāh Kairānawī'

Gordon Nickel

John Wilson

DATE OF BIRTH 11 December 1804
PLACE OF BIRTH Lauder, Berwickshire
DATE OF DEATH 1 December 1875
PLACE OF DEATH Bombay

BIOGRAPHY

John Wilson was born in Lauder, Berwickshire, on 11 December 1804. He followed a course of linguistic, philosophical and theological studies for eight years as preparation for the ordained ministry at the University of Edinburgh, graduating in 1828. He received his licence to preach that year and was appointed as a missionary on 21 June. He married Margaret Bayne in the same year, and the couple travelled to India, where he was to serve as a missionary for the Scottish Missionary Society. They arrived in Bombay in 1829.

Wilson and his wife studied the Marathi language in Harnai, a village south of Bombay, for six months. When they returned to Bombay, Wilson established the Ambroli Church in 1831. He also established an English school in 1832, adding a collegiate section in 1836, and served as principal of this establishment, the Wilson High School and College, until his death in Bombay in 1875.

In 1835, 'after some differences with the Scottish Missionary Society, Wilson and his colleagues in India were transferred to the [mission conducted by the] Church of Scotland' (Carlyle, 'Wilson, John'). He was elected a member of the Royal Asiatic Society in 1836 and the Royal Society in 1845. He returned to Scotland from 1843 to 1847 due to ill-health. In 1869, he was appointed vice-chancellor of Bombay University, an institution he had helped to establish a decade earlier in 1857 (David, 'Wilson, John', p. 742). He also advised the government in India on educational policy.

In addition to his career in education, Wilson was remembered for his scholarship: according to Mohan D. David he 'mastered Sanskrit, Gujarati, Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Urdu, Hindustani, Persian, Arabic, and Zend' ('Wilson, John', p. 742). He founded the journal *The Oriental Christian Spectator* (1830-62) and wrote a number of books on Indian society, history and archaeology, including several related to religion: *Parsi religion* (1843), *The evangelization of India* (1849) and *Religious excavations of western India, Buddhist, Brahamanical, and Jaina* (1875). He was known for

his public preaching and debating with representatives of other religions (Carlyle, 'Wilson, John') and also for his efforts to encourage social reform in India (Cousin, 'Wilson, John').

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Works

DATE 1830-57

ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English and other languages

DESCRIPTION

Four of John Wilson's works particularly concerned with Christian-Muslim relations call for attention. These are his *Refutation of Muhammadism* (1834), *A memoir of Mrs Margaret Wilson* (1838), *The lands of the Bible: visited and described* (1847) and *The star of Bethlehem and the Magi from the East* (1857). Other works by him not discussed here include *Remarks on Muhammadanism*, published by the Bombay Tract and Book Society in 1832, a 16-page Urdu translation from Hugo Grotius's (1583-1645) Dutch *Bewys van den waren godsdienst* ('Proof of the true religion'), which had been translated into Latin and English (section 6 focuses on Islam – see

CMR 8, pp. 583-8), and a 96-page Urdu book entitled *The rise, progress and decline of Muhammadanism*, published by the American Presbyterian Mission in Allahabad in 1841.

As part of a series of disputes with Hindus, Muslims and Zoroastrians, which often took the shape of publishing competing religious tracts (Green, *Bombay Islam*, pp. 27-8), Wilson was brought into confrontation with a Muslim named Ḥājī Muḥammad Ḥāshim, who sought to defend his religion (Smith, *Life of John Wilson*, p. 69). As a means of addressing this *maulvī*, Wilson wrote *Refutation of Muhammadism*, which was published in 1834, with versions in Urdu (Hindustani), Persian and Gujarati appearing in the following years (J. Murdoch, *Catalogue of the Christian vernacular literature of India*, Madras, 1870, pp. 85-6, 100). According to Nile Green's description, the text is 120 pages long (others give different numbers) and contains 22 chapters (*Bombay Islam*, p. 28). It explores scripture, attacks Muḥammad's morality and outlines contradictions and falsehoods in the Qur'an, showing that it is not true.

A memoir of Mrs Margaret Wilson (1838; the 1844 edition, about 550 pages long, is quoted here), which contains extracts from the letters and journals of Wilson's wife, includes several descriptions of Wilson's interactions with Muslims from her perspective. For example, in a letter to her sister dated 21 March 1832, she mentions her husband's attacks on Muslims, with Wilson adding in a footnote a description of the disputes that led to his *Refutation* (p. 299). A more important example is perhaps the letter to a Miss Y. of Edinburgh dated 5 October 1833, which refers to Wilson's conversion of a Muslim fakir. Margaret Wilson records the persecution the convert faced from fellow Muslims and hopes that he will 'be a bright and shining light in the midst of heathen and Muhammadan darkness, and will lead many of the bigoted and intolerant Mussulmans to [...] turn unto the living and true God' (p. 367). She also records that a former opponent of Wilson's (a mullah) had visited the previous day to ask for baptism, which Wilson said he would perform after instruction.

Wilson's *The lands of the Bible. Visited and described* (1847) is a two-volume account of his travels in the Middle East in the early 1840s. It contains various observations of and interactions with Muslims as well as related reflections. It includes accounts of meetings and daily interactions with Muslims, such as Wilson's meeting with the governor of Suez, Muḥammad Bey (vol. 1, pp. 40-2), his observations of Muslim practices, including an account of Bedouin prayer, which he describes as 'the mere repetition of the Muhammadan creed for some dozen times' and questions whether it can appropriately be called worship (vol. 1, p. 279), and his reflections on

the ill effects of the Crusades (vol. 2, p. 236) among other topics. Of interest is ch. 5, 'The Muhammadans', in the section entitled 'General researches' (vol. 2, pp. 701-23). Wilson remarks at the beginning of this chapter that he is not concerned with discussing the general principles of Islam, but rather to make his own observations from the standpoint of a missionary regarding the spirit of the religion. He asserts that Muslim East Asia despised the power of Christendom until British rule reached India, but this has 'led it to acknowledge, with humble submission, that resistance to that power is [...] hopeless' (vol. 2, pp. 701-2).

Wilson expresses both positive and negative feelings about British rule in India, Muslim interest in the Bible and in comparing it with the Qur'an, and Muslim engagement with missionaries. He uses his experience to make comparisons with Muslims in Western Asia, noting that, though these Muslims are more energetic and active than those in India, 'they are, if possible, below them in regard to character and conduct, and fiercer and more bigoted in religion' (vol. 2, p. 703). This inhibits religious inquiry in various ways. They tend to dislike Christianity, viewing it as polytheistic and idolatrous, and view Europeans living among them as irreligious. There is little Christian influence, no established mission, and they are neglected by Europe. He argues that Christendom needs to act in western Asia without delay by demanding toleration for Christianity and distributing copies of the Bible.

Following these general comments, Wilson next discusses particular Muslim communities. He begins with the Bedouins, and records that Europeans have traditionally been fearful of them and stayed away from them. He quotes John Mandeville's description of them, before noting that things have changed because the Bedouin now serve as trusted guides to travellers. He gives a description of various Ṭawarah Bedouin tribes or clans (vol. 2, pp. 706-8) and notes that they lack an extensive knowledge of Islam and adhere to their own body of law. He regards them as the Bedouins most accessible to missionaries, though a missionary sent there should be 'a native of the East, with a vernacular and grammatical knowledge of the Arabic, and ready to accommodate himself in every respect to their self-denied and nomadic mode of life' (p. 709). Wilson then offers brief descriptions of other tribes, pointing the reader to his own work and the work of Johann Ludwig Burckhardt (1784-1817; *CMR* 22, 89-105) for fuller details on some of them. Returning to the topic of mission, he argues that missionaries based in Damascus would 'act most favourably on the Syrian Badawín' (p. 711), suggesting also that Christian merchants ought to turn their attention to them. He notes that illiteracy is a barrier to distributing

scripture among them, but suggests that reading religious texts aloud to them may be beneficial.

The next section focuses on heretical Muslim sects in Syria. He describes the Metawilah and their geographical spread, and gives a lengthier account of the Druze and their geographical spread and history. He quotes from the work of Antoine Isaac Silvestre de Sacy (1758-1838; *CMR* 21, 136-42) and includes an English translation of a Druze catechism in which Jesus of Nazareth is called the Antichrist, which he dismisses as 'sufficiently absurd, fanatical, and humiliating to humanity' (vol. 2, p. 721). He argues that the Druze are accessible to missionaries, noting that an American mission is working among them. He goes on to describe the Nasairíyah and the Ism'aílíyah, noting that their worship 'is said to be very immoral' (vol. 2, p. 722). He observes that 'the Christian teacher is not called systematically to contend with them', but rather 'The darkness of their gross heathenism [...] will fly before the light of heavenly truth' (vol. 2, p. 723).

The star of Bethlehem and the Magi from the East (1857), which is 135 pages long, consists of a sermon and other materials, including an 18-page chapter entitled 'Conversion and baptism of two students of the Elphinstone Institution, Bombay' (pp. 118-35). This contains descriptions of the baptismal services of two converts, Sayyad Hasan, a Muslim, and Shápurjí Edaljí, a Parsi, together with their biographies and statements from them. The chapter is based on a letter from Wilson which had originally been published in *The Oriental Christian Spectator*.

The service included a reading of Jeremiah 29:8, 'Let not your prophets and your diviners, that be in the midst of you, deceive you', which Wilson applied to 'The trial of Muhammad by his own tests', the substance of which he intended to include in 'the new edition of his work on Muhammadanism' (p. 119), and also personal statements from the two baptismal candidates. Wilson describes Hasan as a man of great promise, the son of a teacher in the Government College, who was one of the first Muslims to receive an English education and a long-term acquaintance of Wilson. Through talking with Christians, including Margaret Wilson, and receiving literature from them, Hasan came to the decision to seek baptism and entered the mission house for instruction. Some Muslims attempted to dissuade him, though he was supported by his relatives, who helped him to sell a house he had inherited, which he could now do as a result of the act passed in 1850 that allowed converts to inherit property (p. 122).

In his personal statement (pp. 124-31), which incorporates passages from sermons by Wilson, Hasan seeks to answer the question, 'What must I do to be saved?' He admits that he is 'guilty of sins both of commission

and omission' and risks forfeiting a place in heaven, but Islam does not provide a solution because the act of repentance and the performance of pious duties do not secure freedom from sin. Further, 'In the warrior of Mecca, I cannot find a Saviour, notwithstanding the tenacious opinion of his followers to the effect' because he himelf was a sinner. But Hasan has now put his faith in Christ and seeks to live a life that will enable him to be daily 'cured of the spiritual disease with which I am infected by inherent depravity'. He appeals to Muslims present at the service to abandon the belief that the Bible has been corrupted and to compare what it teaches with the Qur'an, and he prays that all Muslims will turn from 'him of Mecca' to Christ.

SIGNIFICANCE

Nile Green describes Wilson as 'the most influential missionary to work among Bombay's Muslims' (*Bombay Islam*, p. 27). Green makes a convincing case for Wilson's influence on Christian-Muslim relations during his lifetime, noting that 'his impact was felt among every community [...] triggering cumulatively pluralizing responses from Hindus and Parsis as much as Muslims' (p. 27). His *Refutation of Muhammadism*, for example, with its multiple reprintings and translations, and the circumstances around its composition, indicates that Wilson exerted extensive influence within his own lifetime.

Aiming primarily to convert Muslims, in his writings Wilson openly attacked Islam and the claims made for it, in some cases successfully convincing Muslims and other non-Christians in his audience to embrace Christianity. His urging Christians to undertake missionary work among Muslims in the Middle East seemingly contributed to the missionary endeavour. Green notes that his work was carried on by the Church Mission Society's mission to Bombay (*Bombay Islam*, p. 29), although it appears that his influence on Christian-Muslim relations more generally was much more limited after his death. He appears to be remembered more for his work on and among Zoroastrians (see Palestia, *Parsis of India*, pp. 105-27) rather than Muslims.

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James Harry Morris

Raḥmatullāh Kairānavī

Maulānā Raḥmatullāh Kairānavī ʿUthmanī l-Hind

DATE OF BIRTH March 1818
PLACE OF BIRTH Kairana, Muzaffarnagar District, now Uttar Pradesh
DATE OF DEATH 11 May 1890
PLACE OF DEATH Mecca

BIOGRAPHY

Raḥmatullāh Kairānavī (this name also appears as al-Kairānavī in some editions of his works) was born in the north Indian village of Kairana to a family which traced its ancestors to the third Caliph ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān and had close ties to the Mughal nobility dating back to the time of the Emperor Akbar (r. 1556-1605) in the 16th century. He received a traditional Islamic education at home, and in 1830 he went to Delhi to study in the madrasa of Maulānā Muḥammad Hayāt (Powell, 'Muslim-Christian controversy', p. 46). Later he moved to Lucknow for further study and in 1841 he was appointed as chief secretary (*mīr munshī*) on the Delhi estates of Mahārājā Hindū Rāo. After the deaths of his wife and son he returned to Kairana and established a madrasa where he taught (Ali and Usmani (eds), *Bā'ibal se Qur'ān tak*, pp. 179-84).

As Christian missionary activity became more overt, Kairānavī took an active part in resisting missionary efforts and alerting the Muslim community to the missionaries' aims, which he perceived to be the wilful conversion of all Muslims to Christianity by the British Crown through the East India Company (Powell, 'Muslim-Christian controversy', pp. 47-8). He engaged in written and public exchanges with Christian missionaries and challenged Karl Gottlieb Pfander (*CMR* 24, 188-236) to a *munāẓarah* ('formal debate'). In his two-volume *Izālat al-shukūk* ('The removal of doubts'), Kairānavī records his religious correspondence with Pfander, an early instance of written interreligious debate between Muslim and Christian scholars in South Asia. It was later published in Arabic as well as Urdu. When he recognised the tone and polemical attitude displayed by Pfander in his letters, Kairānavī invited him to a public debate with the aim of exposing the distortions and misrepresentations in his understanding of

Islam before a general audience. This was held at the Church Missionary Society school in Agra (also known as Akbarābād) on 10 and 11 April 1854, when he was in his mid-thirties. The event drew several hundred people from the environs and from Delhi and Lucknow. While its outcome remains contested, it is still regarded as a benchmark of encounters in the modern history of Christian-Muslim relations.

The five topics agreed for the debate were: the corruption of the text of Bible; the concept of abrogation in Islam and Christianity, inquiring into whether the laws revealed in earlier scriptures have been superseded, establishing Islam as the final and ultimate divine dispensation; the doctrine of the Trinity; the authenticity of the Qur'an; and the authenticity of the prophethood of Muḥammad.

By the end of the second day, when only the first topic had been discussed, the exchange had grown increasingly intense in both tone and argumentation. With more than a thousand people in the audience, the organisers were prompted to discontinue the proceedings in order to avoid potential unrest. Following the debate, Pfander began a correspondence with Wazīr Khān between 1 May and 16 August 1854. However, despite this continued communication, no consensus was reached between the two regarding their respective theological positions. Reports of the debate spread through the media, but its lasting impact came later through the publication of Kairānavī's books and increased exponentially in the 20th century when it was taken up by a new generation of polemicists.

Kairānavī was also known for his involvement in revolts against the British. Before 1857, Kairānavī was part of a group of *'ulamā'* who met in Thana Bhawan, a small town near Kairāna, for the purpose of repelling the British through jihad. This was led by Mamlūk 'Alī Imdādullāh and the founders of the Deoband madrasa, including Muḥammad Qāsim Nānautavī and Rashīd Aḥmad Gangohī (Miyan, *'Ulamā'-i Hind*, pp. 196-9). He participated in the armed struggle to overthrow colonialist rule, and he took up arms and led some two hundred men from Najibabad to fight in Delhi during the Uprising of 1857. After this was crushed, colonial forces confiscated his lands and sought his arrest, but he fled to Bombay and on to Mocha in Yemen, from where he walked to Mecca, a journey that took almost two years. Mecca at this time was a haven, sometimes temporary but often permanent, for those fleeing repression in India, and he was given help there by Aḥmad Zaynī Daḥlān (1816-86), the grand mufti. The mufti was interested to hear about his controversies with the Christian missionaries in India and urged him to write about it in Arabic. When he heard that Pfander had moved to Istanbul to continue his missionary

activity, Kairānavī remained in the Ḥijāz until his death in 1890, apart from three journeys to Istanbul.

It is known that he travelled to Istanbul in 1863, but not whether this was his own decision or by invitation, nor is it known when he returned to Mecca except that it was before 1873.

The intellectual and militant resistance he had shown in India was applauded in the court of Sultan Abdulaziz (r. 1861-76), and it was here that, in 1864 he wrote *Iẓhār al-ḥaqq* ('Demonstration of the truth'), a summary of the five topics scheduled for discussion in the debate. In addition, he wrote two works in direct response to Pfander's *Mīzān al-ḥaqq*, though they were not published, and also *Mi'ār al-taḥqīq* in response to Ṣafdar 'Alī's (*CMR* 24, 765-80) conversion to Christianity.

During his stay in Istanbul, Kairānavī noted that modernist leanings were taking root among the Ottoman youth, and he wrote a short book entitled *Tanbīhāt* ('Warnings'), which is included in some editions of *Iẓhār al-ḥaqq*. Back in Mecca, he taught at the Grand Mosque under the patronage of the grand mufti until 1873, when he and other Indian emigrés secured the support of Ṣawlat un-Nisā', a wealthy woman living in Calcutta, to establish a school, Madrasa l-Ṣawlatiyya, which remains active today.

Kairānavī was summoned to Istanbul in March 1884 under suspicion of plotting against the Ottoman government. He successfully resolved that matter and returned to Mecca, where he died in 1890. Some in Mecca were influenced by his opinions, including those who later orchestrated the 1916 Arab Revolt.

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Iẓhār al-ḥaqq
'Demonstration of the truth'

DATE 1864
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Arabic

DESCRIPTION

While he was in Istanbul, Kairānavī was asked to write an account of the debate between Karl Gottlieb Pfander and himself in Agra in April 1854, a sign of the recognition this meeting a decade previously had attracted. In response, he wrote this book, in which he addresses the five issues between Islam and Christianity that were to have been the substance of the debate. It comprises an Introduction and six sections. It is related to some of Kairānavī's earlier works, such as *Izālat al-awhām* ('Removal of delusions', 1852-3), *Aḥsan al-aḥādīth fī ibṭāl al-tathlīth* ('The best traditions to invalidate the Trinity', 1853) *Iʿjāz-i ʿĪsavī* ('Christian inimitability', 1854) and *Izālat al-shukūk* ('Removal of doubts', 1855). This maybe explains how he could have written such a long, detailed and comprehensive work so quickly; full comparison of *Iẓhār al-ḥaqq* with them will perhaps show the extent to which he put them to new use.

The titles of these works leave little doubt about Kairānavī's attitude towards Christian scripture in the condition he found it at the time of the Agra debate and on the basis of his familiarity with European biblical criticism at this time. One of them, *Iʿjāz-i ʿĪsavī*, which was largely a response to Pfander's *Mīzān al-ḥaqq* (published soon after the debate by Rizvi Press in Agra in 1854 or 1855), is a substantial work, 612 pages long, divided into three parts together with an extensive preface and a conclusion. The primary intention of the first two parts is to establish the case for the textual corruption of the Bible, while the third contains responses to the objections to Islam raised in Pfander's book. The conclusion is written as a prayerful call for Christians to repent and follow the right path. Kairānavī's general approach in this work suggests that he not only thought Pfander and others like him were simply wrong but that he was incensed at the way they diverged so openly from the true course of religious history as he saw it. The title of this work encapsulates the central theological value that Kairānavī attributes to Jesus's prophetic mission as a divinely inspired forerunner and foreteller of Muḥammad. It simultaneously reflects his commitment to reaffirming the qur'anic understanding of Jesus in contrast to Christian interpretations that, in his view, departed from the original monotheistic message.

In the substantial Introduction to *Iẓhār al-ḥaqq* (pp. 9-95 in the 1989 edition, which is used here), Kairānavī sets out the matters he will discuss in the book and the reasons why they require attention. Then, in Section (*bāb*) 1 (pp. 97-423), he gives brief descriptions of the books of the Old and New Testaments, the number of chapters in each, their supposed authors and dates. He also presents views of European scholars about their dating and authorship, with particular attention to disagreements between Catholic and Protestant scholars concerning canonical and deuterocanonical books. These point to the conclusion that the books of the Bible could not have been divinely revealed.

In Section 2 (pp. 425-625), Kairānavī goes on to present long series of multiple examples from throughout the Bible to demonstrate various forms of textual corruption: alteration (*tabdīl*), addition (*ziyāda*) and omission (*nuqṣān*); and in Section 3 (pp. 641-80) he examines instances of abrogation (*naskh*) in the text.

In these three sections, Kairānavī exposes verbal contradictions and inconsistencies in the biblical books with conscientious thoroughness, attesting to his meticulous reading of the biblical books and attentive study of European scholarship with the help of Wazīr Khān, who was able to read works in languages which he himself did not know. Throughout

his examination, he stands by the Islamic understanding of divine inspiration, according to which the books of the Bible, as supposedly divine utterances, must each demonstrate consistency both within itself and also with all the others. Human authorship and historical contexts, which European scholars at this time would increasingly take into account in their exegesis of individual books, are irrelevant to his approach, so any change or disagreement signals a corruption of the original text and the invalidity of the book's authority. It was exactly this deficency that Kairānavī and his supporters had stressed at the Agra debate, leading them to rule out the Bible as an authority and causing Pfander and his supporters to abandon the discussion as unviable at the end of the second day.

In Section 4 (pp. 681-772), Kairānavī argues against the plausibility of the doctrine of the Trinity on the basis of reason, according to what Jesus himself said, and according to what is reported in the books of the New Testament. Then, in Section 5 (pp. 773-987), he demonstrates that the Qur'an is the word of God and a miracle, and addresses the objections raised by the Christians concerning its status as a revealed scripture, and in Section 6 (pp. 999-1367), he argues that Muḥammad was a true prophet.

According to his own lights, Kairānavī was presenting arguments that were not only persuasive but also final because they were based on the Qur'an. As he understood the matter, since the books of the Bible were revealed to their respective recipients through inspiration, any change to them of whatever kind rendered them corrupt and no longer immaculate divine utterances. The more sophisticated his demonstration of this, the more convincing his proof would be. For him, the European scholarship that sought to trace the development of the biblical books from their origins and to locate them in particular historical and religious contexts were only useful insofar as they helped him to show that they had been tampered with over the course of time. The intricate scholarship he discovered in Western theological studies that was leading to new understandings of the meaning of revelation with regard to the Bible had no effect on his own appreciation of the ahistorical status of his own scripture.

SIGNIFICANCE

In recalling elements in Kairānavī's exchange with Pfander, *Iẓhār al-ḥaqq* marked the Agra debate as a key event in the history of Christian-Muslim relations in South Asia. It arguably made him known as the most significant modern proponent of the Muslim charge that the Bible is textually corrupt.

The work was greeted with acclaim and was promoted throughout the Ottoman Empire, particularly in the Ḥijāẓ, and soon translated into other languages. The Ottoman government arranged for Turkish (*İbrâz ul-haḳ. Tercüme-yi İẓhâr ul-hak*) and French translations (*Idh-har-ul-haqq, ou, Manifestation de la vérité*) in 1876 and 1880, respectively, and these became the bases for translations into many other languages. Kairānavī's travelling companion, Salīmullāh, made an Urdu translation but it was not published. Ghulām Muḥammad in Mecca translated it into Gujarati with additional footnotes, and this translation was in turn translated into English by an unknown scholar and published as *The truth revealed*. This was discovered by the Muslim apologist Ahmed Deedat (1918-2005) in South Africa, bringing renewed international interest to Kairānavī's life and work. Using the original Arabic edition and translations, Akbar ʿAlī of the Dār ul-ʿUlūm, Karachi, translated *Izhar al-ḥaqq* into Urdu, with a preface, commentary and analytical notes by Muḥammad Taqī ʿUsmānī. This was published in Pakistan in 1968 under the title *Bā'ibal se Qur'ān tak* ('From Qur'an to Bible'). Muḥammad Taqī ʿUsmānī's preface was later published separately and translated into English as *What is Christianity?* It was also translated into other languages, including Arabic. The various translations have remained in demand and highly influential down to the present day.

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Naeem Mushtaq and Charles M. Ramsey

William Robertson Aikman

DATE OF BIRTH 12 March 1822
PLACE OF BIRTH Marylebone, London
DATE OF DEATH 15 October 1903
PLACE OF DEATH Paddington, London

BIOGRAPHY

William Robertson Aikman was born in Marylebone, Middlesex, on 12 March 1822. He was the fourth son of George Robertson Aikman (d. 1844) and Sarah Aikman née Cumby (d. 1865). His father was a retired East India Company naval officer who inherited the Ross estate in Lanarkshire in 1821. William joined the Indian army in 1840 and qualified as a translator of Urdu in 1849. Retiring in 1851, he returned to England and took up his life's work as an itinerant preacher and evangelist, also writing poetry and a book on the causes of the Indian Rebellion (or Uprising) of 1857, during which his younger brother won the Victoria Cross.

Aikman rejected the opinion that the Rebellion had been caused by Muslim religious fervour, claiming rather that the 'spirit of Mohammedanism' was 'extinct throughout India' (*Bengali Mutiny*, p. 6) and that Muslims were largely ignorant of their faith and more interested in sensual pleasures than in politics or piety. He blamed Russian influence for the uprising.

He preached in various Dissenting churches and ended up as a 'servant of the Particular Redemption Baptists' (Aikman, *Judgment of the judges*, title page). In 1861, using the pseudonym 'a soldier of the cross', he published *The last regret* as a repudiation of the volume of *Essays and reviews* that had appeared in 1860 edited by John William Parker (d. 1870). In Aikman's view, this impugned the truth of Christianity.

In 1865, Aikman returned to India as a 'volunteer against Islam' (Aikman, *Star of prophecy*, p. v). There, he planned to preach in the bazaars to 'all within earshot the cross of Christ' but, when he attempted it, he discovered that his years in England had 'stripped' him of his 'former efficiency'. Instead, he turned to a literary refutation of Islam, aiming to 'axe the very root [...] from which [...] the moral and religious pestilence called Islam had sprung' (Aikman, *Judgment of the judges*, p. xiii). He finished the Urdu manuscript of *Sŭlāsŭt tūl kūtūūb* ('The three books') in August 1866 and

published it under the name of Willem Roberts. At that time, he was staying with Canon Edward Sell (d. 1932; *CMR* 24, 781-803), Principal of the Harris High School for Muslims in Madras, a prolific writer of tracts for Muslim readers and of books on Islam (Special Collections, University of Birmingham, CMS/B/OMS/C I2 O219 item 3 letter dated 22 June 1867). Aikman's English translation was published in Madras in 1868.

Writing about his time in India between 1865 and 1872, he said that after the book's publication he was 'completely cut off from friendly relations with the Mahommedans' and decided to return to England where he hoped to be 'more useful [...] to the work of the vineyard' (Aikman, *Judgment of the judges*, p. xv). Although he initially intended to keep at a distance from the Particular Redemption Baptists because he did not subscribe to their high Calvinism and wanted to preach to sinners instead of offering 'comfort to saints', he ended up preaching in several of their churches. Aikman died in Paddington, London, on 15 October 1903 and was buried in the family mausoleum in Kensal Green cemetery.

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Sŭlāsŭt tūl kūtūūb
'The three books'

DATE 1866
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Urdu

DESCRIPTION

William Aikman wrote *Sŭlāsŭt tūl kūtūūb* in Urdu while he was staying at the Harris High School for Muslims in Madras as Edward Sell's guest. He completed the manuscript in August 1866, although it was only published, as a book of 286 pages, in 1872. The English version of 1868, to which Aikman added the sub-title, 'a treatise on the tremendous controversy regarding salvation pending between Christians and Mahommedans, in which the current unfounded traditions of the Mahommedans are refuted upon a multitude of passages in the Old Testament, the New Testament and the Koran and the Original Truth of God is submitted to the inquirer', is 155 pages long, divided into seven chapters preceded by a preface (pp. i-vi). In the preface, Aikman states that only one religion is from God and of three religions that claim a divine origin, Judaism, Christianity and Islam, two are false and their followers are 'perishing' (p. i). 'Error', he writes, is 'pernicious' because it subverts the 'spiritual interests of mankind' (p. ii). If Muslims find any errors in his book, he invites them to refute them. Muslims tend to be ignorant about the extent to which Muḥammad commended the Jewish and Christians scriptures (p. iii), but he will prove his case by citing from them as well as the Qur'an.

In ch. 1, Aikman argues that God's original plan for human salvation set out in the Books of Moses cannot be changed and remains the criterion for judging religious truth claims (p. 3). 'Mohammed Mustapha' opposed and denied this plan and was therefore 'uninspired' and 'false' (p. 4). He 'took advantage' of certain passages to 'represent himself to the ignorant Arabs as a prophet' (p. 5). Aikman cites qur'anic verses that 'exalt Moses' (p. 5) as proof that his claim to be a prophet was genuine and he denounces Jews for refusing to recognise this (p. 9). Muḥammad's message parts company from God's plan because it offers salvation in return for almsgiving and

good works, not by the 'atonement and bloodshedding' of Christ on the cross (p. 11). In ch. 2, he aims to prove that the Gospel is not abrogated by the Qur'an and that both the Old Testament and Muḥammad 'witness to the salvation of Christ' (p. 14). Aikman argues that all the Hebrew prophets foretold Jesus's incarnation, death and atonement (p. 23), which conforms with God's original plan for salvation. Muḥammad confirmed in verses such as Q 5:46 that Jesus followed in the footsteps of all earlier prophets (pp. 23-4) while Muḥammad himself preached a different message about an 'entirely different way of salvation'. This shows that the Qur'an is from man, not God (p. 25).

In ch. 3, Aikman examines the claim that the Bible has been corrupted. He argues that the Qur'an lacks any proof of divine origin and that it also contradicts itself because it endorses the Bible's divine inspiration while denying its reliability. Moreover, he says, for a period of 4,100 years prophets 'GAVE UNITED TESTIMONY [*sic*] to Christ Jesus' (p. 42). He goes on in ch. 4 to argue that atonement for sin was necessary for salvation in order to satisfy God's justice. The penalty for sin is eternal punishment and only a 'divine sacrifice' (p. 52) could atone for this.

In ch. 5, he argues that the prophecies of the Old and New Testaments agree perfectly together and establish that faith in Christ is the only means of salvation. In Deuteronomy 18:15 the prophet about whom Moses spoke was Jesus not Muḥammad (p. 71). Descended from Hagar, Arabs are not brothers of the Jews but a separate people. In pretending to be saviour of the Arabs, Muḥammad promised redemption, but he ignored the efficacy of the 'blood-shedding of a lamb without blemish' (p. 72). In ch. 6, Aikman compares the teachings of Islam with what he calls God's original plan for salvation, and finds the Islamic teachings lacking. With equal boldness, he defends the Trinity by arguing that, although this is not fully explained in the Bible, the Holy Ghost brings believers to faith in a Three-in-One God. While this cannot be fully explained, Muslims, he says, are equally unable to explain the 'secret of the self-existence' of God (p. 123). Going further, the denial of original sin in Islam contradicts Christian scripture. In ch. 7, he presents Islam as the fulfilment of the prophecies given in the Book of Daniel, identifying it as 'permitted by God as a heavy judgement for the hypocrisy and heresy of the Christian church'. He concludes by commending his book to Muslim readers in the hope that it will be 'an angel of light, and messenger of peace' (p. 155). God will 'without the aid of the sword, or the power of man, bring this *antichristian kingdom* to nought' (p. 154) since it has fulfilled its purposes.

Aikman's approach resembles, among others, that of Karl Gottlieb Pfander in *Mīzān ul-ḥaqq* (the first Urdu edition of which appeared in 1843 and the second in 1850), though there are no signs in *Sŭlāsŭt tūl kūtūūb* that Aikman knew this earlier work. Both polemicists set out criteria for adjudicating between true and false religious claims, then demolish, at least to their own satisfaction, the claims of Islam and justify those of their own religion. Aikman wrote in Urdu because he hoped that it would help make his book accessible to Muslims, yet the closest he came to showing any respect for Muḥammad was by adding the title 'mustapha' (*muṣṭafā*, 'chosen', 'appointed') to his name, which in fact contradicts his representation of Muḥammad as uninspired. On the other hand, Aikman did not attack Muḥammad's moral character or repeat any of the old legends about how he compiled the Qur'an himself or was aided by a Christian monk and a Jewish scholar. Nor did he represent Islam as characteristically violent or as using the sword as its main means of spreading the religion. Throughout the book, he demonstrates his command of the Qur'an, and cites from it copiously without apparently recognising that, by doing so, he indicates that it possesses some degree of legitimacy.

SIGNIFICANCE

As a layman, Aikman had no formal training in the study of Islam. It is therefore significant that someone who could be regarded as an amateur could learn as much as he did about traditional Christian refutations of Islam and present these arguments in a language that many Muslims spoke, and also make extensive use of the Qur'an in the process. Like Pfander's *Mīzān*, *Sŭlāsŭt tūl kūtūūb* is a classic work of 19th-century missionary polemic against Islam that aimed to be appealing and rational but was actually offensive.

Aikman's hope that Muslims would find the book of value was wishful thinking. Publication of the English version provoked 'leading maulvis' to petition 'the government for its suppression' and boys attending Harris High School in Madras were threatened with 'excommunication' if they read it. In June 1868 the boys refused to study scripture and were expelled, which 'emptied' the school (*The Missionary Conference: south India and Ceylon, 1879*, vol. 2, Madras, 1880, p. 7). Elwood Morris Wherry (d. 1927) described *Sŭlāsŭt tūl kūtūūb* as 'touching upon the main points of controversy', adding that while it 'has its merits, and should be useful to Christian students of Islām', as an 'address to Muslims' it 'has not produced so far as is known any great impression' (*Muslim controversy*, p. 122).

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Clinton Bennett

Nineteenth-century Tamil writings

BIOGRAPHIES

Three authors of Tamil works who were active at various times in the 19th century are discussed here: the Christian author Vedanayagam Sastriar, the Qādirī Sufi Musthan Saib and the Christian priest Samuel Zechariah.

Vedanayagam Sastriar, known as Sastri, was born on 17 September 1774. In 1785, he was sent to Tanjore to study with the German missionary Christian Friedrich Schwartz (1726-98), who identified him as one 'who would play important roles in the development of Tanjore evangelical culture over the next five decades' (Hudson, 'Vedanayagam Pillai', p. 114). When he was only 20, Schwartz appointed him as the headmaster of a school he had opened in Tanjore.

Sastriar wrote his first book in 1790. He was a prolific author, producing more than 140 evangelical works in Tamil, mainly in the form of poetry, that explained Christian scripture and doctrines. The Anglican missionary and Tamil scholar George Uglow Pope (1820-1906; *CMR* 24, 178-82) expressed his admiration for Sastriar as a poet: 'Sastriar had the head of the great Greek poet Homer' (Dayamani Manasseh, *Vedanayaga*, p. 76).

In appreciation of Vedanayagam's abilities as a poet and preacher, the Tanjore church elders and members conferred on him the title *Vedasiromani Mahājñāna Kavicakravartti* ('The jewel of scripture and emperor of the poets of great knowledge'), and the Tranquebar evangelical congregation honoured him with the title *Cuviceshakkavirayar* (Evangelical king of poets') (Dayamani Manasseh, *Vedanayaga*, pp. 32, 33). He died on 24 January 24 1864.

Vedanayagam was a great Tamil scholar, poet and composer, and his songs are still sung in Tamil churches to this day. Gnanasigamony Sastriar, one of Vedanayagam Sastriar's sons, who was also an author (see 'Gnanasigamony Munishi', *CMR* 24, 183-7), wrote *Mēciyā mahattuvam* ('The glory of Christ', 1853), a reply to Muslim anti-Christian polemic.

Kunangudi Musthan Saib (1792-1838) was born into a wealthy Muslim family in 1792. He became a merchant trading in attar, but gave up his wealth and family to become a Sufi in the Qādiriyya order. He is known for his songs, which express his love for God, and is revered as a Sufi saint in Tamil Nadu. He often debated with Christian missionaries and workers.

Little is known about **Samuel Zechariah** (Zachariah or Sakaria) apart from the fact that, in 1866, he was one of the first Indian ministers ordained for work with the London Missionary Society (LMS) and was the first pastor of Neyyoor Home Church in the extreme south of India. He is remembered for his 40 years' service in Neyyoor and also for his two-volume *Ten tiruvitāṅkōṭṭu Tiruccapai carittira curukkam* ('A short history of Christianity in South Travancore', 1906).

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Samuel Zechariah

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Christian and Muslim writings from south India

DATE 1822-67
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Tamil

DESCRIPTION

Vedanayagam Sastriar, *Makamatu markatar sambashanai*

Vedanayagam wrote this brief work (its title in English is 'A conversation or dialogue with those who follow Muḥammad') after a conversation he had with a Muslim. The original text has not survived, though what appears to be a detailed account of the main points discussed in this conversation is included in the biography of Vedanayagam written by one of his sons, Noah Gnanadickam (1830-1902, known as Gnanasigamony). This relates that Vedanayagam met a Muslim accountant named Marub Saib at Kumbakonam on 13 April 1822.

In their conversation, Marub Saib first asks about the birth of Jesus, who is called by the qur'anic name 'Īsā, and his divinity, and about Christian beliefs concerning God and the Bible. In reply, Sastri gives a summary of the Gospel accounts of Jesus's birth, including the annunciation and the exultation of the angels after his birth. Sastri says that Jesus is the Word of God through whom God created everything, alluding to the opening verses of John's Gospel: The Word is God and shines in the darkness but the darkness does not perceive it. Those who do not believe in God the Son will not see life.

Then Saib asks how Christians worship Jesus: as equal to Allāh, as one of the prophets, or as more than a prophet? Sastri replies that, although God the Father was greater than Jesus (during Jesus's earthly life), Jesus was never inferior to the Father. Jesus can do the same things as the Father, 'So we worship him in the same way we worship the Father'. Sastri makes a four-point case for Jesus's divinity. First, Muslims believe Jesus is *Rūḥallāh* ('the spirit of God', Q 4:171) and just as the spirits of human parents are with their children so the Spirit of God was with His Son. Second, Jesus was born without sin, unlike any prophet, and he did not marry or have children, unlike prophets such as Moses. Jesus was just like God. Third, Muslims believe that Jesus is in the third heaven, and indeed, while all the other prophets died and never rose again, Jesus alone was raised from the dead (a statement with which the Muslim would presumably not agree) and went to heaven. Fourth, Muslims say that he will come back to

judge all people and will send them to heaven or hell, so Jesus cannot be a mere human.

In response to the Muslim's questions about individuals raised from the dead by Jesus, Sastri refers to three events recorded in the Bible in which this happens: the son of the widow of Nain, the daughter of Jairus, and Lazarus. In addition, Elisha prayed fervently to raise the Shunammite woman's dead child, while Enoch and Elijah went up to heaven alive, but none of them sat at the right hand of God the Father.

Saib further asks what Christians say about ʿĪsā *nabī* (Jesus the prophet). How could he be the son of Allāh? Does Allāh have a wife (an allusion to Q 6:101)? Sastri replies that, while officers and ministers can be dismissed and replaced, the Son cannot be rejected but remains forever. In addition, God does all things according to His sovereign will and, just as He created everything out of nothing, He begot his Son by the power of the Spirit through Maryam to give Him a human nature. The first Adam had no father and was created from dust and since then no woman has begotten a child without a male. So, since ʿĪsā *nabī* alone was born without a biological father, his birth is unique.

On the matter of scriptures, Sastri says that Christians do not agree with the list of four books that Saib gives, the *Tawrāt* through Mūsā, the *Zabūr* through Dāwūd, the *Injīl* through ʿĪsā, and the *Furqān* through Muḥammad. Rather, Christians define the scriptures according to the date of ʿĪsā's birth, calling the books preceding it the Old Testament and the books after it the New Testament. Along with Mūsā's book, he explains, the Old Testament contains prophetic books written by Isaiah, Jeremiah and Daniel, as well as the Psalms of Dāwūd. ʿĪsā was the last prophet, and no one has ever come after him. Prophets such as Mūsā were only the servants of God, so they wrote as God instructed them. But because Jesus was the Son of God, his disciples wrote the words Jesus told them. So, just as God was able to give scripture, the Son was also able to give scripture. Jesus came to fulfil the law, not to abolish it. In the Gospel of Matthew chs 5 and 6, Jesus gives greater teachings than Moses. He taught about love and being kind to others. He was the last and final prophet and all the prophecies of the prophets are fulfilled only in him. Dāwūd said that he praised God seven times a day because of his love for God's word (see Psalm 119:164), but Jesus said we should pray always. Jews prayed towards Jerusalem because the temple of God was situated there, but he did not give any command regarding a direction of prayer and, in any case, since God is everywhere, we are free to worship Him facing in any direction.

To Saib's question about the doctrine of the Trinity, Sastri answers that, though the Father, the Son and the Spirit are three, they are one in essence: the Father creates, the Son saves and the Holy Spirit sanctifies. Unless the Holy Spirit regenerates our minds, cleanses our hearts and gives us new minds, we cannot enter heaven. In this life we cannot fully comprehend God with our human knowledge, but in heaven people will know clearly. Thus, just as stars appear small to our eyes but when we see them through a telescope we learn about their distance from us and how big they are, so Christians cannot fully understand the Trinity with their limited human knowledge but when we go to heaven we will know more about God.

Sastri Sastriar's *Makamatu markatar sambashanai* is one of the earliest Tamil publications about any Christian-Muslim debate held in India. It gives common Muslim objections against Christianity and offers a way to present true responses in the light of the Bible. After he published it, European missionaries asked him to write a response to a Hindu tract entitled *Kiṟistumata kaṇṭaṇam* ('A condemnation of Christian religion') and many other anti-Christian writings. Sastriar wrote *Neca nirupam* ('Epistle of love'), in which he gave a Christian response to Hindus and shared the details of his dialogues with Catholics and Muslims.

Musthan Saib, *Kiṟistumata kaṇṭaṇa vaccira taṇṭam*

Musthan Saib wrote this polemic (its title in English is 'The rod for correcting, or confuting, Christianity' or 'A diamond club for destroying Christianity') of 182 pages at a time when many Indians were joining the church and being baptised. His major arguments are that Christ is not God but a mere man, the New Testament is not the word of God, and the Christian belief in Jesus's crucifixion to make atonement for the sins of all people is a myth. Although the work itself is now lost, these arguments are preserved in the form of quotations by Gnanasigamony Sastriar in his reply entitled *Mēciyā mahattuvam* ('The glory of Christ') written in 1853 (the second edition, 1864, is listed by J. Murdoch, *Classified catalogue of Tamil printed books: with introductory notices*, Madras, 1865, p. 25). Gnanasigamony briefly introduces Musthan's work in his preface (pp. v-xi) and quotes the latter's questions at the start of each chapter in his book. The Sri Lankan Tamil Simon Casie Chitty (1807-60), author of *The Tamil Plutarch* (1859), also wrote a reply in 1854, though not much is known about it. It is referred to in his *Kutarkkatikkāram* ('Refutation of improper arguments', 1854), which was 'an answer to a gross libel on Christianity' (Hettiaratchi, 'Some literary undertakings', p. 7).

Samuel Zechariah, *Īcā napiyum Makammatu napiyum*

This is a short tract of two pages published by the South Travancore Tract and Book Society in August 1867 (its title in English is 'The prophet Jesus and the prophet Muḥammad'). Zechariah starts with the statement that, among all the religions of the world, Christianity and Islam are most in opposition. Christians say that Christianity is founded by God's grace, while Muslims argue that Islam is the religion established by God. He calls his Muslim readers to examine the question of the true religion by comparing Christ and Muḥammad, and he lists eight characteristics attributed to Jesus and Muḥammad that he says reveal their differences and distinguishing features. First, many prophets foretold the arrival of Jesus and many were expecting his coming, but no prophets either foretold Muhammad's arrival or expected his coming. Second, Jesus was born into a poor family and had no place to lay his head (see Matthew 8:19-20, Luke 9:57-8), but Muḥammad was a rich and powerful man. Third, Jesus was godly and perfect to the extent that even his enemies could not accuse him of any sin, but Muḥammad enjoyed sensual pleasures, marrying many women and living an adulterous life. Fourth, Jesus was gentle, loving and compassionate, but Muḥammad was cruel and a murderer. Fifth, Jesus openly performed a number of miracles and made many prophecies, but Muḥammad never made a prophecy and even confessed that he had no prophetic gift. Sixth, Jesus taught his followers to have only one wife and prohibited divorce except on the grounds of adultery, while Muḥammad taught that a person could marry four women and divorce his wives with a triple declaration. Seventh, in his ministry, Jesus prophesied, performed miracles, preached and reasoned with people, and admonished them with love and care, never forcing people to accept his way, but Muḥammad established his religion by tempting people with talk of sensual pleasures and preached the Qur'an with a sword in his hand. Those he defeated either accepted Islam or were killed. Eighth, Jesus taught his disciples to do away with cruelty and injustice and to display good qualities such as love, patience and self-control, and he rebuked them when they did not do this, but Muḥammad wanted his followers to hate and to fight bravely. He taught that those who fought for his religion would receive many rewards in heaven and that the sword was the key to paradise and hell.

Zechariah asks his readers to give a reasonable and unbiased response to these points and to discern correctly and not to be deceived. At the end, he encourages them to learn more about Jesus by reading the Bible, and emphasises that salvation comes only through Jesus.

SIGNIFICANCE

Unlike north India, south India is known for peaceful co-existence between Christians and Muslims through the centuries. However, these three works reveal that followers of the two faiths had fixed views about one another and were ready to discuss them even before the famous debate in Agra between Raḥmatullāh Kairānavī and Karl Gottlieb Pfander in 1854. The works reveal the liveliness as well as the complexity of relations between Indian Christians and Muslims at this time. They also show the detailed knowledge that Christians and Muslims possessed of each other's teachings and scriptures and, intriguingly, of arguments that had been used for centuries in debates between them. This raises the question of how these were passed to them and what earlier writings were in circulation.

PUBLICATIONS

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Samuel Zechariah, *Īcā Napiyum Makammatu Napiyum*, Travancore, 1867

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Hacker, *A hundred years*

The missionary conference. South India and Ceylon, 1879, vol. 2, Madras, 1880

Arputharaj Samuel

John Robson

DATE OF BIRTH 14 January 1836
PLACE OF BIRTH Lasswade, Scotland
DATE OF DEATH 12 August 1908
PLACE OF DEATH Isle of Arran, Scotland

BIOGRAPHY

John Robson was born in the village of Lasswade, Midlothian, south of Edinburgh. He studied at the University of Glasgow (where he earned Master of Arts and Doctor of Divinity degrees), as well as Geneva, Heidelberg and Göttingen. In 1860, he travelled to India as a member of the United Presbyterian Mission (the Scottish United Presbyterian Church existed from 1847 to 1900), settling in Ajmer in Rajasthan. He worked there for more than a decade (1861-72) and only retired because of ill health.

He returned to Great Britain in 1872 and remained there on medical advice. He and his family settled in Aberdeen, where he served as the minister at St Nicholas Union Church (1876-98). One of his major accomplishments there was the commissioning and building of a new parish church in Union Grove designed by Robert Gordon Wilson (1844-1931).

Once on home soil, Robson began to write and publish his reflections on Indian religion in *Hinduism and its relations to Christianity* (1893). In this he focused only very sparingly on Islam, presumably since the vast majority of the population of the state of Rajasthan, where he had been posted, was Hindu, with only a small number of Muslims.

In 1900, Robson was elected to the moderatorship of the Aberdeen Supreme Court, two years after retiring from ministry. Alexander Gammie refers to him as a man of 'high standing in the Church' in light of his 'distinguished academic career' as well as his missionary work in India ('St Nicholas United Free Church', p. 199). He left Aberdeen early in the new century for Edinburgh then London. He died in 1908 whilst holidaying on the Isle of Arran off the west coast of Scotland.

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

'A Mahomedan commentary on the Bible'

DATE 1867
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

'A Mahomedan commentary on the Bible', which Robson wrote while he was still in north-western India, is a review article of the first two volumes of Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān's (1817-98; *CMR* 24, 424-47) *The Mohomedan commentary on the Holy Bible*, which were published in 1862 and 1865. The review appeared in two parts in *The British and Foreign Evangelical Review* in 1867 and 1868, each part in a separate volume. Sayyid Aḥmad published two volumes of the Urdu *Tabyīn al-kalām fī tafsīr al-Tawrāt wa-l-Injīl ʿalā millat al-islām* ('Elucidation of the word in commentary on the Torah and Gospel according to the religion of Islam') in 1862 and 1863, quickly followed by the English edition, and the third appeared much later in 1887. Vol. 1 serves as an introduction, vol. 2 is mainly a commentary on Genesis 1-11, and vol. 3, published in *Taṣānīf-i Aḥmadiyya*, part 1, vol. 2, is a commentary on Matthew 1-5, though Sayyid Aḥmad composed it before the other two (see *CMR* 24, pp. 428-38). Robson shows no awareness of any of Sayyid Aḥmad's comments on Matthew.

Robson begins the first part of his review by looking forward to the time when India will become a Christian country and acknowledging that, contrary to expectations, it will be Muslims rather than Hindus who will bring this about through study of the Bible and rejection of 'the negations of Islam' (pp. 556-8). The background of Sayyid Aḥmad's commentary, he says, is that the consensus among Indian Muslims, that the Bible is corrupt and is abrogated by the Qur'an, has been proved wrong by Christians such as Karl Gottlieb Pfander (1803-65; *CMR* 24, 188-236). Sayyid Aḥmad is now attempting a new approach, which is to show that the Bible and the Qur'an are in harmony, though this is 'a position which will, we suspect, prove as disastrous for his religion as that which he has left' (p. 559) because Sayyid Aḥmad fails to see that, when he is settling one problem between the scriptures, he is introducing others. He has begun the study of Hebrew exegesis and biblical criticism late and has not mastered them,

and he has tended to impose the Islamic dogmas of the unity of God and the prophethood of Muḥammad upon what he has read. The result is a work of little value apart from the passages from European scholars that are quoted in it, which 'will be of great service to Eastern ones, as communicating many of the results to which the former have attained' (p. 560). It appears that Robson cannot bring himself to say anything congratulatory about this singular undertaking, seeing in it no more than a threat to his own beliefs.

Despite finding so much wrong in the commentary, he goes on to discuss some examples of what Sayyid Aḥmad has done so that readers 'can learn something from it of the position of the religion of the Prophet in presence of that of Christ' (p. 560). After complaining that the English translation of Sayyid Aḥmad's exegetical comments in *Tabyīn al-kalām* is a confused version of the Urdu, he starts with Sayyid Aḥmad's understanding of which parts of the Bible can be considered as revelation. He judges that the Muslim scholar regards the whole of the Old Testament as having 'prophetic authority' and the words of Jesus alone in the New Testament, the rest having the same status as Hadiths. Here can be seen the Muslim understanding that only prophets (among whom was Jesus) receive and transmit revelations directly, although, since Robson finds no argument to substantiate this, he does not comment on it, passing on to the issues of corruption and abrogation.

Regarding the accusation of the corruption of the Bible, Robson summarises in some detail Sayyid Aḥmad's discussion in the seventh of his ten introductory discourses in vol. 1 of *Tabyīn al-kalām*, including his quotations from authoritative Muslim scholars on this issue. He shows that Sayyid Aḥmad concludes there is no substance in the claim that the text of the Bible has been altered: 'On the capital question of the genuineness and authenticity of the Bible, Sayad Ahmad is quite at one with the majority of Christian writers' (p. 568). It might be expected that Robson would have complimented Sayyid Aḥmad on this careful weighing of evidence and arriving at a view that, for a Muslim at the time, was little short of astonishing, but he says nothing.

Moving on to the accusation of the abrogation of the Bible by the Qur'an, he quotes Sayyid Aḥmad's denial that there can be abrogation 'in the prime object of the mission of the prophets on which the eternal salvation of man is dependent – to believe in the unity of God and to worship him', in which Sayyid Aḥmad is stating uncompromisingly that the Bible has not been abrogated. But Robson then develops the argument that the whole of the Bible teaches about the atoning death of Christ, which

leads to the inevitable consequence that 'the doctrine of Mahomedanism which sets it aside is a rebellion against the purposes of God' (p. 569). He does not draw any conclusion from this, leaving it as a blunt conclusion to the first part of his review.

In the second part of the review, which is on vol. 2 of *Tabyīn al-kalām*, Robson notes that Sayyid Aḥmad's commentary only extends as far as Genesis 11 (p. 50). More seriously, he observes that Sayyid Aḥmad 'does not seek so much to reconcile the Mahomedan religion with the Bible, as the Bible with the Mahomedan religion. He continually brings in the Mahomedan doctrine as the rule of interpretation' (p. 50). This is fatal, in Robson's mind, to Sayyid Aḥmad's intention to 'study the [Christian] Scriptures as a whole' (p. 50) and to reconcile Islam with the Bible.

Rather than analysing the commentary in the order in which it appears, Robson takes up 'successive topics and doctrines' (p. 50). He first considers the issue of the authority of the Bible, which Sayyid Aḥmad discusses at the beginning of the volume. Here, Sayyid Aḥmad cites the traditional Islamic view that the Pentateuch in its present form was written down from memory by Ezra and is not God's Word revealed to Moses. But Robson replies that this view is riddled with 'contradictions and absurdities' (pp. 51-2). He makes the same judgement about Sayyid Aḥmad's attempt to reconcile the account of creation in Genesis with the findings of science (pp. 53-4), and goes on to challenge Sayyid Aḥmad's denial that Satan exists in personal form and that the fall of Adam and Eve was an actual event (pp. 54-8).

The issue of the original state in which Adam was created draws Robson into a long discussion about the differences between Christian and Muslim doctrine. On the one hand, Muslims believe Adam was created 'sinful but ignorant, and therefore not responsible; that partaking of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (whether this be accepted literally or figuratively) introduced knowledge and consequent responsibility – a liability to punishment – but also a capability of reward', while, on the other, Christians believe he was created 'holy, intelligent, and responsible' and fell into sin by eating the forbidden fruit (p. 58). Thus, in the one tradition, humankind can work to achieve their own salvation while in the other they are helpless and need salvation from God. For Robson, the Muslim view is 'opposed alike to reason and revelation' (p. 59). Crucially, there is no need in the Muslim scheme for Christ as Saviour, a point that Robson contends Christian apologists have not clarified properly to Muslims, and one that shows how far Islam is from biblical truth. In fact,

Muslims believe that only the prophets were sinless, though they disregard the sins recorded of some prophets in the Bible (p. 61).

Turning to the doctrine of the Trinity, Robson responds to two instances in which Sayyid Aḥmad interprets verses from the first chapters of Genesis not as referring to God in the plural in the way that Christians do, thus opening possibilities that these verses mention the Trinity, but in conformity with Muslim doctrine. He argues that here Sayyid Aḥmad has not grasped the linguistic issues involved and reveals his lack of acquaintance with Hebrew, in other words, that he is out of his depth. In his next comment, however, he reduces the harshness of this criticism by revealing his admiration for the Muslim scholar's achievement in his work:

> It is not merely as a commentary that we look on it, but as the indication of a new movement in the Mahomedan mind. It is the work not of a European but of an Indian Mussulman. He has had none of the advantages in his early training which the former has had. He has been obliged to acquire a knowledge of Hebrew after he had grown up, through a foreign language, amid a press of public business. In such circumstances the wonder is, not that he has not succeeded better, but that he should have done so much as he has. (p. 65)

The fact is, of course, that Sayyid Aḥmad cannot succeed for the simple reason that the Bible cannot be made to conform to the doctrines of Islam. But Robson hopes he will continue his commentary through other parts of the Bible because the outcome is inevitable: the scripture 'will in the end assert its power, and overthrow all that is opposed to it' (p. 65), so Sayyid Aḥmad must eventually perceive the truth of Christianity in its biblical expression.

Robson finishes with a warning to fellow Christians. Sayyid Aḥmad's commentary follows a tradition of painstaking scholarship that 'Easterns' will recognise and respect from precedents in qur'anic commentaries. There is no equivalent among works written for Indian readers by Christians, so the seriousness of this work 'will make them regard it as a much better guide both as regards acquaintance with the subject and earnestness of purpose, than any with which Christian teachers have furnished them' (p. 66). There is, therefore, an urgent need for Christians to write works of this kind to demonstrate their 'superior scholarship'.

Readers of this review are unlikely to catch from it much idea of what is contained in the two volumes. Robson's approach focuses immediately on what he sees as defects in the commentary and accumulates enough criticisms of it, as he sees them, to deter anyone who might think they can

benefit from it. Nevertheless, he can see that it is a substantial enough attempt to attract 'Easterns', presumably Indian Christians as well as Muslims, and should therefore be answered by higher-quality works than have so far been written by European Christians.

SIGNIFICANCE

This review was meant as a warning to fellow Christians that, if they were to make any profound impressions on Muslims or followers of other faiths in India, they must prepare themselves thoroughly. Robson was aware of the famous debate that had taken place in Agra in 1854, where the Muslim participants deployed arguments from European biblical scholarship to support their case for the textual corruption of the Bible. His advice at the end of the review shows he understands the same point that the Christians at Agra must have grasped, which is that Muslims must be addressed with respect and full seriousness. It served as advice to move away from assumptions of European superiority to grasp the reality that their participants in debates could be at least their equals.

As might be expected of a review, this was hardly mentioned after it was published (it is cited without comment in G. Smith, *The life of John Wilson, D.D., F.R.S.: for fifty years philanthropist and scholar in the East*, London, 1878, p. 114 n. 1). So, any effect it may have exerted on Sayyid Aḥmad or on Christians working among Muslims in India cannot be known.

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Katherine Laura Jennings with the Editors

Arthur Brinckman

DATE OF BIRTH 6 January 1838
PLACE OF BIRTH England
DATE OF DEATH 28 January 1913
PLACE OF DEATH London

BIOGRAPHY

Arthur Brinckman was born in 1838, the youngest son of Sir Theodore Brinckman, a British politician and baronet, and his wife, Charlotte Godolphin Osborne. He enlisted in the Oxford Militia in 1854 at the age of 16, and then in the 94th Regiment of Foot in 1855. He served in Ireland, Gibraltar and Peshawar and rose to the rank of lieutenant. He remained in the regiment until 1860 and then spent two years tracking and shooting big game in Kashmir and Ladakh. In 1862, he published a popular book on the subject of hunting big game in Kashmir titled *Rifle in Cashmere*.

He returned to England and enrolled at Cuddesdon College (now Ripon College Cuddesdon) near Oxford to train for ministry in the Church of England. He was ordained a priest in December 1864 and married Louisa Georgiana Edith Swinny, the principal's daughter, the same year. The couple went to Kashmir in 1865 as honorary missionaries of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, a missionary society of the Church of England. For the next two years, Brinckman assisted Dr William Elmslie, a medical missionary, by translating for his patients. All profits from the second edition of *Rifle in Cashmere* were donated to the medical mission run by Elmslie and the Church Missionary Society. In 1867, Edith died in a cholera epidemic, after which Arthur and his daughter Helen Louisa returned to England.

On his return, Brinckman became an advocate for British control of Kashmir, publicly denouncing the oppressive rule of Maharajah Gholab Singh and his mistreatment of the Kashmiri people. He was particularly critical of the maharajah's attempts to obstruct Christian missionaries preaching in Kashmir and of his punishment of converts and associates of missionaries. In 1868, he published a short treatise titled *Wrongs of Cashmere*, which called for British annexation of the territory. The following year, he wrote *Notes on Islam. A handbook for missionaries*. In 1870, he joined the staff of All Saints Margaret Street in London, where he remained until 1876. During this period, he was chaplain to the nurses at

University College Hospital and sub-chaplain to the All Saints Sisters, with whose assistance he founded the St Agnes Hospital for the Fallen in 1874.

Throughout his life, Brinckman was an avid writer, publishing a large number of books and pamphlets on a variety of subjects, including *Notes on the care of the sick* (1879), which was widely distributed. A copy of his book *Love beyond the grave. A word of comfort to mourners*, published in 1895, was found in Queen Victoria's collection at Osborne House. He died on 28 January 1913 at the age of 75.

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Notes on Islam. A handbook for missionaries

DATE 1868
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

Arthur Brinckman's *Notes on Islam. A handbook for missionaries* began as a series of rough notes for the author's own use, which he wrote during his time as a missionary in Kashmir. He organised the notes and published them in 1868, just a year after he returned from Kashmir. The volume of 326 pages is a unique example of early efforts by Protestant missionaries to create educational material for other missionaries in the field about Islam. It was intended to serve as a manual to train Christian missionaries in evangelising Muslims, for which Brinckman believed there was a great need. When the book appeared in the late 1860s, there were few others like it.

The work is divided into 35 chapters and falls into four thematic sections: historical background, basic beliefs of Islam, theological principles of Islam, and practical evangelical hints. The initial eight chapters focus on the history of Islam: the history of Arabia, a bibliography of works on Islam, the life of Muḥammad, Muḥammad's successors, the line of Shīʿī Imams, events in Islamic history, the sects of Islam, and Islam in India. The last was Brinckman's area of expertise, and this chapter served as a

vehicle for his personal interest in promoting greater missionary efforts in Kashmir.

Brinckman's bibliography of works on Islam includes a wide variety of sources. While it is not a comprehensive list of works available at the time, it gives a glimpse into what sources Brinckman had at his disposal during his Kashmiri mission. He drew upon Indian sources such as Sayyid Aḥmad Khān's commentary on the Bible and what he describes as 'Imad i-Din's two books', which are probably the works of the Indian Muslim convert to Christianity (pp. 9-10; see *CMR* 24, 506-41). He makes use of popular sources such as Richard Burton's *Personal narrative of a pilgrimage to el Medinah and Meccah* (1857; *CMR* 17, 368-83) and he draws upon academic sources such as the biographies of Muḥammed written by William Muir (1819-1905; *CMR* 24, 666-96) and John M. Arnold (1817-81; *CMR* 17, 224-30). He also includes earlier works by Henry Martyn (1781-1812; *CMR* 20, 89-111) and Humphrey Prideaux (1648-1724; *CMR* 13, 87-95). Though his notes rely heavily on George Sale's 1734 translation of the Qur'an with notes (*CMR* 13, 325-43), he does not include it in his bibliography.

Six chapters focus on the Qur'an: 'Notes on the Koran', 'Editions of the Koran', a seven-page chart titled 'List of suras in chronological order', 'Notes on the suras' and 'Proper names in the Koran'. These chapters make up the bulk of the work, with detailed notes on the majority of the suras. Brinckman adds historical notes, cross references to the Bible and other qur'anic verses, and he raises matters of contention stemming from them.

He then turns to theological aspects of Islam, addressing 'Mohammed as a sinner', 'Mohammed no saviour', 'Mohammed worked no miracles', 'Predestination' and 'Women in Paradise', which, though he lists it as a chapter in the table of contents, is only one sentence long. Finally, he takes up apologetic explanations to meet common Muslim objections to Christianity, with chapters titled 'Texts from the Koran useful to preach from', 'Passages of Scripture bearing on Islam', 'Passages and texts to preach in the Old Testament', 'Points of contrast between Jesus and Mohammed' and 'Common objections raised by Moslems against Christianity'. In these chapters, he concludes that the main Muslim objection to Christianity hinges upon the validity of the Bible. In response, he cites biblical references to support its integrity.

Brinckman generally argued for a conciliatory approach rather than a dogmatic approach to the evangelisation of Muslims. In consequence, his contemporaries noted a discord between his stance and the tone of this work. This is seen, for example, in his controversial chapter on Muḥammad's character, in which he draws judgements from Humphrey Prideaux's *The true nature of imposture fully display'd in the life of Mahomet*

(1697), William Muir's *Life of Mahomet* (1861) and quotations from Charles Forster's *Mahometanism unveiled* (1829), J.D. Macbride's *The Mohamedan religion explained* (1857) and John Muehleisen Arnold's *The Koran and the Bible* (1866), descriptions that are hardly conciliatory. However, Brinckman does offer some practical conciliatory strategies for missionaries to preach to Muslims, such as that missionaries should not insult or slander Muslims and Islam, and that they should preach sitting down so as not to become overly excited or aggressive (pp. 321-2). The book ends with a chapter that encourages all Christians to engage in mission work.

SIGNIFICANCE

When *Notes on Islam* was first published, it received a number of critical reviews, with one author noting that it lacked a clear introduction or a concise history and outline of Muslim beliefs ('Literary notices'). Another reviewer writing in the *Colonial Church Chronicle* noted the challenges the book faced: 'Mr. Brinckman has done well to print his notebooks. They will not, probably, find many readers, but we trust that the author's design in publishing them may be realized' ('Reviews and notices', p. 238) The book probably received attention because it closely followed the publication of a popular work by Brinckman the year before, *The Wrongs of Cashmere*, which detailed his case for British rule in the territory.

Despite the lack of enthusiasm for the book, it paved the way for later works to be published on evangelising Muslims. Two pioneering missionaries cited it as useful: Samuel Zwemer found it full of admirable hints about public preaching to Muslims (*Arabia*, p. 384) and E.M. Wherry included it as a useful reference (*Comprehensive commentary*, p. i). But while the book was evidently helpful for missionaries when it was first published, by the time Zwemer referred to it in 1900 he noted that it had gone out of print.

PUBLICATIONS

Arthur Brinckman, *Notes on Islam. A handbook for missionaries*, London, 1868; Notes_on_Islam (digitised version available through Google books)

STUDIES

S.M. Zwemer, *Arabia, the cradle of Islam*, New York, 1900

E.M. Wherry, *A comprehensive commentary on the Quran*, London, 1882

'Literary notices', *The Union Review. A Magazine of Catholic Literature and Art* 6 (1868) 475

'Reviews and notices', *The Colonial Church Chronicle* (1868) 238

Emily Leigh-Pemberton

James Long

DATE OF BIRTH 3 June 1814
PLACE OF BIRTH Bandon, County Cork, Ireland
DATE OF DEATH 23 March 1887
PLACE OF DEATH London

BIOGRAPHY

Born in Bandon, County Cork, in 1814, James Long was educated at Bandon School from 1826 for about six years (Oddie, *Missionaries*, pp. 3-4). He studied at the Church Missionary Society (CMS) college in Islington from 1838 and was ordained deacon in the Anglican Church on 26 May 1839 and priest in June 1840. A month later, he was commissioned by the CMS and sent to Calcutta at the age of 26 to oversee a Christian school (CMS, '301 Long, James', p. 54). After eight years in India, he returned to England to marry Emily Orme, and they returned to Calcutta together to continue their work in Christian education (Oddie, *Missionaries*, ch. 3). According to Geoffrey Oddie, Long was 'one of the most remarkable protestant missionaries to work in India in the nineteenth century' (Oddie, *Missionaries*, p. xi). Long's mission focused on education and social reform among Bengali Hindus and Muslims, and much of his writing addresses the ways in which colonial injustices hindered the Gospel. Fluent in Bengali, he regularly surveyed local writings to understand public perceptions of British colonialism and missionary efforts. He noted that many Muslims saw Europeans – and by extension, missionaries – as immoral oppressors.

Long became especially concerned about the exploitation of *ryot*s, peasant indigo farmers. He and other missionaries viewed the indigo system as a form of feudalism and a major obstacle to their mission. His efforts to expose this exploitation led to *Nil darpan*, which often defines his legacy. *Nil darpan* ('The indigo planting mirror'), an anonymously authored satirical play published in 1858, documented abuses within the colonial indigo industry, including violence and exploitation by European landowners. Long helped translate and distribute the English version in 1861, writing a preface that described the play as an accurate representation of the plight of the *ryot*s. This led to his conviction for libel against European planters. He was sentenced to one month in prison and fined 1,000 rupees. Bengali playwright Kaliprasanna Sinha paid the fine, symbolising local support for Long.

While his involvement in *Nil darpan* brought Long notoriety, his contributions to education were equally significant. He was appointed superintendent of one of the CMS's largest English-medium schools for non-Christians in Bengal. Despite limited conversions to Christianity, he remained committed to sharing his faith, even engaging in door-to-door evangelism. The few conversions he recorded were mostly of Hindus.

Long initially believed that English education would prepare the way for conversion to Christianity but, over time, he shifted to promoting vernacular instruction, particularly because few Muslims enrolled in English schools due to the absence of Arabic, Persian and Islamic studies. This was because the curriculum required them to choose a secular rather than a religious education, and many chose the latter. Since English proficiency was required for government jobs, this led to Muslim under-representation in administrative posts and marginalisation by the Hindus. Moreover, those educated in English rarely returned to the poorer rural communities, making the trickle-down model of education ineffective. Long saw vernacular education as vital for reaching all social classes and the wider dissemination of the Bible.

Long also championed indigenous church leadership and contextual evangelism. He envisioned a Bengali church that was self-governing, self-supporting and self-propagating, and he encouraged the adaptation of Western forms of worship into local expressions. His 1871 work, *Scripture truth in oriental dress*, aimed to present Christianity as an Eastern faith. In the preface, he wrote that he wanted Indians to see 'how thoroughly oriental the Bible is both in its subject and style'. As a means of achieving this, the book uses Eastern proverbs to bridge cultural gaps in explaining biblical truths. Oddie notes that Long's lack of 'social, racial, or cultural superiority' contributed to his folk hero status in India and Bangladesh (Oddie, *Missionaries*, p. 186).

Long spent 32 years serving with the CMS in South Asia (1840-72), working alone for the final five years following the death of Emily in 1867. In his latter years, he largely focused on translation and distribution of the Bible. His legacy blends social activism, educational innovation and contextualised ministry. His work reflects a lifelong commitment to reaching Muslims with the Gospel and prophetic warning: that continued marginalisation – especially the exclusion of Muslims from colonial government representation – could lead to serious consequences amid growing Muslim hostility towards British rule. Before his death, Long endowed the CMS with a large portion of his estate to establish a lecture series on missionary scholarship related to non-Christian religions.

Notable recipients included Edward Sell (*CMR* 24, 781-803) and William Tisdall (*CMR* 20, 285-309). Tisdall's lectures on Islam were later published in *The religion of the crescent* (1895).

MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Primary

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CMS, '301 Long, James – age 25', *Register of missionaries and native clergy 1804-1904*, London, 1905, p. 54

Secondary

K. Karttunen, art. 'Long, James', in K. Karttunen, *Persons of Indian studies*, 2017, online; https://whowaswho-indology.info/3861

G. Oddie, *Missionaries, rebellion, and proto-nationalism. James Long of Bengal, 1814-87*, London, 2013

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Art., 'Long, Rev. James', in C.E. Buckland, *Dictionary of Indian biography*, London, 1906, 253

E. Stock, *History of the Church Missionary Society*, London, 1899, vol. 2, pp. 271-2 (detailed account of his work and *Nil darpan*)

Rajendralala Mitra, A.F.R. Hoernle and Pramatha Nath Bose, *Centenary review of the Asiatic society of Bengal from 1784 to 1883*, Calcutta, 1885 (Appendix D. 'Index of the papers and contributions to the Asiatic researches and to the Journal and Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal', part 1, 106-95, Long's articles are listed on p. 154)

'Trial of the Rev. James Long for the publication of the Nil Durpan', *Westminster Review* 77/151 (1 January 1862) 137-8

WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Handbook of Bengal missions

DATE 1848
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

Long compiled his *Handbook of Bengal missions, in connexion with the Church of England: together with an account of general educational efforts*

in north India from over 200 sources, aiming to create a comprehensive reference for educational and missionary societies. It is 520 pages long, commencing with a brief historical overview of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge and the Church Missionary Society in Bengal in which Long notes a persistent concern that missionaries were perceived as extensions of the immoral behaviour associated with European colonial powers. In the main body of the work he offers descriptions – along with occasional analysis – of missionary and educational activities in major cities.

While the majority of the text centres on mission efforts among Hindus, there are some scattered references to Muslims and Islam. These include both Muslim perceptions of Christianity and missionary attitudes toward Islam and Muslims. Although most references portray Muslims as resistant or even 'hostile to Christianity', Long notes an exception in the city of Agra, where Muslims reportedly held a more favourable view of Christianity. He attributes this openness to the enduring influence of the Mughal Emperor Akbar's (r. 1556-1605) legacy of religious tolerance (pp. 45-60). However, despite recording reports of a general openness to hearing the Gospel, Long shares information about the abundance of rumours misrepresenting Christianity within local communities, including Muslims being paid to convert to Christianity and being forced to eat pork during communion.

Long writes of a certain Abdul Masih, who features prominently throughout the handbook and is celebrated as one of the most significant Muslim converts in the region (see "Abdulmasīḥ', *CMR* 24, 136-47). Long attributes his conversion to the preaching of the Anglican missionary Henry Martyn (*CMR* 20, 89-111). Ten years after his conversion, he became the first former Muslim to be ordained in the Anglican Church. Long records that, in 1821, the same year as his ordination, Abdul celebrated the Easter Eucharist in Urdu with a diverse congregation that included Europeans. Despite prevailing negative attitudes among Muslims towards Christianity and his conversion, Abdul was able to gain respect within the Muslim community by putting his medical training into practice as a tangible expression of the Gospel.

Beyond Abdul Masih, however, missionary success among Muslims was more limited than that among Hindus. While Long acknowledges that Muslim communities were often willing to attend church services and listen to the Gospel, actual conversions and baptisms were rare. Those who did convert often faced severe persecution from their families. Indeed, such threats of violence led at least one Muslim convert, Chirāgh ʿAlī

(*CMR* 24, 625-36), to conceal his Christian faith in order to avoid retaliation (p. 67).

The hostility of Muslims towards the Gospel and the persecution of converts led Long and others to question those who believed that Muslims' respect for the biblical patriarchs somehow made them primed for Christianity. This is most clearly evident in his comments on a missionary report of Muslim persecution of a missionary preaching in the city of Janpur (pp. 170-5). Long did not view Muslims as primed for Christian conversion by their Islam; rather, he considered them prejudiced and antagonistic toward the Christian faith because of their deep religious identity. Opposition to the Gospel is a recurring theme throughout the handbook, with Islam and Muslims frequently described using terms such as 'prejudiced' and 'bigoted'. When discussing receptiveness to the Gospel, Long characterises Muslims as 'the most bigoted class in the east' (p. 51). He documents how Islamic scholars and religious leaders consistently seek to refute Christian doctrines through polemical debates, both in person and in anti-Christian tracts, referencing especially an ongoing tract exchange between the missionary Karl Pfander and Muslim scholars in Agra (see '*Murāsalat-i mazhabī*', *CMR* 24, pp. 240-5). References to the 'sword' of Islam appear multiple times in the handbook, suggesting forced conversions of Bengalis to the faith. In contrast, Long portrays Muslims in the Punjab region as relatively passive.

A consistent theme in the handbook is the perceived decline of Islam from its former dominance and the concurrent resurgence of Hinduism. According to Long, this perceived regression prompted many Muslims to cling more tightly to their religious identity and to view both Christianity and Hinduism as existential threats. Overall, Long depicts missionary success among Muslims as minimal. His portrayal of ministry to Muslims is decidedly pessimistic, reflecting his belief in the entrenched nature of Muslim identity and its resistance to Christian influence. Given that the handbook is an assessment of the overall activity of mission work in the region, much of what Long writes on Muslims and Islam comes from missionary colleagues, including Carl Benjamin Leupolt (p. 79), James Charles Thompson (p. 139), Robert Hawes (p. 188), Henry Fisher (p. 233), William Bowley (p. 171), and William Deer (p. 182), whose works he documents in some detail.

SIGNIFICANCE

The *Handbook of Bengal missions* is one of the most extensive records of English missionary activity on the Indian subcontinent during the first

half of the 19th century. Long's detailed analysis of activities in mission compounds and schools provides a general picture of Christian views of Islam and Muslims and the nature of missionary interaction with them.

PUBLICATIONS

James Long, *Hand-book of Bengal missions, in connexion with the Church of England. Together with an account of general educational efforts in north India*, London, 1848; handbookofbengalmissionsinconnexionwithchurchofenglandjameslong1848_202003_234_Y (digitised version available through Archive.org)

STUDIES

Oddie, *Missionaries*, pp. 46, 145, 163-4

Review art., '*Hand-book of Bengal missions, in connexion with the Church of England. Together with an account of general educational efforts in north India*, by the Rev. James Long, Church Missionary in Calcutta. London, 1848', *Calcutta Review* 9 (1848) xlviii-lxii

'Analysis of the Bengali poem *Rajmala* or *Chronicles of Tripura*'

DATE 1850

ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

Rajmala is a 15th-century chronicle of the Tripura Dynasty composed in Bengali. The Asiatic Society of Bengal commissioned Long to evaluate it and publish his findings in its journal. In his article, which is 24 pages long, he presents a portrait of Bengal before what he terms the 'Mohammadan invasion' and the accompanying 'Moslem propagandism' of the Mughal Empire. Although his evaluation is not solely about Islam, he comments on how Muslims attempted to 'denationalise the Hindus' during the Mughal era.

He documents policies such as replacing local languages with Arabic and Persian and making proficiency in these languages a prerequisite for government service. He argues that erasing pre-existing religious and cultural traditions was a deliberate strategy of the Muslim rulers in conquered regions. This erasure included renaming persons and places to reflect a Muslim identity and destroying Hindu monuments or repurposing them

for Muslim worship. In his view, the conquerors' primary aim was to eliminate any historical ties to Hinduism or Hindu nationalism. He concludes that these practices are largely responsible for the scarcity of Hindu historical writings in Bengali.

SIGNIFICANCE

The article provides a framework for Long's perspective on the historical relationship between Islam and Hinduism in Bengal. Significantly, it demonstrates why Long felt that schools where teaching was in the vernacular were important. He saw the shift in power structures moving to favour the Hindus as setting the stage for a Muslim revolt. Throughout his missionary career he argued that Muslims would blame the English curriculum of the missionary schools for their marginalisation.

It has gone through several reprints, suggesting continuing recognition of its importance.

PUBLICATIONS

J. Long, 'Analysis of the Bengali poem *Rajmala* or *Chronicles of Tripura*', *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* 19 (1850) 533-57; 008699504 (digitised version available through Hathi Trust)

J. Long, *Analysis of the Bengali poem* Rajmala *or* Chronicles of Tripura, Agartala, Tripura State, 1923, repr. 1995, 2008 (Includes an 'Introduction' to Long's article); Analysis_of_the_Rajmala (digitised version available through repository.tribal.gov.in)

'The social condition of the Muhammadans of Bengal and the remedies'

DATE 1869
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

James Long read this paper to a meeting of the Bengal Social Science Association on 21 January 1869. It was published in the section on 'Economy and trade' in vol. 3 of the *Transactions of the Bengal Social Science Association* the same year (pp. 1-14), together with comments from some of the listeners (pp. 14-17). He begins by stating that three major cultural and religious waves have shaped the Indian subcontinent, each leaving a lasting

impact on its social fabric. In the first, Hinduism entrenched the caste system in Indian society and Buddhism promoted social and educational equality; in the second Islam 'has left its mark in the feudal system of the land tenure, the languages of the country, and the immuring of women'; and in the third, the Anglo-Saxon, it is hoped there will be 'social elevation of the people, and no monopoly of knowledge to a favoured few' (p. 1). His paper is concerned with 'the reflex action of the third wave in the social condition of the Muhammadans of Bengal', which is 'gradually deteriorating' (p. 1).

Long attributes this deterioration in part to the British requirement for all government employees to have a knowledge of English (p. 2). Few Muslims qualify and so they are being superseded by Hindus even though, as one-time conquerors of India, they still regard themselves as superior. With the 1857 Uprising in his mind (p. 2), he acknowledges that something must be done, because 'a socially degraded people cannot be a contented one' (p. 4) and he fears trouble. He suggests that control by force would not be practicable and, referring to two Muslim fundamentalist sects actively working to revive Islam in Bengal, 'the history of the Ferazis and Wahabis clearly shows that Muhammadanism is not dead, but sleeping' (p. 5). Discontent is widespread because Muslims consider that the government does not credit the kind of education they receive through the traditional system they follow.

The remedy to this regrettable and dangerous situation may lie in the following actions: 1. to take the predicament of the Muslims seriously; 2. to compile information about their social conditions, which are bad enough to kindle unrest; 3. Europeans must study Persian and Arabic in order to be able to communicate properly with Muslim Indians; 4. attempts to force India into a single uniformity should be abandoned and Muslim 'specialities' should be respected; 5. provision should be made for the study of Persian, Arabic and Sanskrit alongside English so that native speakers of these languages can fulfil their true potential; 6. teaching of all subjects should be allowed in vernacular languages rather than in English, allowing Muslims in particular to take pride in their own languages; 7. specialists have been provided to teach other languages, so it is unfair not to do the same with the languages used by Muslims; 8. the same kind of scholarships provided for Hindus should be provided for Muslims (pp. 5-13).

In some institutions there are signs that some of these recommendations are being implemented.

SIGNIFICANCE

Long's arguments evidently stemmed from a very practical wish to ensure peace in India, as well as presumably to avoid any repetition of the Uprising of ten years earlier. In addition to this, however, he repeatedly showed in his paper awareness of the great inequalities suffered by Indian Muslims and wanted to right them. He observes: 'Although the Moslems have fallen from their palmy state, [...] yet are they not unworthy [read 'worthy'] of our sympathy; we must regard them as a mighty ruin, as the *debris* left by a vast and overwhelming torrent' (p. 3). This and other similar remarks strongly suggest that he felt a deep sense of unfairness about the predicament into which Muslims had fallen and wanted to do something about this, at least by ensuring that they could relate to the British fairly. He gave no indication of wanting to make them British, and said nothing about making them Christian. Quite unusually, he appeared to want them to flourish as Muslims. This is remarkable for a Christian clergyman who had gone to India in principle to propagate his faith.

Members of the audience whose responses were recorded welcomed the paper as important and timely, and commented on aspects of it. Any direct influence on policy it may have exerted is not known, though it evidently represented a sentiment that was felt by more than a few British in India at the time.

PUBLICATIONS

J. Long, 'The social conditions of the Muhammadans of Bengal and the remedies', *Transactions of the Bengal Social Science Association* 3 (1869) 1-17 of the Economy and trade section; in.ernet.dli.2015.196056 (digitised version available through Archive.org)

Trevor Castor

John Rogers

DATE OF BIRTH Unknown; first half of the 19th century
PLACE OF BIRTH Unknown
DATE OF DEATH 28 July 1876
PLACE OF DEATH North India

BIOGRAPHY

Nearly all that is known about John Rogers is contained in John Reid's *Missions and Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, which was published in 1895. Reid says that when he was eight Rogers entered Secundra Orphanage near Agra, which was run by the Church Missionary Society. He went on to St John's College, Agra, where he was prepared for the Calcutta University entrance examination (*Missions and Missionary Society*, vol. 2, p. 460). It is not known whether he attended the university, but he worked as a teacher for some time before joining the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1866. He continued to teach, though at a much lower salary than before, as well as preach, and at some stage he was ordained as a Methodist minister. He prepared translations of Sunday-School material in Urdu and Hindi and edited the Sunday-school paper *Khair Khivah i Atfal* (p. 460).

Rogers is known to have written *Taftīsh ul-Islām*, which is discussed below, and also a set of stories for children entitled *Mir'āt ul-atfāl* ('Mirror for children'), which was published by the American Methodist Mission Press in 1870.

In 1873, he gave up teaching and became a pastor of the 'native' church, first in Moradabad, about a hundred miles east of Delhi, and then in Lucknow. In January 1876, he was admitted to the North India Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. However, by this time he was ill with tuberculosis and he died on 28 July 1876. Reid wrote appreciatively of him:

> [He] was regarded as a rare man, as a gentleman in the best sense of the word; a Christian of irreproachable character; a preacher clear, sound, instructive, and interesting, upon whose ministry the missionaries esteemed it a coveted privilege to wait (p. 461).

MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Brodhead and J. Murdoch (eds), *Conference on Urdu and Hindi Christian literature held at Allahabad, 24-25 February 1875*, Madras, 1875, p. 71 (listing of Rogers's two known books)

Methodist Episcopal Church, *Minutes of the thirteenth session of the North India Conference*, Lucknow: American Methodist Mission Press, 1877, p. 54 (obituary)

J.M. Reid, *Missions and Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, revised J.T. Gracey, vol. 2, New York, 1895, pp. 460-1

WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Taftīsh al-Islām, Investigation of Muhammadanism

DATE 1871
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Urdu

DESCRIPTION

Rogers's *Taftīsh al-Islām*, probably subtitled *Investigation of Muhammadanism*, written in Urdu and 128 pages long, was published in 1871. It is listed in Brodhead and Murdoch, *Conference on Urdu and Hindi Christian literature* (p. 71), though there appear to be no extant copies of it.

A number of Indian Muslims noticed the work. In particular, a few years after it was published Nāṣiruddīn Muḥammad Abūlmanṣūr Dihlavī (d. 1903) wrote a full response in *Ifḥām al-khiṣām dar javāb Taftīsh al-Islām* (Delhi, 1876). Investigation of this response will most probably reveal something of the contents of Rogers' work.

SIGNIFICANCE

Taftīsh al-Islām almost certainly included polemical material that was critical of Islamic beliefs. This was acerbic enough to attract responses from Muslim authors, both soon after it was published and more recently.

PUBLICATIONS

J. Rogers, *Taftīsh al-Islām, Investigation of Muhammadanism*, Lucknow (?): American Methodist Mission Press, 1871

STUDIES

Nāṣiruddīn Muḥammad Abūlmanṣūr Dihlavī, *Ifḥām al-khiṣām dar javāb Taftīsh al-Islām*, Delhi, 1876

Ruth J. Nicholls

William Nassau Lees

DATE OF BIRTH 26 February 1825
PLACE OF BIRTH Kilanny, County Louth
DATE OF DEATH 9 March 1889
PLACE OF DEATH London

BIOGRAPHY

William Nassau Lees, a distinguished Arabic scholar and linguist, was born in rural Ireland, the youngest son of the clergyman Sir Harcourt Lees and his wife Sophia. He was locally educated before attending Trinity College, Dublin, though he left before completing his degree.

In 1845, Lees went to India, where he was known as Nassau Lees, and enlisted in the 42nd Bengal native infantry as an ensign. He evidently showed some flair in learning Arabic, Persian and Urdu as part of his training because, by 1853, having been promoted to the rank of lieutenant and appointed secretary to the Board of Examiners at Fort William College, Calcutta, he was collaborating with the Orientalist Aloys Sprenger (*CMR* 24, 472-95) in editing texts. In 1854, he published an edition of the account of the Muslim conquest of Syria attributed to the early Muslim historian al-Wāqidī (*c.*747-823), and in 1856 an edition of Abū l-Qāsim Maḥmūd al-Zamakhsharī's (1074-1143) commentary on the Qur'an.

In 1856, he was appointed principal of the Mahommedan College in Calcutta, where he taught law, logic, literature and mathematics. He remained in this position until 1872. In 1857, in acknowledgement of his linguistic work, he was awarded an honorary LLD by Trinity College, Dublin. His *A biographical sketch of the mystic philosopher and poet, Jámí* (Calcutta, 1859) was printed at his own press, and he also published an edition of the courtier ʿAbdulqādir Badāʾūnī's (1540-1605) history of the early Mughal dynasty, *Muntakhab al-tavārīkh* (Calcutta, 1864-9). He was official government translator of Persian, and also for many years examiner of Arabic, Persian and Urdu for the entire Indian civil service.

While still a serving officer in India, Lees twice stood unsuccessfully for election to the Westminster parliament, in 1868 and 1874. He retired in 1884 and returned to Britain, where he was given the rank of major-general in 1885. He died in 1889 at his home in Grosvenor Street, London. He never married.

Lees wrote many articles for the *Journal and Proceedings of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal* (see the *Centenary review of the Asiatic society of Bengal from 1784 to 1883*) as well as several articles for the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, including 'Materials for the history of India during the 600 years of Mohammedan rule previous to the foundation of the British Empire in India' (*Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 3 [1868] 414-771). He became a member of the Royal Asiatic Society in 1872.

In addition to producing editions and translations of classical Arabic works, Lees wrote many articles for the press in India and Britain, and was also joint proprietor of the *Times of India*. He wrote a number of books about India, often based on his newspaper articles, including *The drain of silver to the East, and the currency of India* (London, 1864), *Memoranda written after a visit to the tea districts of E. Bengal* (Calcutta, 1866), *Land and labour in India* (London, 1867) and *Indian Musalmáns* (London, 1871). In a biographical entry on Lees's father, Patrick Geoghehan describes his writing as 'always cheerful but rarely interesting, [...] influenced by a conservative perspective on British policy in India' ('Lees, Sir Harcourt').

MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Rajendralala Mitra, A.F.R. Hoernle and Pramatha Nath Bose, *Centenary review of the Asiatic society of Bengal from 1784 to 1883*, Calcutta, 1885, Appendix C, 'List of books published directly or indirectly by the Asiatic Society', part 1, 95-105, pp. 101-3, Appendix D, 'Index of the papers and contributions to the Asiatic researches and to the Journal and Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal', part 1, 106-95, p. 153; ch. 5, 'Language and literature', part 2, 137-97, includes many references to Lees's works

Obituary, 'General Nassau Lees', *Allen's Indian Mail* (8 April 1889) 318-19 (reprinted from *The Times of India*)

Obituary, 'Major-General W. Nassau Lees', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 21/2 (1889) 463-6

H.M. Chichester, art. 'Lees, William Nassau (1825-1889)', in *DNB*

Art., 'Lees, William Nassau', in C.E. Buckland, *Dictionary of Indian biography*, London, 1906, 249

M. Mansoor, *The story of Irish Orientalism*, Dublin, 1944, p. 31

H.M. Chichester, revised P. Loloi, art. 'Lees, William Nassau (1825-1889)', in *ODNB*

P.M. Geoghahan, art. 'Lees, Sir Harcourt', in J.I. MacGuire and J. Quinn (eds), *Dictionary of Irish biography*, Cambridge, 2009 (includes a section on William Nassau Lees); https://www.dib.ie/biography/lees-sir-harcourt-a4767

K. Karttunen, art. 'Lees, William Nassau', in K. Karttunen, *Persons of Indian studies*, 2017, online; https://whowaswho-indology.info/3727

John Chesworth

WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Indian Musalmáns

DATE 1871
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

Lees published *Indian Musalmáns: being three letters reprinted from the 'Times'; with an article on the late Prince Consort, and four articles on education reprinted from the 'Calcutta Englishman.' With an appendix containing Lord Macaulay's Minute* at the end of 1871. The first section (pp. 1-35) contains copies of three letters he had written to *The Times* in October and November 1871 on the attitude of the British colonial government in India towards the Muslim population. This is followed by extracts from a series of articles he had first published in the *Calcutta Englishman* in 1866, in which he outlines his philosophy of education and makes recommendations for the revision of British colonial education in India (pp. 46-86).

In the early 1870s, following the high-profile trials of Muslim leaders in north India who had been accused of plotting to overthrow the colonial government, many British officials and journalists looked on the Muslim population with suspicion. William Wilson Hunter (1840-1900), a member of the Indian Civil Service and prolific author, asked in his influential 1871 work *The Indian Musalmans* whether Indian Muslims were 'bound in conscience' to rebel against British rule, thereby popularising debate about this in Britain and among the British community in India. After examining various interpretations of the question given in Muslim law, Hunter proposed a number of measures to reconcile Muslim subjects to British rule, among them the re-appointment of local Muslim judges by the British Indian government (they had been abolished in 1864), and changes to colonial education to attract Muslims into state-sponsored schools and colleges.

Lees's letters to *The Times*, written while he was on furlough in Britain, were intended as a response to the debate started by Hunter and appeared a few months after his work. In one of them, Lees criticises the 'sensational' nature of Hunter's writing (p. 12) and declines to follow him into a detailed examination of the precepts of Muslim law regarding the status of British India as a territory in which Muslims could reside (*dar-ul-Islam*), though he agrees that the presence of a large body of disaffected Muslims would represent a danger to the British government of India. In his third

letter, he offers suggestions similar to Hunter's about how to address the 'grievances' of the Indian Muslim population (p. 20). Unsurprisingly, given that he was principal of the Calcutta Madrasa, in the third of these letters Lees focuses on the reform of colonial education and argues that, while Indian Muslims are not opposed to studying 'Western' science, English literature and the English language in colonial schools and colleges, they expect to study their own sacred language, Arabic.

Extracts from Lees's 1866 articles on education, which had originally been intended to influence government policy in Bengal, follow logically from this argument. In these articles, he had argued that to exclude the teaching of Arabic and Sanskrit from colonial educational institutions was destructive for Indian culture and was guaranteed to limit the popularity of colonial education among both Muslims and Hindus. Conscious of the colonial government's desire to appear 'neutral' on religious matters (p. 74), Lees stresses that it is possible to teach Arabic language and literature in English schools and colleges without having to include Islamic religious instruction. He also challenges the arguments of Thomas Babington Macaulay (1800-59), whose Minute on Indian education of 2 February 1835 (which is included as an appendix to the text, pp. 87-104) had led to the near-exclusion of Arabic and Sanskrit from the colonial educational system.

An additional article on the contribution of Prince Albert, husband of Queen Victoria, to the development of public instruction (pp. 36-46) offers an insight into Lees's ideas on the role of education in forging national identity but does not directly concern British India or Christian-Muslim relations.

The collection is an interesting example of Lees's forays into journalism and politics, which on occasion provoked the ire of British authorities in Calcutta.

SIGNIFICANCE

The measures suggested by Lees in his letters to *The Times* to reconcile Indian Muslims to British rule borrowed in part from Hunter's *The Indian Musálmans*, not least when Lees also recommended that the British government should reverse its decision no longer to appoint Muslim judges. Lees's recommendations for educational reform closely resemble Hunter's, although here the influence was more in the other direction, because Hunter acknowledged in his work that his proposals to render colonial education more attractive to Muslims were partly inspired by reforms suggested by Lees while he was principal of the Calcutta Madrasa (*The Indian*

Musálmans, p. 197). In the 1860s, Lees had introduced a new curriculum at the Madrasa in which, unlike in other colonial schools and colleges, the teaching of the Arabic language and Arabic literature was emphasised.

Unlike Hunter's work, Lees's *Indian Musálmans* received relatively little attention in Britain or India when it was published, although the British Government of India was broadly sympathetic to his proposals for educational reform. In the decade that followed the appearance of the work, the teaching of Arabic was reintroduced in a network of colonial schools across Bengal and a government university promoting the study of 'oriental' subjects, including Arabic and Sanskrit, was inaugurated in Lahore. Lees's arguments contributed to the changes in public opinion and official policy that facilitated these developments, although his insistence on separating the teaching of Arabic language and literature from Islamic religious instruction had earlier provoked opposition from some Muslims in Bengal, among them students and staff of the Madrasa.

PUBLICATIONS

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STUDIES

R. Ivermee, *Secularism, Islam and education in India, 1830-1910*, London, 2015, pp. 70-82

M. Mohar Ali, 'Hunter's "Indian Musalmans". A re-examination of its background', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* 1 (1980) 30-51

Robert Ivermee

Muḥammad ʿAbdurraḥmān

DATE OF BIRTH Unknown; first half of the 19th century
PLACE OF BIRTH Unknown
DATE OF DEATH Unknown
PLACE OF DEATH Unknown

BIOGRAPHY

No information is available about Maulvī Muḥammad ʿAbdurraḥmān. His name does not appear in major biographical works such as *Nuzhat al-khawāṭir wa-bahjat al-masāmiʿ wa-l-nawāẓir*, *Tadhkīrah-ye ʿulamā-ye Hind* and *Fuqahā-ye Hind*. He may have intended to remain unknown, just like the imam of a remote mosque today, or alternatively the lack of recognition may reflect the limited reception of the one work for which he is known, which itself gives no information about him.

It may be conjectured that Muḥammad ʿAbdurraḥmān held views deemed to be unconventional that led to his exclusion from the major biographical compilations, though this finds no support from the opinions he expresses in his one short work.

WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Tālīf fī isbāt ul-taḥrīf
ʿAn exposition confirming the corruption in the Bible'

DATE 1873
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Urdu with Arabic and Persian

DESCRIPTION

Muḥammad ʿAbdurrahmān wrote *Tālīf fī isbāt ul-taḥrīf* at the behest of a certain Maulvī Muḥammad ʿAlī Siddīqī, as is noted in the colophon (p. 78). This person's name appears in the printing credits but he cannot be further identified from the available sources. The purpose of the work was to refute the arguments raised in Sayyid Aḥmad Khān's *Tabyīn al-kalām fī tafsīr al-Tawrāt wa-l-Injīl ʿalā millat al-Islām* ('Exposition of the discourse in the commentary on the Torah and the Gospel according to the religion of Islam', 1862-5), which had caused consternation among fellow

Muslims. Muḥammad ʿAbdurrahmān's rejoinder, which he wrote in 1873, is 78 pages long and composed of a series of 'questions' (*mas'alāt*), all centring on Sayyid Aḥmad Khān's use of books of the Bible in *Tabyīn al-kalām* to explain the Qur'an. In his arguments, ʿAbdurraḥmān makes extensive use of qur'anic verses, Hadiths, and classical exegetical authorities, often adopting a distinctly polemical tone aimed at exposing Khān's inconsistencies and defending the traditional Sunnī understanding of *taḥrīf*. The work is notable for its dense marginalia, which often contain Urdu translations and paraphrases of Arabic and Persian passages found in the main body. These glosses are not merely auxiliary, but essential to understanding how ʿAbdurraḥmān intended his arguments to be read by a multilingual scholarly audience. They demonstrate the work's exegetical depth and make considerable demands on readers.

In question 1 ('Is the classification and compilation of the *tafsir* of the Torah and the Gospel according to the belief of Ahl-i Sunnat wa-Jamāʿat or not?', pp. 3-9) ʿAbdurraḥmān discusses whether it is acceptable to compose a book that sets out to make comparisons between the Torah and Gospel, as Sayyid Aḥmad Khān has done. He cites Sheikh ʿAbdulḥaqq Dihlavī (1551-1642), an eminent interpreter of Hadith, who emphasised that only texts that are demonstrably authentic should be used to clarify the meaning of the Qur'an, thus ruling out the Torah and Gospel because they have been shown to be corrupt. ʿAbdurraḥmān also points out that expertise in the language of the Torah and Gospel is essential for anyone who engages in discussions about them and that Sayyid Aḥmad Khān's lack of this expertise weakens his arguments and renders them unreliable.

In question 2 ('Is it necessary for the Muslim Community to engage in reading or writing about the Torah and the Gospel?', pp. 9-14) he expresses doubts about the need for Muslims to have anything to do with the Torah or Gospel. While he acknowledges the elevated status of the Gospel, he maintains that there is no need to explore scriptures other than the Qur'an because of their unreliability. He supports this with a Hadith:

> O community of Muslims! How can you ask the People of the Book about anything while your Book which Allāh has revealed to your Prophet contains the most recent information from Allāh and is pure and not distorted? Allāh has told you that the People of the Book have changed part of Allāh's books and distorted them and written something with their own hands and said, 'This is from Allāh', to have a small gain for it. Will not the knowledge that has come to you stop you from asking them? No, by Allāh, we have never seen any of them asking you about that which has been revealed to you. (*Tālīf*, p. 12, citing *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī* 7523, Book 97, Hadith 148)

In question 3 ('Is the Qur'an a miracle, and were the previous scriptures also miracles?', pp. 14-15) ʿAbdurraḥmān argues that the Qur'an, which remains in its original revealed form, contains comprehensive and unaltered knowledge and guidance, rendering earlier revelations no longer necessary. Furthermore, these books no longer possess the miraculous character of the Qur'an because of alterations to grammar and orthography in them, examples being *tashdīd* (doubling of a letter) and diacritics (*iʿrāb*), which were introduced into the text of the Torah.

In addressing question 4 (whether the divine attributes [*ṣifāt*] are merely part of God's essence [*dhāt*], pp. 15-16) ʿAbdurraḥmān firmly rejects this possibility as contrary to the orthodox teachings of the Ahl al-Sunna. According to his explanation, God's attributes are affirmed, established, and eternally honoured; they neither merge with nor separate from God's essence, but coexist inherently and inseparably with it. Attributes such as knowledge, power, and life are valid only when understood in conjunction with the essence, having no independent existence or autonomy apart from God. Here, ʿAbdurrahmān's answer defends the real and eternal coexistence of God's attributes with His essence, thus directly opposing Sayyid Aḥmad Khān's rationalist view in which the attributes were reduced to metaphorical or functional descriptions of divine action.

Then, in question 5 ('Is the definition and categorisation of revelation [*waḥy*], as suggested by Sayyid Aḥmad Khān in his introduction, in accordance with the books of Islamic jurisprudence, the principles of Sunna, and the Muslim community [*Ahl-i Sunnat wa-Jamāʿat*], upon which legal rulings have been derived, correct or not?, pp. 16-34) he addresses the matter of the agreement between revelations and *sharīʿa*. He mentions *ilhām* ('inspiration') as a form of divine communication given to saints and pious individuals, though he points out that while prophets are protected from error, saints and ordinary humans may be susceptible to deception. He cites Q 6:112: 'Likewise did We make for every Messenger an enemy, – evil ones among men and jinns, inspiring each other with flowery discourses by way of deception'.

In question 6 ('Are the arguments put forward by the aforementioned exegetes, who deny any proofs of verbal distortion [*taḥrīf lafẓī*] and allow only interpretive distortion [*taḥrīf maʿnawī*], correct according to the beliefs of Ahl-i Sunnat wa-Jamāʿat or not?, pp. 34-52) ʿAbdurraḥmān shows that the distortions in earlier scriptures are not only matters of interpretation but also of changes to their actual texts. Sayyid Aḥmad Khān argues that alterations to the texts that do not change the meaning should not be considered distortions unless there are additions, omissions

or substitutions of words. ʿAbdurraḥmān challenges this by citing passages from the Bible that contradict the Qur'an and demonstrate distortion, and to substantiate his contention that earlier scriptures have been corrupted he quotes verses from the Qur'an (among them Q 3:78, 4:46 and 5:14) that refer to Jews and Christians distorting, moving and omitting parts of their books.

After completing his discussion of question 6, ʿAbdurraḥmān reverts abruptly to the earlier questions 3 and 4 (pp. 52-77) to continue the focus on textual reliability while expanding it into broader theological concerns. Although the transition lacks an explicit marker, it is thematically justified, as all three discussions address the causes and types of *taḥrīf*, both interpretive (*maʿnawī*) and textual (*lafẓī*).

In questions 3 (p. 52-3) and 4 (53-75), ʿAbdurraḥmān argues that textual corruption occurred through word substitution, alteration of rulings such as *rajm* (stoning) as punishment for grave sins, and manipulation of language, citing Q 3:78. He questions the textual integrity of earlier scriptures because of widespread corruption, polytheism, and weak scholarly authority, and he describes *taḥrīf* more broadly as including doubtful interpretations (*shubuhāt*) and corrupt explanations (*tāwīl fāsid*), practices later found among innovators (*ahl al-bidʿa*). Khān's later admission that the scriptures are not free from error is linked by ʿAbdurraḥmān to an earlier discussion (p. 14), which stresses that divine preservation (*ḥifẓ*) was granted only to the Qur'an, which was revealed word for word.

Beyond refutation, ʿAbdurraḥmān presents a broader theological structure. He contrasts the Qur'an's preservation and linguistic precision with the humanly transmitted forms of earlier scriptures. Drawing on concepts such as *faṣāḥa*, *balāgha*, *mizāj*, and the safeguarding in the *Lauḥ-i maḥfūẓ*, he portrays the Qur'an as uniquely characterised by consistent eloquence (*nūr ʿalā nūr*) in contrast to the variations and distortions in previous revelations.

The work concludes with the Caliph Abū Bakr's sermon (p. 77), in which the Ahl al-Kitāb are condemned for having altered the original revelations.

SIGNIFICANCE

Although Muḥammad Muʿaẓẓam, the owner of the Delhi printing house that published *Tālīf*, praised ʿAbdurraḥmān for bringing light to Muslims and redirecting them to the right path through his book (p. 78), the work does not appear to have been noticed by anyone involved in the debates to which it contributes. Its aims and method conform to the principles of the conservative Deobandi movement, which sought to defend traditional

Islamic teachings, but there is no evidence that it was taken up by Deobandi scholars. Moreover, the work's defence of the classical doctrine of the divine attributes (*ṣifāt*), affirming their real and eternal coexistence with the Divine Essence (*dhāt*), clearly opposes rationalist reinterpretations of revelation, such as those advanced by Sayyid Aḥmad Khān. Furthermore, it is not mentioned by Khān or any of his followers, who would almost certainly have responded to it if they had known of it.

Further research may show where exactly *Tālīf* fits into the vigorous debates taking place in 19th-century north India, and this could in turn shed more light on Muḥammad ʿAbdurraḥmān himself.

PUBLICATIONS

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C.W. Troll, *Sayyid Ahmad Khan. A reinterpretation of Muslim theology*, Karachi, 1978

R.B.M.R. Hassaan, 'The educational movement of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, 1858-1898', London, 1959 (PhD Diss. SOAS), p. 96

Fadl al-Din (ed.), *Tahzīb ul-akhlāq*, Lahore, 1894

S.A. Khān, *Tabyīn al-kalām fī tafsīr al-Tawrāt wa-l-Injīl ʿalā millat al-Islām* ('Elucidation of the word in commentary on the Torah and Gospel according to the religion of Islam') with the English subtitle *The Mohamedan commentary on the Holy Bible*, vols 1-3, Ghazeepore, 1862 and 1865

Jamal Malik

Herbert Courthope Bowen

Herbert Bowen

DATE OF BIRTH 1848
PLACE OF BIRTH Trinidad
DATE OF DEATH 9 April 1909
PLACE OF DEATH West Kensington, London

BIOGRAPHY

Herbert Courthope Bowen was born in Trinidad in 1848. He was an undergraduate at Cambridge University, and began his career in education as assistant master at Dulwich College in 1870, continuing in Highstead School (1871-3), City of London School (1873-6) and Hackney Downs School (1876-81), before becoming the founding principal of Finsbury Training College for Teachers (1881-6). This was the first institution that sought to streamline the training of secondary teachers by creating an efficient educational process and simplifying curricula. The experiment did not succeed and the college closed in 1886. In 1883, Bowen was among the founders of the Teachers Guild, a body that was to promote the welfare and independence of educators in Great Britain and Ireland.

Bowen was heavily influenced by the German educator Friedrich Froebel (1782-1852), and his career was characterised by a progressive view on education. In his best-known work, *Froebel and education by self-activity* (1894), he draws on Froebel's methods and principles to argue for an emphasis on the psychological development of the child as an individual. His many publications and lectures became a conduit in England for the transmission of a primarily German body of educational ideas.

Bowen's publications on education and literature were a departure from his first publications, which focused on religion. While he was at Dulwich College, he wrote *Muhammadanism. Its present condition and influence in India*, for which he won the Le Bas Prize in 1872. A few years later in 1873, for his essay *Buddhism and Christianity* in Cambridge, he won the Sir Peregrine Maitland Prize, which was reserved for a Cambridge essay connected to the propagation of the Gospel through missionary efforts in India and other parts of the 'pagan' world. The essay included a comparison of Buddhist and Christian morality and ethics, and, although

Bowen admitted that Buddhists were 'without hope, without God in this world and the next' (*Buddhism and Christianity: their contrasts and results in history*, London, 1874, p. 29) his overall positive assessment of Buddhism was considered to be controversial for his time. It attracted scathing criticism in the *Church Missionary Intelligencer* ('Buddhism and Christianity'), where a writer deemed the essay unworthy to receive the Maitland Prize because its contents led to 'conclusions so out of character with the intentions of the founders' that the writer said he could only hope that this 'dry rot may not creep in beyond literary and scientific circles'.

The controversial and progressive views exhibited in Bowen's early publications on religion were also to characterise his career in education. Though not all his efforts proved successful, his pioneering spirit in attempting to transform education in England ultimately led to significant progress.

After struggling with a lengthy illness, Bowen died in London in 1909 at the age of 61.

There are no indications that Bowen ever travelled to India. In *Muhammadanism. Its present condition and influence in India* he states that for many years he lived 'among hundreds of Indian Musalmáns of the lower classes' (p. 10 n. 1), which may suggest that he did go there. However, it is more likely to be a memory from his early life in Trinidad, where Indian Muslims came to work as indentured labourers from the 1840s. If this was the case, it may explain why, thanks to his early experiences, he approached the topic of the status of Muslims in India in the fair-minded way he did.

MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION

'Review of Mr. H.C. Bowen's "Buddhism and Christianity" and Dr. Caird's lecture at Westminster Abbey', *The Church Missionary Intelligencer. A Monthly Journal of Missionary Information* 11 (1875) 18-23

Archives Cambridge, University of Cambridge, King's College – GBR/0272/OB/1/191/A (15 Letters from Herbert Courthope Bowen to Oscar Browning 1882-96)

H.C. Bowen, 'Preface', in Bowen, *Froebel and education by self-activity*, New York, 1893, v-viii (on Bowen's experience as an educationalist)

G. Philip, 'Obituary (Herbert Courthope Bowen)', *Child Life* 11 (1909) 119

W. Steward, 'Obituary Herbert Courthope Bowen', *Journal of Education* 31 (1909) 320

R.W. Rich, *The training of teachers in England and Wales during the nineteenth century*, Cambridge, 1933

J. Venn, *Alumni Cantabrigienses. A biographical list of all known students, graduates, and holders of office at the University of Cambridge, from the earliest times to 1900*, Cambridge, 1940

J. Hardcastle, 'Something more than straw and sticks and bits of coloured paper. English at Hackney Downs (formerly The Grocers' Company's School), 1876-1881', *Changing English* 18 (2011) 17-29

WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Muhammadanism. Its present condition and influence in India

DATE 1872
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

In this 51-page essay (there is also an addendum), Bowen discusses 'the progress and present condition of Muhammadanism in India – the advantages and disadvantages of its moral influence over the minds of the people – its help and hurt in securing peace and prosperity to the nation' (p. 1). He addresses this with particular regard to the decline of traditional Muslim education as a result of the abolition of earlier forms of financial support (the redirecting of *waqf* endowments to education under British supervision), the abolition of the office of 'kazi' and the resulting difficulty in implementing Muslim law in day-to-day situations, and the unsuitability of Muslims for official positions in the British bureaucracy because they have rejected the right kind of education and are regarded as disloyal.

Bowen prefaces this discussion with an account of the religion of Islam (pp. 1-12), including its articles of faith, origins, evolution and practices, supporting what he says with quotations from George Sale's translation of the Qur'an (1734), which he affirms he has read 'thoroughly' (p. 8), and from Islamic scholars. He also refers briefly to the works of Edward Gibbon, Bartélemy d'Herbelot and Thomas Carlyle. His main source, particularly in his central discussion in the essay, is Sir William Wilson Hunter's, *Indian Musalmans*, which had been published in 1871. He appears to agree closely with many of Hunter's points, and further research is needed to tell how far he contributed ideas and suggestions of his own.

Having laid the groundwork in this account of Islam, Bowen gives a brief historical overview of Islam's beginnings and spread in India, highlighting the animosity between Shī'īs and Sunnīs and the watering down of the faith as Muslims adopted Hindu practices. As he expresses regret at the form of the faith that developed in India and looks back to its beginnings, he gives a characterisation of Muḥammad that typifies his whole treatment of Islam:

> Muhammad laid no claims to miracles or to divinity; he simply spoke from his heart the truth which was in it, in those strong burning words of inspiration in which all great truths are wont to clothe themselves; and because in these there were thoughts and longings which for years had lain smoking and smouldering, known or unknown, in the hearts of countless men; therefore was his preaching listened to; therefore did men cleave to him and believe him. (p. 18)

While this avoids the questions of the authenticity of the Qur'an and the prophetic status of Muḥammad, it refrains from criticism and condemnation, portraying Muḥammad as the sincere preacher of a truth Bowen perceived him to be.

Bowen identifies a corrective to the degenerate Islam of India in the renewal that was brought in the early 19th century by the Wahhābī-inspired Sayyid Ahmad Barelvi (1786-1831) and the consequent call for 'rebellion against the Infidel' (p. 28) that led to the growth of an extensive network throughout India of anti-British rebels who declared the country *dār al-ḥarb* and clamoured for war (p. 30). But these rebels did not represent all Indian Muslims, he argues, because scholars from the main sects issued *fatwā*s on the 'side of peace and loyalty' (p. 34) and resisted calls for jihad.

The final part of the essay (pp. 35-51) is devoted to the disadvantages experienced by contemporary Muslims in India. Bowen briefly traces the process by which British merchants in India were mistreated by local rulers, armies were established to protect them and, through the victories they won, land was progressively acquired until the British possessed the whole country. Those who suffered most were the Muslims because it was they who were dispossessed, in this differing from the Hindus who lost nothing. The outcome is now that the Hindu will work for the British 'with a light heart' while the Muslim 'only resorts to it in his extremity full of bitterness and despair' (p. 37).

Bowen paints a vivid picture of the wrongs and grievances suffered by the Muslim community, chiefly the lack of traditional education centred on the Qur'an and Muslim sacred works that formed the basis in the

education of every Muslim noble. In the current government school system, there is no provision of this kind, not even teaching of the languages needed to access these sources.

> It is wrong, nay it is absurd, to answer that these matters will right themselves in a generation or two when our Western civilization shall have opened the minds of the natives and given them a greater freedom of ideas. (p. 43)

He insists that remedial action is urgently needed.

A second wrong is the abolition of the system of 'kazis', who administered and applied the sacred law of Islam, and also the misappropriation of funds that were dedicated to pious causes (pp. 43-5), and a third is the disappearance of Muslims from the army because of suspicion about their loyalty to the government and the discontinuing of the legal system for which Muslim lawyers were trained. A last wrong is government support for the Christian church alone, for which funds taken mainly from the Muslims are used.

The essay concludes with a series of suggested remedies for these wrongs, and a final rallying call:

> Let us initiate timely reforms and resolve to rule without worrying the people with taxes they are alike unable and unwilling to bear; to admit the higher classes to a fair share in the honourable posts of the public service; and, lastly, to institute a set of Councils, framed on the plan of those in our larger colonies, which may eventually develope into a real representation of the people. (p. 51)

All this can be seen as an attempt to swing public opinion in favour of Islam, reflecting Bowen's awareness that readers might harbour negative stereotypes about Muslims that he believes should be dismantled. He is quite clear that Christianity is the fullness of truth and he hints at this in a number of places (e.g. p. 48), but what is unexpected is his passionate concern that Indian Muslims, in all their reserve and distance from those of other faiths, should be treated with dignity and their sensitivities respected.

SIGNIFICANCE

Alongside what is clearly an expression, or reflection from Hunter, of British self-interest, Bowen shows rare sensitivity towards Islam and Muslims in India, built on an unusual amount of knowledge about them, particularly for someone who never went to India. How and why he acquired this remains a mystery, especially as he did not appear to use

it again. Comparison with Hunter's *Indian Musalmans* will perhaps provide answers as to whether Bowen was simply summarising and repeating what he found in the recently published book or was using it as the starting point that enabled him to express his own personal views.

Bowen does not say much about any intellectual or religious framework within which he is expressing his ideas about Islam, though at one point he says enough to give a hint of an unusual (though not unique) regard for religions other than his own. Among the things he says should be done to ameliorate the situation he has outlined, he itemises what Christian missionaries should do:

> O that [they] would just for a little while lay aside theology, and preach only Christ and his Gospel! would remember S. Augustine's words, 'in every religion on earth there is some truth,' and strive only to shew that ours holds the most! (p. 48)

This openly acknowledges that Islam, Hinduism and other religions contain traces of awareness of God, and have value in pointing the way to Christianity, where he believes the clearest traces are to be found. Whether Bowen knew it or not, he was expressing what would come to be labelled as a form of inclusivist theology.

PUBLICATIONS

H.C. Bowen, *Muhammadanism. Its present condition and influence in India*, London, 1873; Muhammadanism_Its_Present_Condition_and (digitised version available through Google Books)

Nathalie Kufeldt

Edward Whinfield

Edward Henry Whinfield

DATE OF BIRTH	28 August 1835
PLACE OF BIRTH	Bradford-on-Avon, Wiltshire
DATE OF DEATH	14 April 1922
PLACE OF DEATH	Croydon

BIOGRAPHY

Edward Henry Whinfield was born on 28 August 1835 in Bradford-on-Avon. He was educated at Rugby school and Oxford University, and in 1858 he passed the examination to enter the Indian Civil Service. He travelled to India in 1859 and spent much of his life there as a civil servant in various administrative capacities at stations around the country and wrote a number of professional manuals.

In his latter years in India, before he returned to England in 1881, a deep interest in Persian culture and mysticism took root and was reflected in his writings. His first major translation, of *Gulshan-i rāz*, a poem by the Sufi Maḥmūd ibn ʿAbd al-Karīm Shabistarī (d. c. 1320), appeared in 1876. In 1880, it was reprinted in Trübner's Oriental Series, the first of Whinfield's many contributions to this series. His engagement with Sufi thought continued with translations of Rūmī's *Masnavī-i maʿnavī* in 1887 and Jāmī's *Lawāʾiḥ* in 1906. Some of his most celebrated works are his translations of Omar Khayyam's *Rubaiyat*, of which 253 quatrains appeared in 1882 and 500 quatrains 1883. While some scholars such as Edward Fitzgerald had made translations of these earlier, Whinfield's interpretation was both scholarly and accessible: he aimed to retain the poetic essence of the originals while making them comprehensible to English readers.

While it is not known when or how Whinfield learnt Persian, one thing is clear: his translations significantly contributed to Western understanding of Persian Sufi literature and Islamic mysticism. His works remain valued for their scholarly precision and their dedication to preserving the spiritual and poetic integrity of the originals. His legacy endures in continuing study and appreciation of Sufi literature, with scholarly attention focusing not only on his own publications but on the valuable collection of Islamic manuscripts he placed in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, and the John Rylands Library, Manchester.

MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION

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B. Forrest, art. 'E.H. Whinfield (1835-1922)', *The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam Archive*, January 2018; https://www.bobforrestweb.co.uk/The_Rubaiyat/N_and_Q/E_H_Whinfield/E_H_Whinfield.htm

WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

'Muhammadan philosophy'

DATE 1874
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

In this short article of 18 pages, Whinfield reviews Augustus Schmoelders, *Documenta philosophiae Arabum* (Bonne, 1836), and Amable Jourdain, *Recherches sur les anciennes traductions d'Aristotle* (revised by Charles Jourdain, Paris, 1843). His aim is to gauge the influence of Greek philosophy on Islamic philosophy and literature and also the impact of Islam on European thought. The article begins with the evidence for points of contact between the Arab world and Greek philosophy. Here, Whinfield shows how certain aspects of Greek knowledge must always have been present in the Arab world, though mostly confined to grammar and astronomy. It was in the 8th century, with the coming of the 'Abbāsid dynasty, that Greek philosophy became a major object of study and transformed Muslims from 'a people who had hitherto lived only to fight and to propagate their faith' into a people who cultivated 'science and literature' (p. 3).

In what he writes, Whinfield exhibits clear attitudes of condescension towards Islam, Muslims and the Arab world of his own time. His vocabulary evokes images of Muslims as combative and violent people, who availed themselves of Greek philosophy only when they understood that

it could be a weapon to 'crush heresy amongst their own class' (p. 11). He argues that many of the ethical, philosophical and theological arguments in Islamic works represent nothing more than 'Greek moral philosophy in a Muhammadan dress' (p. 9). Advancement in these areas of discussion was directly related to the influence of the peoples the Muslims conquered and associated with, specifically the Christian Nestorians, who were prominent in Mesopotamia, Persia and Khorassan, places where the 'Abbāsids found allies. He also attributes their advancement in rhetoric to Aristotle, Plato and Socrates, and even in mathematics and science he finds the Arabs to be once again disciples of the Greeks, and not very good ones: '[T]he discoveries of the Arabs in algebra have been rather overrated, having been mostly anticipated by the problems of Diophantus' (p. 18).

Whinfield also addresses the possible influence of Islamic doctrine on Christianity, though since he has already determined that the systematic theology of Islam was nothing more than the philosophising of Aristotle, he sees no real possibility of contamination. The only thing he attributes to Arabs as a genuine and original contribution to Western Europe and Christian theology is that they brought a 'great impetus' to the process of 'philosophising theology' (p. 15).

SIGNIFICANCE

Whinfield's article has attracted little attention in subsequent scholarship and so his reputation rests less on the negative evaluation of Islam and Muslims he gives here and more on his substantial efforts as an editor and translator of the various Sufi works noted above in his biography, where a role of evaluation of Islam and Muslims is barely in evidence. In these works, Whinfield draws on his considerable knowledge of the Persian language and of Sufism.

At first view, there may appear an inconsistency between the negative attitudes to Islam and Muslims expressed in this short treatise and obvious admiration for some of the great Sufi works which attracted his attention as a translator. Yet he seems to have struck a comfortable balance in his view of Islam and Muslims in his diverse works. The negative tone evident in 'Muhammadan philosophy' is also hinted at very briefly in the introduction to his study of Omar Khayyām when he writes: 'No sooner was Islam established than the same problem of the existence of evil in the handiwork of the Almighty Author and Governor of all began to trouble the Moslem theologians, and by their elaboration of the doctrine of Predestination they managed to aggravate its difficulties' (*The quatrains*

of Omar Khayyām, London, 1893, p. 27). Yet, at the same time a clear sense of genuine interest and respect for Sufi Islam can be detected when he writes elsewhere of

> the more striking parallelisms to Sufi ideas to be found in the Neoplatonists, and in the mystical theologians of Europe. It is this correspondence with European Mysticism which gives Sufiism its chief interest for European students. Many of the Catholic definitions of 'mystical theology' would do for descriptions of Sufiism. The ruling ideas in both systems are very similar, if not absolutely identical. (*Gulshan i raz*, London, 1880, p. v)

Furthermore, despite his criticism of Islam and Muslims in this obscure article in *The Calcutta Review*, he was clearly prepared to collaborate with Muslim scholars, as can be seen in his partnership with M.M. Qazvīnī in preparing the translation of Jāmī's *Lawā'iḥ*. In striking this balance, Whinfield showed himself to be more the scholar than the missionary or evangelist, balancing a willingness to criticise (at times quite acerbically) but also to admire.

PUBLICATIONS

E.H. Whinfield, 'Muhammadan philosophy', *The Calcutta Review* 58 (1874) 1-18; sim_calcutta-review_1874_58_115 (digitised version available through Archive.org)

Rachel Riddell, Amaris J. Rivera Mercado and Peter Riddell

Augustus Brodhead

DATE OF BIRTH 18 May 1831
PLACE OF BIRTH Milford, Pike County, Pennsylvania
DATE OF DEATH 29 August 1887
PLACE OF DEATH Toronto

BIOGRAPHY

Augustus Brodhead was born in Milford, Pennsylvania, to John and Eliza (*née* Ross) Brodhead on 18 May 1831. Nothing is known of his childhood and schooling. In the early 1850s, he entered Union College, Schenectady, New York, graduating in 1855 and going straight on to Princeton Theological Seminary, where he completed his Doctor of Divinity degree in 1858. He was ordained as a minister in the Presbyterian Church and licensed to preach by the Presbytery of Hudson in May 1858. In July that year, he married Emily Cumming (d. 1905) of Princeton, New Jersey, and was also accepted by the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America (PCUSA) for work in the American Ferrukhabad Mission in India. The couple set off for India in November 1858, arriving in Calcutta in April 1859 ('Brodhead, Augustus, D.D.').

Brodhead was a much-needed replacement for the missionaries who had been killed during the Sepoy Uprising. He was initially posted in Mainpuri in Uttar Pradesh, where he spent 13 years mainly assisting in the church and evangelising, with some time at the nearby military garrison of Futtehgharh. Whilst in Mainpuri he prepared *Dharn gyán* a catechism book in Hindi, which was published by the Mission Press in Allahabad in 1868, and also a number of hymns for use in the church ('Brodhead, Augustus, D.D.'). From his writing in Hindi and Urdu, it is clear that he was adept at languages.

In 1872, Brodhead was transferred to Allahabad, the seat of government for the North West Province, where he taught at the Theological Training School of the Synod of India. He adapted and translated three religious tracts into Urdu: *Alqāb al-Masīḥ* ('The titles of Christ, 1872), *Masīḥ kā jī uṭhnā* ('The resurrection of Christ', 1876) and *Tuḥfatu 'l-'ulamā'* ('A gift to the learned', 1876). He also wrote a number of books on history, presumably for use as course books at the college, including *Dīnī aur dunyavī tārīkh kā majmū'ah* ('Outlines of sacred and profane history', 1874) and *Tārīkh-i kalīsiyā kā majmū'ah* ('A compendium of Church history', 1878).

During his time in Allahabad, Brodhead was involved in the management of the North India Bible and Tract Societies. He was also connected to the Christian Vernacular Education Society (CVES), who in 1875 organised a conference in Allahabad on Urdu and Hindi Christian literature. The proceedings, which Brodhead co-edited together with John Murdoch (1819-1904, Agent and Travelling Secretary for CVES), show that the participants represented a wide range of Protestant missions working in India and that there was a desire among them to produce suitable material for Muslims and Hindus. It was noted that Muslims possessed written refutations of works by the Christians Karl Gottlieb Pfander, Safdar ʿAlī and ʿImāduddīn Lāhiz (*CMR* 24, 188-236, 765-80 and 506-41), and that there was a need to review these 'and prepare a work for Muhammadans, showing wherein the so-called refutations have failed to reply to the aforesaid works' (Brodhead and Murdoch, *Conference*, p. 10).

Brodhead's health began to fail whilst he was in Allahabad, and he returned to America in 1878. There, he served in various Presbyterian congregations before being appointed to the First Presbyterian church in Bridgetown, New Jersey, in 1881. He also wrote a short pamphlet entitled *Historical sketch of the missions in India. Under the care of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church* (Philadelphia PA, 1881).

His health was still poor when, in the summer of 1887, he undertook a pulpit swap with a minister from Toronto in the hope of an improvement, but while he was there, he died on 29 August. He is buried in Milford, Pennsylvania ('Rev. Dr. Brodhead dead').

MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Archives Schenectady NY, Union College Schaffer Library Special Collection – Augustus Brodhead Alumni File

A. Brodhead and J. Murdoch (eds), *Conference on Urdu and Hindi Christian literature*, Madras, 1875

Art. 'Brodhead, Augustus, D.D.', in A. Nevin and D.R.B. Nevin (eds), *Encyclopaedia of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America*, Philadelphia PA, 1884, 102

Art. 'American Presbyterian missions', in B.H. Badley, *Indian missionary directory and memorial volume*, Lucknow, 1886, 124-35 (see p. 134 for Brodhead)

'Rev. Dr. Brodhead dead', *Bridgetown Evening News*, 29 August 1887

Art. 'Augustus Brodhead', in *This day in Presbyterian history*; https://thisday.pcahistory.org/tag/augustus-brodhead/

John Chesworth

WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Works for Indian Muslims

DATE 1872-6
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Urdu

DESCRIPTION

Brodhead is known to have written three works for Urdu-speaking Muslims. They all come from his last few years in India, and they share the characteristic of being expositions of Christian teachings rather than comparisons between Christianity and Islam or polemical examinations of Muslim beliefs.

Alqāb al-Masīḥ ('The titles of Christ) was published in 1872. Printed in Urdu in Roman transliteration, it is 79 pages long and comprises a brief two-page Introduction and 14 chapters. These explain 14 main titles of Christ from the New Testament, particularly the Gospel of John, such as Light of the world (John 8:12), Way, Truth and Life (John 14:6), Alpha and Omega (Revelation 1:8) and similar.

A few years after this, in 1876, Brodhead published *Masīḥ kā jī uṭhnā* ('The resurrection of Christ'). As he indicates on the title page, this was an adaptation of *The Resurrection of Christ* (New York, 1872), a series of sermons presenting historical evidence for the resurrection by the American Presbyterian minister Eliphalet Nott (1773-1866), which were brought together after Nott's death. Brodhead's Urdu work, published in Ludhiana in 1876, is 125 pages long and, like the earlier work, it appears to be mainly expository in character, leaving readers to draw their own conclusions.

In the same year, 1876, Brodhead published *Tuḥfatu 'l-'ulamā'* ('A gift to the learned'), which is 80 pages long. It is an adaptation of *Ecce Homo. A survey of the life and work of Jesus Christ,* published in 1865 by Sir John Seeley (1834-95), who was appointed Regius Professor of Modern History at Cambridge University in 1869. Significantly, maybe, in the years before he wrote this book, he had taught at the Working Men's College, Camden Town, London, among the founders of which was the theologian and champion of Christian Socialism, F.D. Maurice (1805-72; *CMR* 17, 209-19). If Seeley's work exhibits any influence of Maurice's distinctive thinking, this is likely to have been reflected in Brodhead's translation.

Elwood Wherry comments (possibly quoting another author): 'This booklet presents the chief positive arguments for Christianity without polemics against Hindus and Muhammadans' (*Muslim controversy*, p. 123),

indicating that, like Brodhead's other two works, it sets out Christian points of view without entering into arguments against Islam. Wherry further comments on it: 'We want a large literature of this kind, written in this spirit', evidently the spirit of respectful and agreeable exchange.

SIGNIFICANCE

It is noticeable that none of these works appears to take into consideration qur'anic teachings that disagree with what is said in the New Testament. Thus, *Alqāb al-Masīḥ* explains titles of Christ, such as Light of the World, that the qur'anic portrayal of him would not admit, while *Masīḥ kā jī uṭhnā* obviously assumes that Christ died and was buried, which is denied in Q 4:157. Furthermore, they ignore the debate that had been continuing in India over the status of the Torah and Gospels as textually corrupted and abrogated by the Qur'an. Clearly avoiding polemic, the works appear simply to set out the Christian position and leave it at that.

It is possible that Brodhead believed that clear expositions such as these would be enough to lead any reader to appreciate the truthfulness and attractiveness of Christian belief. However, close reading of his Urdu adaptations may help to refine this view by showing how he added comments that the authors of the works he translated would not have thought necessary to include or that showed the superiority of Christianity over Islam.

PUBLICATIONS

John A. Brodhead, *Alqāb al-Masīḥ: ne Urdu i muqallā men tarjuma kiyā*, Allahabad, 1872; 103002500 (digitised version available through Hathi Trust)

John A. Brodhead, *Masīḥ kā jī uṭhnā*, Ludhiana, 1876; 103001299 (digitised version available through Hathi Trust)

John A. Brodhead, *Tuḥfatu 'l-'ulamā'*, [Allahabad], 1876; 103030834 (digitised version available through Hathi Trust)

STUDIES

E.M. Wherry, *The Muslim controversy. Being a review of Christian literature written in the Urdu language for the propagation of the Christian religion and the refutation of Islam*, Madras, 1905

David Thomas

Thomas Jefferson Scott

DATE OF BIRTH 4 October 1835
PLACE OF BIRTH New Alexandria, Ohio
DATE OF DEATH 22 January 1920
PLACE OF DEATH Wauwatosa, Wisconsin

BIOGRAPHY

Thomas Jefferson Scott was born and brought up in a tiny village on the eastern border of Ohio. Showing academic aptitude at school, he went on to Ohio Wesleyan University and gained Master of Arts and Doctor of Divinity degrees. Having acknowledged a stirring of faith when he was 18, he earned his licence to preach as a young man of 20 years in 1855 and was made a deacon in 1861 and priest in mid-1862. He married Mary Worthington in that year. He was accepted by the Pittsburgh Conference of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church to serve as a missionary, and he and his wife travelled to India in 1863, settling in the Budaun district east of Delhi, for six years and in Bareilly for a further 10. This was a region with a sizeable Muslim population. During his years there, he served as Presiding Elder for four years and as professor, then principal, of the Bareilly Theological Seminary (approximately 1871-6). Among other work, he promoted the establishment of Sunday Schools.

He learned to write in Urdu, and translated and published several theological works for northern Indian readers in their own language. Among these were: a book on the preparation of sermons; a Bible dictionary translated from the *Index* by John Barr; a translation of *Bible commentaries* by the American Methodist Daniel Denison Whedon; a general introduction to the Bible; a revision and re-translation of the Catholic Epistles and Revelation; and shorter studies on natural theology and homiletics.

Scott was praised in the *Western Christian Advocate* in 1903 for his scholarship and his service to Methodism and to God. There it was said of him that 'he lived a life of noble devotion to the highest ends' (p. 2). He died in 1920 at the age of 84.

MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION

B.H. Badley, *Indian missionary directory and memorial volume*, New York, 1881, p. 204

E.T. Nelson (ed.), *Quinquennial catalogue of the Ohio Wesleyan University, 1842-1886*, Delaware OH, 1886, p. 18

J.M. Reid, *Missions and Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, revised J.T. Gracey, 3 vols, New York, 1895, vol. 2, p. 242

'An Ohioan in India', *Western Christian Advocate* 69 (1903) 2

A. Belvadi, *Missionary calculus. Americans in the making of Sunday schools in Victorian India*, Oxford, 2019, pp. 79-81

WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Missionary life among the villages in India

DATE 1876
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

Scott's *Missionary life among the villages in India* was published in the United States when he was stationed in Bareilly. He acknowledges in the work that much had already been written about Protestant missionary work but, since he still finds a surprising degree of ignorance among the public about what this is, he feels justified in making his own contribution. *Missionary life*, which is a substantial 343 pages long, comprises 11 parts, each of which is given to a particular episode or to a certain locality. An annotated bibliography records the individual themes and topics that compose each part (pp. 5-10), and there is a brief appendix and glossary at the end (pp. 341-3). The work aims to give friends of mission and prospective missionaries a sense of what life is really like in the mission field, with its 'pleasures, perplexities, vexations, trials, and wants' (p. 3). It is packed with anecdotal accounts and descriptive material that record actual encounters between Scott and the Indians among whom he worked. Since the majority of Indians Scott encountered were Hindus, Islam does not appear frequently, though the 'false pretensions of Hinduism and Mohammedanism' are often dealt with together, treated as a double-headed obstacle to spreading Christian mission (p. 25).

Part 1 (pp. 11-36) is titled 'Camp at Dahemi' (a village in the Budaun district in Uttar Pradesh). On the first page, Scott refers to Muslims as 'bigoted' (p. 11). He mentions a few Muslim villagers but only in passing and never as sources of meaningful exchange, and he describes Muslim teachers in the British government school as a minority that unites together to

'raise a bad feeling against us and our message' (p. 31). He remarks that they would rather see Indians languishing in idolatry and polytheism than finding Christianity.

Part 2 (pp. 37-57), 'A camping trip to Shajehanpore' (roughly 80 miles east of Dahemi), contains much more about Islam. Scott comments here that it is hard to tell whether 'Islam has put on Hinduism or Hinduism Islam' in India (p. 39), repeating a common idea in American and British missionary literature that Indian Muslims have retained 'superstition' and 'caste prejudice' in common with their Hindu countrymen (p. 39). He describes an encounter he had with a young Muslim who asked why the ministry of Christ lasted only 33 years and what proof Scott had that the extant New Testament was the original. Scott remarks that Muslims take for granted the absurdity and untenability of the Trinity and the divine Sonship of Christ as well as the corrupt state of the Gospel. He is impatient about such 'foolish' questions and says missionaries must aim to 'sober' the questioners and to avoid agitating the crowd against the preacher (p. 48).

Later, he repeats another popular view, that Muslims may be more 'enlightened' in their ideas about God than Hindus, but this is because they are 'solely indebted' to Jewish and Christian scripture. In fact, there is 'hardly one original truth' in the Qur'an (p. 55), and Islam has 'stripped' Judaism and Christianity of their essential truth and produced an impoverished and 'pretended revelation' (p. 56). Scott goes as far as saying that Indian Muslims are no better than Hindus in their 'moral character' and are perhaps even worse (p. 55). His impatience is palpable as he refers to another engagement in a village in which all he could do was encourage sceptical Muslims to examine their holy text more closely, as if in doing so they would discover its deficiency. The difficulty for Scott is that, for Muslims, to 'examine is to doubt and become an infidel' (p. 57). Scott refers to repeated attempts to bring the unnamed Muslims around before retiring for breakfast, at which point 'I left these false followers of the prophet' (p. 56).

Part 3 (p. 58-93), 'Camp at Lukempore', is set in a village roughly four miles from Budaun. Like many other American and British missionaries and civilians, Scott remarks upon the abundance of monuments to 'Mohammedan saints' across India (p. 59). He discusses acquaintances with a Muslim *zamindar* (land-owning noble) and a *maulvī* (religious teacher), both of whom were inquiring about conversion but stopped short of it, about which he concludes that 'it seems much harder for

Mohammedans to become Christian than for Hindus' (p. 83). Yet 'intelligent Muslims' will acknowledge that 'Christians are nearer to themselves and infinitely better than Hindus' because they are not idolators (p. 86).

Part 4 (pp. 94-119), 'Camp at Bangawan' (north of Budaun), has less to do with actual encounters. It introduces an idea that Scott repeats elsewhere, that the Muslim conquerors coaxed Indians into accepting Islam by offering them land and employment. Protestant missionaries are correct when they refuse to tempt converts with 'worldly motives' (p. 95; here Scott cites 1 Corinthians 3:10-13). The 'cunning and worldly' Jesuits show no scruples in using the 'loaves and fishes' approach where they are active in mission, but Methodists must keep to the principle that the 'true foundation' is Christ alone (p. 95).

Part 5 (pp. 120-35), 'Camp at Katinnah' (a camp-village near Bangawan), covers much of the same ground as the preceding parts. One sermon falls flat among the villagers and Scott notes that 'Mohammedanism seems to bitter the heart against the teaching of the Gospel' (p. 128). Another later sermon on three topics – sin, salvation and superior Christian morality – has more success as Scott quotes a Persian proverb to silence a resistant *maulvī*, whose 'defects and ignorance remained concealed' (p. 129). Scott often reports that Muslims with whom he has engaged in dialogues raise their voices to show irritation. Later, in Part V, he asks rhetorically what is wrong with India, and answers that it is its religions. And India is 'no better' than Arabia, the 'fountain of Islamism' (p. 134).

Part 6 (pp. 136-45), 'Camp lost', offers no insight into Christian-Muslim relations. Part 7 (pp. 146-70), 'Camp on the Ganges', contains references to Muslims as 'wicked' as well as 'bigoted' and destructive, 'wantonly' destroying Christian texts 'out of pure hatred of the work' after Scott observed Muslim boys making kites and fireworks out of pages from the Bible (pp. 147-8).

Part 8 (pp. 170-217), 'To camp-meeting', is set in Zilhar, a town 60 miles from Budaun. It reports an encounter between Scott and a Muslim villager who argues that, if Christ was sent as a saviour, he failed in saving the British, as is evidenced by the poor behaviour of English soldiers in occupied India. Scott acknowledges this bad conduct and laments it as a challenge for American missionaries in undoing their primary appeal to Indians: salvation from sin. He urges the crowd to 'distinguish between nominal and real Christians' but is unsuccessful in this instance in persuading any of them (p. 176).

Part 9 (pp. 218-67), 'The return home', refers to the case of Fazal Ullah, who is 'ready to renounce the religion of Islam' and take baptism in Budaun

(p. 222). He is one of the very few Muslims Scott mentions by name. Later he is referred to as 'good evidence that our labor is not in vain in the Lord' (p. 271). Positive encounters are few and far between in *Missionary life*, and this scrap of success is immediately followed by a story of an anonymous Muslim who asks 'stupid' and 'insolent' questions during a sermon: '[my] patience in replying to them has ceased to be a virtue' (p. 230). The Muslim argues that Christianity is waning in influence and has been abrogated by Islam and that its scriptures are corrupted. The last idea resurfaces later with a little more substance as an old *maulvī* cites variances in manuscripts of the Bible. Scott does not attempt to confront the matter head on, instead silencing the *maulvī* by 'referring him to marginal readings' of the Qur'an and warning that this argument will also damage his own holy book (p. 232). Scott is dismissive of another argument he hears many times, when Muslims inquire as to how God could have a wife (an allusion to Q 6:101) – 'attacking the title' of Christ as Son of God (p. 254) – but he does not report what he answers.

Part 10 (pp. 268-302), 'Camp at Aligunge' (less than 50 miles south of Budaun), is the last part in which Muslims are mentioned. Here, Scott says that bigotry keeps them from breaking bread with Christians and recounts a few further meetings that follow much the same course as in earlier parts. A *maulvī* interrupts one sermon by calling attention to three apparent errors that prove the corrupt condition of the Gospel: Matthew citing only 13 generations in the third section of his genealogy of Christ after claiming there were 14 (Matthew 1:12-16); Paul conflicting with Moses when he taught that the old dispensation was imperfect (e.g. Romans 5:12-21); Scott himself teaching that Christ is the one saviour, contradicting the evidence that Moses interceded successfully on behalf of the Israelites at Sinai (Exodus 33:12-17). Scott only responds to the last of these, and tells the man to distinguish between a 'prevailing prayer' and the genuine work of redemption (p. 287). The man presses Scott upon how Christ is at all 'better' than Moses but Scott does not record his response, only telling his readers that 'patience' and 'good exegetical knowledge' are needed to counter Muslim statements about the 'untrustworthiness' of the scriptures (p. 288). Here, as elsewhere in *Missionary life*, Scott is rather vague in his treatment of the debates that arose between himself and his listeners.

Scott's description of the very last confrontation he mentions is likewise brief, if a little more detailed than usual. Another *maulvī* who wants to prove that Christ is no more perfect than any other prophet cites Deuteronomy 18:18-20 and 21:23, claiming that Jesus had experienced sin and punishment, and was therefore imperfect. Scott states that Christ was

manifestly sinless in comparison with 'a man like' Muḥammad (p. 299), and he refers to an attempt to explain the sacrifice Christ made and the atonement it gave to humanity, though he gives no more detail. What he chooses to stress instead is that he had never encountered such 'impudence, impertinence, ignorance, and noise' in all his time in India (p. 300).

SIGNIFICANCE

Scott is an obscure figure whose publications in Urdu and single major work in English have not been widely referenced. *Missionary life among the villages in India* was listed in a few American catalogues and it was reviewed by one Methodist periodical that judged it more informative than the average travelogue, partly due to its attention to 'religious forms' ('Contemporary literature', *The Ladies' Repository* 36 [1876] 565-8, p. 566). Indeed, it does read as a travelogue but is more preoccupied with Indian religiosity than is usual in the genre. It is original in that it gives more of a personal dimension to Methodist mission in India. It is quite introspective and reveals the emotional states of the author: his pleasure, impatience, frustration, dismissiveness, and at times his disgust, are all palpable. The work is not theologically rigorous and is for a general Christian readership. The reader senses that Scott is being utterly candid and is very human rather than an ideal missionary modelling himself on Christ.

The work describes Muslims almost unanimously – with a few 'intelligent' and 'sincere' and 'liberal' exceptions – as bigoted, ignorant and lacking grace, all well-worn tropes used of Muslims in 19th-century missionary writing. Scott is highly unusual, however, in that he never refers to Muslims as violent or to Islam as a religion of the sword. He is wholly uninterested in the military aspect of the historical spread of Islam across India. He refers to the Prophet Muḥammad once and without mentioning conquest (p. 299). He also only rarely describes Muslims as being fatalistic (pp. 185, 278). Militancy and fatalism appear as tropes in virtually all missionary sources published under the British Raj but are not emphasised here. *Missionary life* is therefore unique in some respects, even though it draws from a stock of standard prejudices about Muslims that many missionaries harboured.

PUBLICATIONS

T.J. Scott, *Missionary life among the villages in India*, Cincinnati OH, 1876; 012294233 (digitised version available through Hathi Trust)

Katherine Laura Jennings

James William Hampson Stobart

DATE OF BIRTH 20 March 1832
PLACE OF BIRTH Hexham, Northumberland
DATE OF DEATH 1 December 1902
PLACE OF DEATH Baltimore, Maryland

BIOGRAPHY

James Stobart was born in Hexham, Northumberland, in 1832. He gained a BA degree from Oxford University in 1857, and in 1859, the year in which the Indian Uprising officially came to an end, he was appointed principal of La Martiniere College, Lucknow. He married Helen Buyers, a clergyman's daughter, in 1864, and they had six children, all born and baptised in India. Stobart remained principal of La Martiniere College until 1879. He seems to have been back in Britain when his book *Islam and its founder* was published, as his Preface lists place and date as 'Clifton, 5th July, 1876'. It appears that he did not publish any other books.

Stobart's life after 1879 is unclear, though it is likely that he remained in England. He is listed as 'head-master' at 'Southborough Tunbridge Wells preparation for public schools and Royal Navy' (*The Saturday Review of Politics, Literature, Science and Art* 48 [1879] pp. 252, 281, 311, 339), and he must have been in Kensington, London, in 1886, when his son Herbert became a pupil at Westminster School (*Supplement to the Westminster School Register: Continued from October 1883 to October 1893*, London, 1894, p. 21). In 1889, he moved to America, but of his life there nothing is known. He died in Baltimore in 1902.

MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION

The Ecclesiologist 18 (1857) p. 193 (refers to new members of the Oxford Architectural Society, including 'Mr. J. W. H. Stobart, Worcester College')

The Annual Register, Oxford, 1859, p. 291 (notes that, in the Oxford University examinations, Paschal [Trinity] term, 1858, 'Stobart, J. W. H. Worcester', had been awarded 'classis I' in 'jurisprudentia et historia moderna')

The Calcutta University Calendar, Calcutta, 1870, pp. 183-5

J.W.H. Stobart, *Islam and its founder*, London, 1876, p. 2

The Saturday Review of Politics, Literature, Science and Art 48 (1879) 252

J. Foster, *Alumni Oxonienses: the members of the University of Oxford* 1715-1886*; their parentage, birthplace and year of birth, with a record of their degrees. Being the matriculation register of the University*, vol. 4, London, 1888, p. 1356

The Baltimore Sun, 17 June 1903, p. 7; https://www.newspapers.com/newspage/371483032/

La Martiniere College: Our principals; https://www.lamartiniereluckno w.org/about/our-principals

WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Islam and its founder

DATE 1876
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

Islam and its founder was published by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK) in its 'Non-Christian religious systems' series. Consisting of twelve chapters, in the 1876 edition it is 254 pages long. It begins with an examination of the geography and early history of Arabia, and an account of early Arab religion and the ancestry of Muḥammad (chs 1-2), followed by a survey of his life and teaching (chs 3-9), and accounts of the main divisions in Islam and an outline of its history (chs 9-12). In the Preface, Stobart lists works that influenced him. These include William Muir's *Life of Mahomet* and George Sale's 'Preliminary discourse' and notes to his translation of the Qur'an. Stobart continues:

> I have also found valuable aid in the writings of Freeman (*The Saracens*), Forster (*Geography of Arabia*), Kasimirski (Koran), Irving (*Life of Mahomet*), Monier Williams (*Indian Wisdom*), Lane (*Modern Egyptians, &c*), Burton (*El Mecca and El Medineh*), Kennedy, the Rev. J. (*Christianity and the Religions of India*), Hughes, the Rev. T.P. (*Notes on Muhammadanism*), Lamartine, Prideaux, Deutsch, Bosworth Smith, Gibbon, and others who have written on the subject. (p. 1)

Stobart may well have been invited by SPCK to write this contribution to their series of educational works because he was a school principal rather than a missionary. Another reason may have been that he was located in Lucknow, a place whose name resonated with Britons of Stobart's time, barely 20 years after the Indian Uprising. Although both Hindus and Muslims were involved in this rebellion, many Britons thought it was

instigated by Muslims. Thus, a book written by the principal of the famous Lucknow school would arouse intense interest.

Stobart states in the Preface that he has 'endeavoured to avoid everything which would appear like partisanship or prejudice' (p. 2), but he repeatedly allows his own beliefs and assumptions to sway judgements. Thus, when he recounts the story of the monk Baḥīrā recognising the seal of prophecy on the young Muḥammad he remarks that this is 'so mixed up with fable as to make it [...] quite unworthy of belief' (p. 54), and he denies that Muḥammad had true knowledge of biblical teachings in terms that display his own evangelical Protestantism: 'Of the need of a *Redeemer,* and of the finished *Atonement*, he knew nothing' (p. 60). Further, he observes that Martin Luther looked upon Muḥammad as 'a devil and the firstborn child of Satan', while Philip Melanchthon considered that he 'was inspired by Satan, because he does not explain what sin is' (p. 63). He also quotes Humphrey Prideaux's (1648-1724) dismissal of Muḥammad as 'a wilful and intentional deceiver from first to last' (p. 63, quoting Prideaux, *The true nature of imposture fully display'd in the life of Mahomet*, London, 1697, pp. 11, 110).

Stobart concedes that Muḥammad's domestic behaviour 'was that of a faithful and affectionate husband, whilst his reserved, meditative, and sober manners in public secured him the love and praise of his fellow-townsmen' (p. 64), but Stobart is in no doubt that he came under the power of Satan: 'The stealthy advances of a worldly ambition blinded his mental vision [...] and by the suggestions of the Evil One took captive his soul' (p. 66). This was demonstrated in his 'acts of vindictive revenge, by rapine and lust; and how still he makes bold in believing these revelations which, under the name of the Almighty, are invoked to justify his deeds' (p. 68). He criticises the permission given in the Qur'an to take captive women as concubines (Q 70:3), which would have affected readers who remembered the rape of Christian women during the Indian Uprising, and he condemns 'those gross pictures of heaven and hell, which [...] are sufficient in themselves to disprove the claim made by their author to Divine inspiration' (p. 104), leading to the withering conclusion that 'Mahomet was unable to form any estimate of celestial happiness apart from the sensual indulgences, to which the story of his life shows him to have been so keenly addicted' (p. 106).

Other instances of his condemnation of Muḥammad's teachings include his remark that Muḥammad inserted the apocryphal story about the boy Jesus making birds from clay found in the *Arabic Gospel of the*

Infancy, which was among the works of 'fabulists of Christendom', into the 'preserved book' (p. 122), and his derision of Muḥammad's teaching about the way in which a husband 'may repudiate his wives without any assigned reason, and without warning; [and] may, if apprehensive of disobedience, rebuke, imprison, and strike them (Sura iv. 28); and against this the dishonoured spouse has almost no means of redress' (p. 151). His evangelical indignation is evident when he states:

> Some Mahometans make a habit of continually changing their wives [; …] women are liable to be indefinitely transferred from one man to another, obliged to accept a husband and a home wherever they can find one, or in case of destitution, to which divorce may have reduced them, resort to other more degrading means of living. (p. 152).

He continues in this way when he refers to *ḥudūd* punishments and acts of assassination, which he suggests were 'deliberately planned by Mahomet, and the perpetrators blessed and rewarded; and we also meet with instances at this period of the barbarous mutilation of captives […] Thus […] the Jewish law of retaliation – abolished by the Christian dispensation – (is) revived in the Koran' (p. 167).

Despite this, he sees a measure of sincerity in Muḥammad and he demures from the criticism generally made by European scholars. He very possibly has Humphrey Prideaux in mind when he writes:

> That [Muḥammad] was the impostor pictured by some writers is refuted alike by his unwavering belief in the truth of his own mission, by the loyalty and unshaken confidence of his companions, who had ample opportunities of forming a right estimate of his sincerity, and finally, by the magnitude of the task which he brought to so successful an issue. No impostor, it may safely be said, could have accomplished so mighty a work. (p. 231)

Muḥammad may have been misguided but he was not 'intentionally' wicked or malevolent.

In ch. 10, where he discusses the Hadith, the Sunnī-Shīʿa divide, Wahhābism and Sufism, Stobart refers to Sufi doctrines in the same withering way as he has condemned other practices: 'The terms love of God, truth, &c., have, in Sufi theology, an especial and mystic meaning, very different from their usual acceptation in Christian terminology. Their [the Sufis'] chief doctrines are taught under the images of wine, love, flowing ringlets, and intoxication' (pp. 201-2). Unusually, when he writes about the spread of Islam in ch. 11 he observes that the Muslim conquest of Spain had some positive results: 'Their rule, though necessarily degrading, was equitable, and the fullest religious toleration was granted. The Jews, in

particular, were freed from the cruel persecutions to which they had been subject under Christian rule' (p. 215), though he adds that 'it cannot be denied that the normal condition of Islam is one of missionary aggression by the sword' (p. 226).

Stobart was particularly hostile towards the Ottomans and their

> centuries of despotism, with [...] bigoted persecution of its Christian peoples, and oppression of its co-religionists [. ...] Turkey has systematically oppressed and degraded its subjects [...] the time must come when the Mahometan rule will be swept from those fair regions in Europe, which have for centuries been blighted by its presence [...] so long as Mahometans are true to their own creed, so long will it be impossible for them, when they are the governing power, to grant perfect equality to their subjects of other creeds, or, when they are subjects, to render loyal and hearty obedience to a sovereign professing any antagonistic faith. (pp. 221-2)

The last comment here probably relates to the Indian Uprising. It is followed a little later by an open complaint:

> Of the 100 millions professing Islam there are in India alone some 41 millions, subjects of the Queen of England, who is thus ruler over the largest Mahometan population in the world. That these subjects are a source of strength to the Empire few will be disposed to assert, for, in face of the express directions of the prophet, loyalty becomes a difficulty, which is doubtless conscientiously felt by many devout Moslems. (pp. 225-6)

The implication is that Muslims, having dual loyalties, cannot be wholly trusted.

Stobart's religious stance is made clear in the concluding paragraph of the book:

> Light and darkness are not more opposed than the loving dictates of the Gospel and the vengeful spirit of the Koran, in which hatred and oppression take the place of love and forgiveness of injuries, and the denunciations of the prophet contrast with the voice of the Good Shepherd, which speaks of peace and good-will to all mankind. (p. 238)

SIGNIFICANCE

Islam and its founder was mentioned soon after it was published, probably because it was distributed widely by SPCK and also because it was accessible to general readers and gave a compact summary of Muḥammad and of the history and teachings of Islam.

The year after its publication, a review in *The Bookseller* (5 November 1877) admiringly observed that in it, 'Distinction is carefully drawn between the comparative ingenuousness of his [Muḥammad's] first profession,

and the indefensible acts of his later performance. His system of religious doctrine is subjected to a rigorous examination' (pp. 998-9). A few years later in 1880, *The Law Magazine and Review* respectfully cited it in connection with a legal case concerning a foreigner in the Ottoman Empire:

> The impossibility of a Mohammedan government, while remaining true to its colours, granting religious equality to its subjects, has been well set forth in the volume on Islam, in the series of non-Christian Religious Systems in course of publication by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge. The author, Mr. J. W. H. Stobart. (*The Law Magazine and Review*, fourth series 5 [1880], p. 156)

However, *Nature, A Weekly Illustrated Journal of Science* (vol. 17, November 1877-April 1878) had earlier been fiercely hostile. In the course of discussing three works from SPCK, the author dismisses it comprehensively:

> Mr. Stobart's book will supply a convenient but misleading compendium for those who wish to know a little about the subject. It reproduces the bigotry which disfigured Sir William Muir's 'Life of Mahomet,' on which it is chiefly based, without the scholarship which rendered that Indian civilian's four volumes the standard English work on Islám. ('Books received', p. 240)

Whatever people thought, missionary needs facilitated the book's circulation. A review in vol. 5 of *The Mission Field* in 1878 recommended it for the 'special attention of all intending Missionaries, and indeed of all friends of Christian Missions'. The review notes that 'Mohammedanism may be said to be the most formidable opponent of Christian Missions [. ...] It is *the only form of religion* (other than Christianity) *that makes converts in the present day* [. ...] Thence the value of Mr. Stobart's little book. [...] Altogether it is a clear and satisfactory sketch of the nature and the history of this false religion' (pp. 291-2). In the same vein, a report from the 1910 Edinburgh World Missionary Conference included the work among its listed books (*World Missionary conference, 1910. To consider missionary problems in relation to the non-Christian world*, Edinburgh, 1910, vol. 1-9, p. 396).

In contrast, C.B. Upton in *The Theological Review* revealed his liberal-theological sentiment by condemning the book. After a positive review of the SPCK book on Buddhism and a less enthusiastic review of the book on Hinduism, it states about Stobart's work:

> We are compelled to speak in quite different terms of Mr. Stobart's *Islam*. It is best described by saying that it belongs to the pre-scientific period. It is written from the point of view of a sound believer in evangelical

> Christianity, who does not believe that science in any shape has anything to do with the narratives of the Pentateuch [...] the narrative shews none but a superficial acquaintance with the facts of Mohammed's career, and no great insight into his character [. ...] Real students of Islam can learn nothing from it, and those who approach the subject for the first time would do well to drink at a purer fountain of information. (15/60 [1878] 'Notices', p. 179)

An indication of the book's wider impact is that it has been quoted approvingly, though somewhat selectively, by Muslim authors from the time it was first published. These include Chirāgh ʿAlī (*A critical exposition of the popular 'Jihād'*, Calcutta, 1885, pp. lxviii, lxxxvii, 2, 52), Ummed Ali (*Mohammed in ancient scriptures*, Agra, 1947), who quotes from Stobart's work on a number of points (pp. 63-4), and Zulfiqar Ali Shah (*The paradox of Muhammad* (*saw*). *Roots of prophetic hate and love in the West*, FCNA, 2013, http://fiqhcouncil.org/the-paradox-of-muhammad-saw-roots-of-prophetic-hate-and-love-in-the-west/), who refers to Stobart's rejection of the idea that Muḥammad was an impostor.

Attitudes towards it as a work to be relied on continue to be mixed.

PUBLICATIONS

J.W.H. Stobart, *Islam and its founder*, London, 1876, repr. 1877, 1878, 1895, Whitefish MT, 2005, Norderstedt, 2016; 100434754 (digitised version of the 1895 repr. available through Hathi Trust)

Anthony McRoy

James Vaughan

DATE OF BIRTH 1826 or 1827
PLACE OF BIRTH Hull, Yorkshire
DATE OF DEATH 1882
PLACE OF DEATH Calcutta

BIOGRAPHY

James Vaughan was born in either 1826 or 1827 and he grew up in Hull, England. As a young man, he served as the superintendent of a Sunday school and then joined the Anglican Church Missionary Society (CMS) and studied at the CMS Training College in Islington. He was ordained in December 1854, and joined the Calcutta Mission the following year. In India, he held a number of roles, being described by William Burnet as a 'universalist in Missions' ('James Vaughan', p. 124). He worked in Calcutta for 19 years, from 1855 to 1874, where he was for most of the time in charge of Trinity Church. He first served at a mission school and orphanage in Mirzapur and he later became known for his evangelism and open-air preaching in the region. From 1874 to 1877 he was back in Britain, and it was during this time that he wrote *The trident, the crescent, and the cross*, published in 1876. When he returned to India, he was appointed as superintendent of the Krishnagar Mission and chair of the Bengal Native Church Council.

In addition to *The trident, the crescent and the cross*, Vaughan also wrote *What think ye of Christ? Is he divine or not?*, published in Calcutta in 1874, just before returning to England. An Urdu translation entitled *Masīḥ Ibnu'allāh* ('Christ the Son of God'), is included in William St Clair Tisdall's list of important Christian works in Asian languages on Islam in *A manual of the leading Muḥammadan objections to Christianity* (London, 1904, p. 235), although the English original is not in his list of important works in European languages earlier in the book. A second edition of the English version was published by the Calcutta Tract and Book Society in 1874, as well as 1,000 copies of the 178-page Urdu translation (H.U. Weitbrecht, *A descriptive catalogue of Urdu Christian literature*, Lahore, 1886, p. 52).

Vaughan died in India from a sudden illness in January 1882.

MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION

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'Committee of correspondence, February 7th', *Church Missionary Intelligencer and Record* 7 (March 1882) 187

W. Burnet, 'James Vaughan. A chapter in Indian mission life', *Church Missionary Gleaner* 12 (1885) 123-4, 137

CMS, '494 Vaughan, James', *Register of missionaries and native clergy 1804-1904*, London, 1905, p. 98

WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

The trident, the crescent, and the cross

DATE 1876
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

Vaughan's *The trident, the crescent, and the cross. A view of the religious history of India during the Hindu, Buddhist, Mohammedan, and Christian periods* was published in 1876 and is 344 pages long. It includes extensive references to Islam and Muslims, particularly in ch. 6 (pp. 135-91), entitled 'The Mohammedan era'. This chapter explores the history and origins of Islam, the spread of Islam in India and Muslim dynasties and rulers.

The chapter opens with the statement that Islam is the obvious successor to Buddhism in interreligious struggles with Hinduism, and that Vaughan's aim here is to trace this struggle (p. 135). It includes comparisons between the lives of Christ and Muḥammad, and descriptions of the history and character of Islam, the main Islamic sects, and the history of Islam in India, including an exploration of interactions between Christians and Muslims through Indian history, particularly under the Mughal Empire. In his description of the history of Islam, Vaughan draws on opinions that Muḥammad simply reshaped ideas and tropes that were familiar in his immediate context, including Christianity, but he also challenges contemporary scholarship by offering an analysis of Muḥammad's life that positions him as 'sincere and ingenuous, [and] as conscious of an honest feeling after light and truth' (p. 145). Overall, Vaughan's descriptions include both positive and negative interpretations of Islam and its key figures.

Vaughan closes the chapter by focusing on contemporary issues. For example, he records Indian Muslim dissatisfaction with Christian rule and the lack of Muslim representation within government service. Although he suggests that legislation may serve to reduce some of this hostility, he argues that, regardless of the government's efforts, Indian Muslims will not be made into loyal and satisfied subjects since devotion to Islam and dissatisfaction with the British are intimately connected. Indeed, for Vaughan 'such disaffection is the essential outcome of their creed' (p. 188) and colonisation of India inherently means that 'England [...] accepted Moslem disloyalty as a necessary heirloom' (p. 189). The answer to these challenges, he argues, lies with the missionaries and the conversion of Muslims in India. In fact, the targeting of the Hindu population alone for conversion will, he fears, create more discontent amongst Muslims. He explains that Muslims have not been targets of evangelisation because of the small number of missionaries, the large population of Hindus who are more agreeable than Muslims, the greater ease with which Hinduism can be challenged, and encounters between Christians and Muslims in earlier times that have made Muslims resistant and the task of converting them more difficult. Though he cannot provide a policy for missionaries, Vaughan writes:

> It is abundantly clear that, sunken and degraded as the majority of the Indian Moslems may be, secular and seditious as may be their leading characteristics, they are singularly impressionable in their higher nature, and succumb to earnest appeals to the conscience[. ... T]heir consciences being unenlightened, and the appeals based on erroneous principles, the upshot has generally been unsatisfactory; but, surely, their susceptibility to impression under such appeals, may well indicate the right mode of approach by Christian missionaries[. ... I]f the Gospel is to win its way amongst the Mussalmans of India [... it will do so] by a body of fervid, loving, self-denying preachers appealing with burning eloquence to the moral consciousness of their hearers, proclaiming the terrors of God's law, which [the Muslims] do not deny, and the solemnity of the coming judgement, which they believe in. (p. 190)

Vaughan is careful to note that success will not be met through controversies or attacks on Islam. Moreover, he argues that it is not European missionaries who should be carrying out this mission but their Indian converts, who may be able to excite people's passions for Christianity, just as Muslim figures have done for Islam through Indian history. He ends the chapter with an extract from an 1873 paper by Thomas Valpy French (1825-91; *CMR* 24, 338-44), who founded the Lahore Divinity School, on

the spiritual impressibility of Muslims when the correct methods are employed. This final section orients the earlier and more extensive descriptions of Islam and its history towards the themes of Christian rule over Muslims and their conversion. Understanding the history of Islam and its place in India are essential points of reference for the conversion of Indian Muslims.

Other substantive references to Muslims feature in the penultimate chapter of the book entitled 'The native church' (pp. 281-327), which explores the history of Protestant missions. Referencing a conversion recorded in James Long's (1814-87) *Hand Book of Bengal missions* (London, 1848, pp. 185-6), Vaughan describes the testimony of one convert who had encountered only trouble when he was a Muslim, but found pity, money and rice after his conversion. For Vaughan, this highlights the importance of Christian compassion and help for converts. Later in the chapter, he includes the story of the conversion of another Muslim through a Hindu orphan convert who had been sent to hospital to have his tuberculosis treated. While he was there, he read from the Bible to the Muslim, his fellow-patient, and also told the missionaries to speak to him, with the result that the Muslim requested a copy of the New Testament from them. On their next visit to the hospital, the missionaries found that the Muslim had been discharged because his disease was 'incurable' (p. 317), but two years later they came across him in a group of converts at a leper colony. There, in addition to converts, Hindus and Muslims visited and learnt from the man, and he 'lived some three years thus to glorify God and benefit his fellows' (p. 318). Vaughan praises him highly, writing:

> He ruled with Christian wisdom and love over his less advanced brethren; he watched their walk, gently admonished any inconsistencies which they might display, gathered them around him every morning and evening for devotion; expounded to them the Scriptures and mightily helped them in their heavenward course. [... H]e seemed to have reached the Apostolic standard; he was 'joyful in all his tribulations'. We never saw a Christian with clearer views, stronger faith, and brighter hope than he possessed. [...] When the Master summoned him away, we all felt that the loss to the Leper Church was great. (p. 318)

Through accounts such as this, it becomes clear that Vaughan's primary focus is the conversion of Muslims.

This being so, Vaughan still takes a novel approach to Islam by, for example, comparing its origins with those of Buddhism, which allows him to move away from traditional conceptions of the faith as a corruption

of Christian traditions and to present a more nuanced exploration of its origins. His assessments of Islam, whilst they are ultimately devaluing and dismissive, nevertheless encapsulate a level of moderation that was only just beginning to appear at this time in Christian works about Islam in South Asia. For example, Vaughan rejects portrayals of Muḥammad as a hypocrite and imposter, but instead chooses to place him within his socio-historical context and highlight his sincerity. At the same time, he explains Muḥammad's religious experiences as the result of epilepsy (pp. 144-6), and attributes literary merit to the Qur'an, but judges that it is contaminated with errors that betray its fallaciousness (pp. 148-54).

Despite movements away from traditional scholarship, Vaughan is clearly a product of his time and of traditional European Christian thought on Islam. This can be seen, for example, in his assertions that Islam spread primarily through violence (pp. 163-6). At times, he is demonstrably incorrect in his descriptions, as when he gives the impression that Islam in India has undergone some Christianisation when he argues that figures such as Akbar converted to Christianity (p. 176). But this appears to be a genuine mistake rather than a sinister attempt to rewrite Indian history.

Although the majority of the text is a mixture of both positive and negative assessments of Islam, it is in Vaughan's description of the character of Islam and the quality of Muslims in India where the reader feels his strongest anti-Muslim tendencies. For Vaughan, Islam in India has been tarnished by the influence of Hinduism: he sees Muslims as 'half-Hindus' (p. 184) and those who are devout and honest (i.e. Muslims in north India) as not truly Indian. Such comments feed into his recommendation for a mission to Muslims, whose lack of devotion, he considers, may make their evangelisation an easy task, and they also hint that the importance of Islam in Indian history and its impact on Indian society was relatively slight. Vaughan shows his true colours in his recommendation that Muslims should be targeted for conversion.

SIGNIFICANCE

The trident, the crescent, and the cross appears to have been well received by those interested in Hinduism. Julius Richter describes it as one of the best comparisons of Christianity and Hinduism (*A history of missions in India*, trans. S.H. Moore, New York, 1908, p. 303). Anonymous reviews ('Recent mission literature', *Church Missionary Intelligencer and Record* 2 [1877] 602-8, pp. 602-5; 'The religious history of India', *Allen's Indian Mail and Official Gazette* 35 [1877] 153) also focused primarily on its exploration of Hinduism. On the other hand, G.B. Durrant recorded it as a source of

interesting cases related to preaching at bazaars (quoted in 'Records of the missions. North India Mission. II. North-West Provinces [continued]. Lucknow', *Church Missionary Intelligencer and Record* 3 [1878] 306-7).

As well as this, the book was also recognised for its important information related to Christian missions to Indian Muslims. A paper entitled 'Missions to Mohammedans. A plea for more extended missionary efforts amongst Mohammedans in India', submitted to the General Committee of the Church Missionary Society on 22 November 1887 (*Church Missionary Intelligencer and Record* [January 1888] 28-33), drew on its suggestions for mission. Building on Vaughan's ideas, the paper argues that it is important to employ Muslim converts for evangelism among Muslims. Further, the second part of Burnet's obituary of Vaughan includes the story told in the book about the conversion of the Muslim leper ('James Vaughan. A chapter in Indian mission life', *Church Missionary Gleaner* 12 [1885] 187), suggesting that Christians were using the text to draw wider lessons about evangelisation of Muslims in India.

Overall, *The trident, the crescent, and the cross* provides an interesting approach to Islam that marks a movement away from more polemical treatments towards a more nuanced description of the religion's history. Nevertheless, the text features material that seeks to devalue Islam, its truth claims, its impact in India and the strength of its followers' convictions. The wider influence of the text is unclear, but it does appear to have informed other writings on Islam in India and approaches to Muslims, and includes material relevant to the evangelisation of Muslim communities.

PUBLICATIONS

J. Vaughan, *The trident, the crescent, and the cross. A view of the religious history of India during the Hindu, Buddhist, Mohammedan, and Christian periods*, London, 1876, repr. Norderstedt, 2021; 001394642 (digitised version available through Hathi Trust)

James Harry Morris

Thomas Valpy French

DATE OF BIRTH 1 January 1825
PLACE OF BIRTH Burton upon Trent
DATE OF DEATH 14 May 1891
PLACE OF DEATH Muscat

BIOGRAPHY

Thomas Valpy French was the eldest child of Peter and Penelope Arabella (*née* Valpy) French. He was born in Burton upon Trent where his father was vicar of Holy Trinity Church. He went to school locally and then to Rugby School before entering University College, Oxford, in 1843 to study Classics. He graduated in 1846 and, in 1848, won the Chancellor's prize for a Latin essay and was elected as a fellow of University College. He was ordained deacon in 1848 and priest in 1849, serving as curate to his father in Burton upon Trent and assisting at St Ebbe's Church, Oxford, during term time (Birks, *Life and correspondence*, vol. 1, p. 10). In April 1850, he was accepted as a missionary by the Church Missionary Society (CMS) and sent to Agra together with Edward Craig Stuart (1822-1911; *Register*, no. 417, pp. 79-80; see *CMR* 20, 357-68) to set up an educational establishment. They arrived in Agra in February 1851 (Stacey, 'Legacy', p. 22; Buckland and Cox, 'French, Thomas Valpy').

In 1852 in Calcutta, French married Mary Anne Janson (d. 1912), whom he had met whilst at Oxford. She lived in Britain through most of their married life, raising funds for the work and looking after their children, who gradually increased in number to eight (Stacey, 'Legacy', p. 22).

St John's College, Agra, named in memory of the Cambridge college that Henry Martyn (1781-1812; *CMR* 20, 89-111) had attended, opened in 1853 with French as principal. It prepared students to sit examinations for government posts and attracted Hindus and Muslims who saw the importance of secular education and were prepared to accept Christian religious teaching as part of the process (Birks, *Life and correspondence*, vol. 1, pp. 42-61). French spent seven years in Agra, during which time, in addition to his work at the college, he undertook outreach amongst Hindus and Muslims. In 1854, he assisted his fellow CMS missionary Karl Pfander (1803-65; *CMR* 24, 188-236) in his debate in Agra with Raḥmatullāh Kairānavī (1818-90; *CMR* 24, 253-60). Herbert Birks notes that, during the

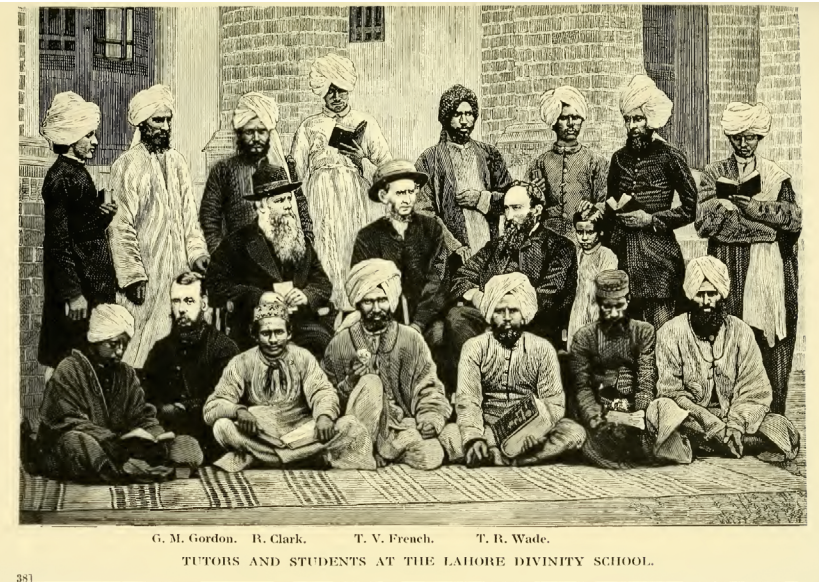


Illustration 8. Thomas Valpy French with tutors and students

period of the debate, he 'came more especially forward' when the matter of alteration of the Bible by Christians was raised, owing to his 'Oxford scholarship' (Birks, *Life and correspondence*, vol. 1, p. 72). French was in Agra during the Indian Uprising of 1857 and his correspondence relates the experiences of the missionary community there (Birks, *Life and correspondence*, vol. 1, pp. 86-119).

French came back to Britain in 1859 and served as a curate in Clifton, Bristol, for 18 months (Stock, *Heroic bishop*, p. 20). He returned to India in 1861 to found the Derajat mission on the North-West Frontier with Robert Bruce, another CMS missionary (1833-1915; *Register*, no. 551, p. 111; *CMR* 20, pp. 9-13, 56-7, 357-9), though his health 'gave way' and he came back to Britain in 1863.

Through 1864, he served as curate in Beddington, Surrey, and then, from 1865, he was vicar of St Paul's, Cheltenham (Birks, *Life and correspondence*, vol. 1, pp. 150-3). He returned to India in 1869 to found St John's Divinity School in Lahore, training men for ordained ministry as well as others for secular work. He was known as *Haft zabān pādrī* ('the seven tongued pastor') because of his facility with languages (Birks, *Life and correspondence*, vol. 1, p. 47).

French remained in Lahore until 1874, when he returned to Britain to become vicar of Erith in Kent. Although he had resigned from the CMS in 1874, in a letter to William Gray (1829-95), the CMS secretary, in 1876 about the suitability of translating William Muir's (1819-1905; *CMR* 24, 666-96) *The Corân. Its composition and teaching* (1878) into Ottoman Turkish he mentions that he was travelling to Malmesbury on behalf of the CMS (Archives Birmingham, University of Birmingham, Cadbury Research Library Special Collections – Church Missionary Society: CMS/B/OMS/C M O8/114).

In 1877, French became rector of St Ebbe's, Oxford, and in the same year he was awarded a Doctor of Divinity degree by the university. He was also chosen to be the first bishop of Lahore and was consecrated in December. The diocese of Lahore, which was created out of the diocese of Calcutta, covered the Punjab and Sindh, including Delhi, which meant that he was able to support Edward Bickersteth (1850-97), to whom he was related, in his desire to establish the Cambridge Mission to Delhi (*CMR* 24, 956-75). In his diocese, his hope was to 'build an indigenous, multi-racial Indian church[. ...] But his efforts to train learned Indian clergymen who would exert Christian influence on Indian élites ultimately impeded the spread of Christianity in the Punjab' (Buckland and Cox, 'French, Thomas Valpy').

French served as bishop of Lahore for ten years, during which he oversaw the completion of the cathedral. He resigned at the end of 1887 but then, in early 1891, he responded to a call for mission work in Arabia and went to Muscat, where he died on 14 May 1891 and was buried there (Birks, *Life and correspondence*, vol. 2, pp, 215-306, 330-60).

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John Chesworth

WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Injīl-i Da'ūd
'The Gospel according to David'

DATE 1877
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Urdu

DESCRIPTION

Injīl-i Da'ūd appeared in 1877, the year in which French was made bishop of Lahore. It was published in Ludhiana at the Mission Press under the supervision of Elwood Morris Wherry (1843-1927; see *CMR* 16, 371-84), with a print run of a thousand copies. It is 350 pages long, divided into a short Introduction and 15 chapters, the product of French's use of the Psalms in his street preaching to Muslims in Lahore while he was principal of St John's Divinity School between 1869 and 1874. Herbert Birks records that 'The revision of a little work upon the Psalms, *Injil Dāūd* (or *The Gospel of David*), occupied all [French's] spare time during the opening months of 1874' (*Life and correspondence*, vol. 1, p. 313). The table of contents is in Persian, while the text is in Urdu with quotations from the Qur'an in Arabic and from the Bible in the Urdu of the standard 19th-century translation. Occasionally, French adds a note to clarify how the meaning of a Hebrew or Arabic term refers to Christ.

In the Introduction (pp. 1-6), French sets out his three main themes: 'The ultimate covenant in Christ', 'Prophecies of the Psalms fulfilled in Christ' and 'The authenticity of the Bible'.

In chs 1-5 (pp. 7-117), French discusses the first of these themes. The covenant that God made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob was perpetuated

through David (see Genesis 12:1-3 and 2 Samuel 7) and ultimately fulfilled in the person of Jesus. French points out that it is crucial to recognise that the covenants with Abraham and David should not be considered in isolation, as Christ was the ultimate fulfillment of both.

Chs 6-9 (pp. 118-208) present an extensive list of verses in the Psalms that are prophecies of Christ, together with verses in the Gospels that fulfil them. These include: Psalm 22:18 and John 19:23-4 (at Jesus's crucifixion his garments were divided by casting lots); Psalm 69:21 and Matthew 27:34 (Jesus was offered wine mixed with gall on the cross); Psalm 22:8 and Matthew 27:41-3 (Jesus was mocked on the cross); Psalm 22:1 and Matthew 27:46 (Jesus cried out on the cross, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?').

There are numerous other elements in the Psalms that were fulfilled in Christ, among them the person of King David himself, who not only prophesied about Christ but also resembled him in his rule. He envisioned the House of God being built, and Jerusalem being filled with the splendour of the great king and gaining recognition among all nations and tribes. Psalms 8, 22 and 69 contain foretellings of Christ's resurrection, ascension and kingdom.

Chs 10-15 (pp. 209-350) focus on the authenticity of the Christian scriptures. There is a misconception among some that the Apostle Paul altered or rejected the Law of Moses and was opposed to Christ. But Paul's letters, particularly Romans, Hebrews and Galatians (at this time Hebrews was generally accepted as Pauline), make clear that the Law of Moses was fulfilled in Christ. The books of the Old and New Testaments are entirely reliable and free from any alteration or corruption because, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and by the work of historians such as Jerome and Eusebius, the manuscripts were faithfully copied and transmitted to later generations. These manuscripts do not contradict the original text.

On p. 251, French quotes two verses from the Qur'an (5:68 and 5:66) that refer to the Torah and the Gospel as authentic revelations, and he strongly advises his readers not to reject this testimony, which comes from Muḥammad himself. He cautions against developing new theories about the abrogation of the Bible which would deprive the Muslim community of the truth.

Injīl-i Da'ūd is wholly centred on demonstrating that the writings of the biblical prophets point towards Jesus. In fact, several prophecies in the Psalms are so directly related to him that they are meaningless unless they are applied to him. French commends the Psalms as the culmination of knowledge and praise, containing fundamental religious teachings

and offering spiritual strengthening and uplift to those who are walking on the path of God. No matter how severe the anxiety, superstitions and illness faced by humankind, remedies are to be found in the treasury of the Psalms.

SIGNIFICANCE

In demonstrating that one book of the Bible, the Psalms, which is endorsed by the Qur'an, supports another, the Gospel, which is also endorsed by the Qur'an, *Injīl-i Da'ūd* contributes towards demonstrating the integrity of Christian scripture on the basis that the parts cohere together. In addition, the prominence given to David, acknowledged as a prophet in the Qur'an, as a witness to Jesus and his ministry, functions as a supporting proof that the events about Jesus related in the Gospels had been predicted by an authority who Muslims could be expected to regard as reliable. It would be impossible for French not to regard his work as performing this function, given his memories of the intractable difficulties caused by disagreement over the integrity of the Bible at the debate in Agra between Pfander and Kairānavī, which he had witnessed 20 years earlier.

If French was able to use the Psalms in the street preaching upon which this book was based, it would seem that Muslims who heard him were prepared to accept the importance and maybe authority of the Bible as a source of information about religious matters. If this was so, it could be that the denial of the integrity of the Bible that formed such an important element in scholarly polemic was not maintained so staunchly among Muslims who were not so finely attuned to matters of theology.

No further editions of the work were published, although in a letter to his sister Penelope dated December 1880, French mentions that a Pashto translation was being prepared. He related that a *mullah* from Bannu was motivated to do this after a dream 'in which the prophet David appeared to him, and told him that he was entrusted with the work of publishing them in Pushtu' (Birks, *Life and correspondence*, vol. 2, p. 125). There is no record that this was ever completed or published.

A sign that the book continued to prove useful years after its publication is that in 1911 Elwood Wherry included a complimentary paragraph about it in 'Literature for Muslim readers, in the Urdu language':

> For the use of the preacher to Muslims and for the instruction of the intelligent Muslim reader, there are few books more helpful than Bishop French's *Injíl-i-Dá'úd* (The Gospel of David). It is an exposition of the Messianic Psalms and the prophecies found in them; the whole being treated with reference to the Muḥammadan objections. (p. 148)

A recent reprint, 'produced by a Christian Apologetics group, with the meanings of Persian and difficult Urdu vocabulary given in brackets', also available on-line (https://noor-ul-huda.net/htmlbooks/injil-i-daud/), suggests some continued interest in the book.

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* Thanks to Ali B. Langroudi for translating the Table of Contents from Persian.

Yousaf Sadiq

Philip Meadows Taylor

DATE OF BIRTH 25 September 1808
PLACE OF BIRTH Liverpool, England
DATE OF DEATH 13 May 1876
PLACE OF DEATH Menton, France

BIOGRAPHY

Philip Meadows Taylor was the eldest of the five sons of Philip Taylor and Jane Honoria Mitford. One of his ancestors, the Revd John Taylor of Norwich, was a well-known dissenting preacher but it is not known how far Taylor was influenced by the religious views of this man. As the eldest son of an impoverished middle-class family, he was forced to fend for himself from a very young age. In 1824, he went to India to seek his fortune. He joined the nizam of Hyderabad's army, which was led by English officers and controlled by the British Resident in Hyderabad. Recruited by the Resident as a 'local' officer rather than by the East India Company, he started as a lieutenant and rose to the rank of captain in 1836 and captain commandant in 1843, serving in all for 28 years.

In 1842, Taylor was sent to Shorapoor (present-day Surapur in Karnataka) to govern this small feudal state during the minority of its ruler. He remained there until 1853, the year in which the nizam's regular army was assimilated into the East India Company's army. He was pensioned off, but the British government then employed him as deputy commissioner of the newly acquired district of Nuldrug. In 1857, he was transferred to Buldana in north Berar and was appointed commissioner of Shorapoor in 1858, after its ruler forfeited his kingdom by participating in the Uprising of 1857 against the British. Ill health forced him to return to England in 1860 and he resigned from service in 1861. He settled in Dublin and took up writing as a pastime, and in 1869 he was made a Companion of the Order of Star of India. After visiting India for the last time in 1875, he died on his return home in 1876.

Taylor distinguished himself as an authority on India. Capitalising on his experiences, he wrote seven novels with India as the background, of which five include elements of Christian-Muslim relations, albeit indirectly. He also wrote an autobiography, several articles, three short stories and three works of history and, in addition, he acted as the Indian

correspondent of *The Times* from 1840 to 1843. He is known today mainly for his sympathetic portrayal of Indian characters in his novels.

Taylor's attitude to Islam was ambivalent. He spent a significant portion of his life in the nominal service of a Muslim ruler in a Muslim-dominated state, so naturally he frequently interacted with the local Muslim nobility, while his proficiency in several Indian languages, including Hindustani, Persian, Marathi and Telugu, enabled him to communicate freely. In addition, he married Mary, the daughter of the Eurasian banker William Palmer, whose grandmother was an Indian Muslim princess. Patrick Cadell hints that Mary may have been the offspring of William Palmer and his unnamed Indian mistress, though this has not been proved (*Letters of Philip Meadows Taylor*, p. xx). There is also the unsubstantiated rumour that Taylor kept several Indian mistresses himself, one of whom was a Hindu Marathi woman who converted to Islam (Kincaid, *British social life*, p. 175; Mansukhani, *Philip Meadows Taylor*, p. 92). Evidently, his close familiarity with Muslims rid him of the many misconceptions and prejudices that prevailed in his time, and critics often allege that he was more sympathetic to Muslims than to the members of other religious communities in India. On the other hand, he witnessed frequent Muslim uprisings against the British, particularly the Wahhābī conspiracies of 1833 and 1839 and the Uprising of 1857. These events filled him with anxiety and bitterness. Also, Muslims were opposed to the Anglicisation and Christianisation projects which he espoused as a colonial administrator, making him inimical to Islam, as some of his writings attest.

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Islam and Muslims in Taylor's works

DATE 1839-77
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

None of Taylor's works deals exclusively with Islam or Christian-Muslim relations as such, though he does express views scattered throughout his writings. His treatment of Islam is hardly unconventional and there is no evidence that he was interested in theology or ever studied the Qur'an. Whatever he knew about the religious life and beliefs of Muslims seems to

have been gleaned from direct observations, not studies. His main subject of interest was India, and Islam, which he calls 'Mahomedanism', interested him only because it was one of the 'two great religions of India' (*Student's manual*, p. 8). His real credit lies not in expounding Islamic doctrines but in familiarising his countrymen with the way of life of Indian Muslims. He had an eye for detail, which enabled him to portray the manners and customs of Indians meticulously, and he is justly praised for being unusually sympathetic towards them. Many of the heroes in his novels are Muslims, which was unusual in an age when racial and religious prejudices led to the majority of the British looking down on non-European, non-Christian people. Taylor appears to have been unusually liberal for his time.

The Islam that Taylor describes is essentially 'Indian Islam', Islam as it was practised in India. Though Islam was brought to India from Arabia and Persia, it adapted to the Indian context by incorporating customs and practices prevalent among non-Muslims. It is this that Taylor presents in all its local colours. It must also be recognised that, when he speaks about Christian-Muslim relations, he has in mind relationships between Indian Muslims and European Christians. He seems to give Europeans sole credit for introducing Christianity into India, ignoring the fact that it was probably present in the subcontinent from the first century when an indigenous Christian Church (Mar Thoma) was believed to have been founded by St Thomas in Kerala. However, Taylor does not portray relationships between Indian Muslims and Indian Christians. He focuses only on interactions between Europeans and Indian Muslims.

It should be kept in mind that Taylor wrote as a colonial administrator and his attitude to Islam and Muslims largely depended on the vagaries of the relationships between the British and their Indian subjects. It would thus be futile to look for consistency in Taylor's approach to Islam and Muslims because his opinions altered with changing circumstances. Keeping in view these changing attitudes, his writings can be divided into three periods: pre-Uprising, Uprising, and post-Uprising writings.

Pre-Uprising writings

These works were written in the early years of Taylor's career in India, when he worked in the Nizam of Hyderabad's army. While some of them reflect his youthful enthusiasm for reform, they lack the mature insight that characterises his later works. In general, his attitude to Muslims reflected in these works was one of sympathy. He may not have appreciated

everything he saw in India, but he never failed to admire Indians when it was their due. He believed that, despite their differences in religion, a cordial relationship could exist between the Christian colonisers and their Muslim subjects. The works of this period that represent Islam and the Muslims are discussed below.

Confessions of a Thug was originally published in three volumes in 1839, and a revised edition was published in 1858. Taylor's first novel (though not his first published work), it describes the Indian fraternity of murderous criminals known as the 'thug', who worshipped the goddess Kali and preyed upon travellers. Both Hindu and Muslim thugs were said to worship Kali, irrespective of their own religious loyalties. The protagonist of the novel is Ameer Ali, a Muslim thug who narrates the story of his life to an unnamed white officer simply called 'the Sahib'. The novel describes his exploits, which consist entirely of grisly tales of murders spiced up with brief interludes of romance. Though the protagonist and the major characters are all Muslims, Islam *per se* does not feature prominently in this novel. There are just a few references to Muslim beliefs, such as paradise and the *houri*s (heavenly virgins), though the Prophet and the twelve Shīʿī Imams are invoked again and again by the Muslim characters, as is 'Muriam' or Mary, the mother of Jesus; Taylor was evidently well aware of the fact that both Jesus and Mary are venerated in Islam and he seems to have taken pride in it, as is suggested by the frequent references in his other novels. There is also a photographic description of a Shīʿī Muḥarram procession in Hyderabad (1858 edition, pp. 83-6). Taylor's own views on Islam are not clearly expressed, though at one point he does complain that Islam promotes the 'terrible doctrine' of fatalism among its believers (p. 130). But the novel is not about Islam or Muslims; it is about thuggee, which was regarded by the British as a sort of independent cult, and the novel says virtually nothing about Christian-Muslim relations. Indeed, Christians also form only a marginal presence. Ameer dreams that the 'true believers' will one day rise against the 'Ungrez', the English (p. 48), but he does not actually speak of a jihad against the non-Muslims, and the matter rests at that.

Tippoo Sultaun. A tale of the Mysore war, the second of Taylor's novels, published in 1840 also in three volumes, depicts the war between the British and Tipu Sultan, the ruler of Mysore (r. 1782-99). It describes the adventures of two characters, the Indian Meer Kasim Ali and the British Herbert Campton, through whose eyes Tipu Sultan is jointly portrayed.

The novel contains vivid descriptions of the rituals and practices of Indian Muslims, and Taylor's insight into the belief of the Deccan Muslims is clearly revealed when he makes them invoke local Sufi saints such as Burhanee Sahib, Karwa Owlea and Baba Boodun in addition to universally venerated figures in Islam. He also meticulously describes day-to-day practices of Indian Muslims, such as cracking one's knuckles to ward off an evil eye, giving food to fakirs and reading *Sūrat al-Fātiḥa* for the sick and the dead. It appears that Taylor nurtured some confusion about this sura, the first chapter of the Qur'an. There is the practice of reading it to obtain grace during adversity, but in a footnote he glosses it as an 'offering for the remission of sins and favour of heaven', which is not close to the actual meaning (*Tippoo Sultaun*, vol. 3, p. 232).

Tippoo Sultaun also contains reflections on the fatalism of Indian Muslims, including Tipu. Interestingly, an implicit distinction is made in the novel between the Muslim belief in 'nusseeb' (*naṣīb*, 'fate', 'chance') and the Christian belief in divine providence. In vol. 3, ch. 8, which begins with Taylor's reflections on providence, he shows that belief in 'corrective' providence is healthy as it does not make one inactive, though reliance on 'nusseeb' destroys one's capacity for independent action. The novel also records other Muslim 'superstitions', among which is an account of witchcraft (vol. 3, pp. 225-7). The two wives of Rhyman Khan, Meer Kasim Ali's patron, plan to destroy his favourite third wife Ameena through witchcraft, for which they hire the Muslim witch Kureena. Taylor gives graphic descriptions of the magic rituals she performs, including her invocation of figures from Muslim demonology such as 'Shekh Suddoo' (a malevolent spirit), 'Nursoo' (a *jinn*) and 'Numrood' (Nimrod), as well as 'Shaitan' (Satan). The fact that he knew about these figures shows his familiarity with magic practices in India, though he scoffs at such 'ridiculous and puerile' ceremonies, noting that they would only evoke laughter in English women (vol. 3, p. 233). Here a distinction is made between 'superstitious' Indians and 'rational' English.

Tippoo Sultaun also contains a little about Taylor's attitude towards Christian-Muslim relations. The worst side of Muslim fanaticism is displayed by Tipu Sultan, who is portrayed as a bigot with the words 'burn, slay, destroy, convert' always on his lips (vol. 3, p. 66), and both Hindus and Christians become his victims. Taylor is horrified at his practice of castrating Christian youths and converting them forcibly to Islam and notes that, when he fought a religious war against the English, he called his army 'the army of Islam', inciting them with the rhetoric of jihad and reminding them of the rewards promised to martyrs in the afterlife. Historically, Tipu

fought the British for political reasons, but Taylor exaggerates the religious nature of the conflict, making the officers in Tipu's army as bigoted as he is himself. But amid this atmosphere of fanaticism and hatred, relief is provided by the two heroes. Kasim and Herbert are cordial towards each other from the very beginning and, while Kasim's attitude towards Christians warms on closer acquaintance, Herbert's is respectful to Muslims from the very beginning. Though he contemptuously refers to Islam as a 'base and unholy faith' (vol. 2, p. 152), he admits later that both Christians and Muslims worship the same God. Herbert develops a very close relationship with the aged fakir Sheikh Furreed of Balapoor and, when as a captive he falls ill, the fakir nurses him back to health (vol. 2, pp. 198-200). Forgetting their religious differences, the fakir comes to love Herbert and calls him 'my son' instead of 'Feringhee', or Englishman, an affection that Herbert returns (vol. 2, p. 205). Despite the general atmosphere of bitter hatred, the novel thus presents a ray of hope. Through the actions of his leading characters, Taylor shows that it is ultimately possible to belong to different religions and still live together in peace and harmony.

'Education in India' is an article by Taylor published anonymously in the *British and Foreign Review, or, European Quarterly Journal* in August 1844. It was later discovered by David Finkelstein. In it, Taylor reviews three works, *Minute by the right honourable the Earl of Auckland, governor general of India upon native education* (1841), *The reverend Dr Duff's letters addressed to Lord Auckland on the subject of native education* (1841), and *Pre-eminence of the vernaculars, or the Anglicists answered: being two letters on the education of the people of India* by B.H. Hodgson (1841). In the article, which runs to 32 pages, Taylor expresses his personal views on the Orientalist-Anglicist controversy that was prevalent in India at that time. The Anglicists wanted to promote the study of English language and literature in the academic institutions run by the British government of India and urged the government to withdraw the grant assigned to support the study of classical Indian languages and use it to spread Western education. The Orientalists, who opposed them, felt that English should not be imposed upon people. Taylor sided with the Anglicists, arguing that the classical languages such as Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian were useless and outdated.

Interestingly, to state his case Taylor employs an almost religious rhetoric. For him the ultimate end of learning is to acquire the knowledge of 'truth'. This 'truth' is actually religious in character because, through Western secular education, Hindus and Muslims can be taught to perceive the 'absurdity' of their faiths. Once they become convinced of the errors

of their religions, they can be prevailed upon to embrace Christianity. He advises against direct proselytism, noting that it is likely to fail, maintaining instead that 'Conversion must follow when enlightenment has prepared the way' ('Education in India', p. 173). In this way, Western secular education is to become a tool for spreading Christianity in India.

Although Taylor's arguments were not new, it is interesting that he clearly states his own position with regard to Islam as well as Hinduism, at one point directly condemning the Qur'an for 'its false belief, its sensual promises, its debasing doctrine of fatalism, its lying revelations and impudent assertions of miracle and inspiration' (p. 161). He makes it plain that he wholeheartedly desires the propagation of Christianity in India.

Uprising writings

The Sepoy Mutiny, or Indian Uprising, of 1857 came as an unpleasant shock to the British. It was the first concerted armed movement of Indians against their colonial masters. Originating in the military barracks in Bengal, the violent revolt rapidly spread to several parts of the country. Though the British were successful in suppressing the rebellion, it was not without a great cost to themselves, and the relationship between them and Indians was soured for years as a result. As with many other Englishmen, Taylor's trust in Indians was completely shaken. At this point in his career, he was working directly for the East India Company as a deputy commissioner of the Ceded Districts and, when the mutiny broke out, he was transferred to north Berar to defend this district from the mutineers. Though he never faced any personal danger himself, he was kept in a constant state of alarm. This trying time turned his mind against all Indians, including Muslims. In two works written in this period, he tries to trace the causes of the Mutiny and suggest some future course of action for the British government.

Letters from Meadows Taylor, Esq, deputy-commissioner of the Ceded Districts in the Deccan written during the Indian Rebellion, 1857 comprises four letters written to his family during the Sepoy Mutiny. Originally printed by John Edward Taylor for private circulation only, they were later appended to Taylor's autobiography, *The story of my life*, as 'Letters home'. They cover the period from 21 June to 26 September 1857. In them, Taylor tries to analyse the causes of the Mutiny. He mainly blames the Hindu sepoys (soldiers) for starting the revolt, though he does not spare

the Muslims. Of particular interest is the letter dated 7 September 1857, in which he sees the rebellion as the manifestation of a Manichaean clash between civilisation and savagery. He feels that 'civilisation is pressing hard on Hindooism, perhaps also on Mahomedanism', implying that Hinduism and Islam are incompatible with (European) civilisation (*The story of my life*, 1878, p. 347). He criticises Indian Muslims for supporting the Hindus in this rebellion, noting that the 'Hindoostanee' or the north Indian Muslims were 'much Hindooised' (p. 347). In another letter, dated 26 September 1857, Taylor expresses his apprehensions with regard to the Muslim soldiers in the Madras army, calling them 'bigoted', 'turbulent' and 'unfaithful', and claiming that their allegiance lies actually with 'the cause of Islam' (p. 354).

The first of the letters, dated 21 June 1857, is the most telling. In this, he describes the Mutiny as 'a great struggle between light and darkness, civilisation and savages' (p. 340). It is thus depicted in veritably biblical terms, as an event pre-ordained by the Christian God whose ultimate purpose is to establish the triumph of Christianity in India. Taylor's rhetoric is highly passionate, and almost contradicts the liberal benevolent tone found in his earlier works.

Memorandum on the future government of India, 40 pages long, printed by John Edward Taylor in 1858, was for private circulation like the four Mutiny letters. Here, Taylor sets out his suggestions for the governance of India after the Sepoy Mutiny, and again he gives vent to condemnation of Hinduism and Islam. He expresses his deep distrust of Muslims, arguing that their very religion teaches them to hate Christians. Though he advises the government to include 'negroes' (Africans) in the Indian army to counterbalance the power of Indian soldiers, he insists that any African embracing Islam should be immediately deported because he believes that it is impossible for an African to become a Muslim and remain loyal to the British (*Memorandum*, p. 30). As in the letters, he blames 'Pagan and Mahomedan savagery' (p. 41) for igniting the rebellion and further suggests that the Mutiny came as God's 'chastisement' to the British for failing to civilise (or Christianise) the Indians. In the concluding section, he advises the colonial rulers to declare boldly that they will maintain a 'Christian government' in India, and also advises them to allow no 'direct encouragement' to 'heathenism', but to let it face the challenge from 'open and professed Christianity' (p. 43). Taylor thus, in effect, asks the government to give up its secular character.

In short, the works written by Taylor during the Sepoy Mutiny reveal his (temporary) distrust of both Hindus and Muslims, though he quickly recovered from this, as is evident from his later writings.

Post-Uprising writings

These works were written during the last stage of Taylor's life when he had retired from service and settled in Dublin. They differ in tone from the earlier works, suggesting that he had mellowed a great deal with age and experience. His criticism of Islam is less severe and, though he still condemns Muslim fundamentalism, he believes that it is possible for ordinary Muslims to live in peace with non-Muslims. An interesting feature of the novels of this period is that they portray successful interracial and interfaith marriages, rare features of the colonial literature of the time. Taylor seems to have believed it is possible for individuals to rise above their narrow religious identities and to adopt a tolerant humanitarian view of life.

Ralph Darnell was published in three volumes in 1865. It tells the story of the war between the East India Company and Siraj-ud-daulah, nawab of Bengal, whose defeat in the Battle of Plassey in 1757 led to the foundation of British power in India. The protagonist, Ralph Darnell, participates in this battle and, after the defeat and death of the nawab, marries his widow, Noor-ool-Nissa. *Ralph Darnell* contains little about the religious beliefs of Muslims, even though some of the major characters in it, such as Siraj and his Afghan mistress Sozun, are Muslims. However, Taylor does distinguish between the temperaments of Indian and Afghan Muslims, so that, while the fatalism of the Indian Muslims makes them rely excessively on astrology, the sturdy Afghans trust more to the strength of their arm. The novel does not say much about Christian-Muslim relations either. Siraj certainly hates the English, but not on religious grounds. Unlike Taylor's Tipu, he does not project himself as a champion of Islam; he respects Christian prayer books because they contain the message of Jesus, who is venerated in Islam, and he hates the English simply because they do not obey him in all matters. True, there are bigoted characters like the nawab's advisor Moulvee Wullee-oo-Deen, who hates the Christians bitterly for being uncircumcised, but such characters are few in number.

The novel also portrays the friendship between Siraj's wife Noor-ool-Nissa and the English captive Julia Wharton, which helps Julia to get rid of her prejudices against Islam. *Ralph Darnell* is exceptional in being the first

Anglo-Indian novel to portray a successful interfaith and interracial marriage between a European Christian man and an Indian Muslim woman. Significantly, Ralph marries Noor-ool-Nissa in a Muslim 'nika' ceremony and he does not insist on her conversion to Christianity. Such marriages were considered anathema in Anglo-India and, in depicting it, Taylor seems to have been pretty advanced for his times. Some scholars have theorised that his attitude was coloured by his witnessing of a successful interfaith marriage in his wife's family (see David Finkelstein, 'Study of the works of Philip Meadows Taylor', p. 154).

A noble queen. A romance of Indian history was Taylor's last novel. It was published in serialised form in both *The Overland Mail* and *The Week's News* between February and December 1875, and a three-volume edition was brought out after Taylor's death in 1878. It recounts the story of Chand Bibi (1550-99), regent of Bijapur and later regent of Ahmednagar, who died while bravely defending Ahmednagar against Mughal invasion, though it deals only peripherally with her, concentrating instead on two groups of characters whose stories are tenuously linked to her. One group comprises the Portuguese priest Francis D'Almeida and his sister Donna Maria, who suffer persecution at the hands of his superior Dom Diego de Fonseca only to emerge triumphant in the end, and the other group comprises the blind fakir Ahmud Ali and his granddaughter Zora, persecuted by the villainous Osman Beg, who longs to possess Zora. After much suffering and hardship, Osman is punished and Zora is united in marriage with her lover, Abbas Khan, a noble in the court of Chand Bibi.

This novel stands out from the rest of Taylor's works for the detailed descriptions of Muslim rituals it contains. For instance, there is a meticulous description of the rituals performed by a novice Sufi during his initiation into the 'Turreequt' (*ṭarīqat*, the 'way' of the mystics). Also, when Ahmud Ali decides formally to enter the holy order, he goes on a pilgrimage with Zora to the tomb of the saint Syud Geesoo Duraz (Hazrat Khwaja Banda Nawaz Gaisu Daraz) in Gulbarga, and he is initiated on the way into the order by a 'Mushaekh' (sage) after an elaborate ceremony. Taylor vividly describes this ceremony, in which Ahmud Ali is made to entertain the fakirs with a feast, have the hair of his body clipped, and required to repeat the 'four forms of belief' (*kalmas*). After this, he is formally recognised as a fakir or religious mendicant and then, at the second stage, he is asked to confess his sins and is then presented with the 'shujra' (*shijra*), the list of holy predecessors, and is made a *Mushaekh* (*A noble queen*, 1896,

pp. 291-3). These descriptions are very accurate and show Taylor's extraordinary familiarity with the rituals and principles of the Sufis. The final stage is reached when Ahmud Ali arrives at his destination in Gulbarga, where he delivers a passionate sermon in a mosque, which makes the people recognise him as a 'wallee' (*walī*) or saint of the highest order. Taylor's remark about this sermon is worth noting. He asserts: 'Be not offended with me, O Christian reader, for such things can be taught out of the book you have been told to hold in scorn, apart from the mystery and sensual doctrines which are so strongly mingled with them' (*A noble queen,* p. 304). This comment seems ironic in the light of Taylor's tirade against the Qur'an in his article 'Education in India'. It appears that he had revised his views by this stage of his life.

He also seems to have taken a softer stance towards so-called native 'superstitions'. The novel contains an exorcism scene in which the blind fakir exorcises an evil spirit from the body of a young girl through charms and incantations. Taylor comments in parentheses that he had personally witnessed such an incident during his stay in India, and he does not dismiss it out of hand as an example of native superstition, but describes it as one of the several 'curious and interesting episodes' of Indian life (*A noble queen*, p. 282).

The novel also portrays the close relationship between 'Nazarenes' (Christians) and 'Moors' (Muslims). Chand Bibi herself is amicable towards the Christian missionaries, and compares them favourably with the clerics of her own faith. Other characters, such as Queen Taj-ool-nissa, Nawab Dilawer Khan and Abbas Khan, are also friendly to the Christians. As in other novels by Taylor, a strong bond develops between the two leading characters, the Muslim girl Zora and the Christian Maria. This easily transcends religious boundaries. It is true that there are characters such as Dom Diego and the Peer on either side, who will stop at nothing to revile the other's faith. But there are also men such as Ahmud Ali and Francis who treat each other civilly, despite both being clerics, and even share the same residence for a while without any feeling of bitterness developing between them. As a matter of fact, the Muslim appears to be more liberal than the Christian, who, being 'a soldier of the Church militant' (p. 175), can never admire Islam, though he does not revile it either. Nor does he entirely trust Muslims, not even his close friend Nawab Dilawer Khan of Moodgul. The fakir, on the other hand, not only admires Christians but also respects their religion. The following observation of the fakir is very important: 'Feringis are men of the Book, and believe in the Lord Jesus and his mother Mary, [...] they have not our light, for that came later in

the world; but their light is to be honoured' (pp. 69-70). When Francis and Maria take temporary shelter in the household of the fakir, the possibility of an interfaith exchange emerges because, as Taylor points out, Ahmud Ali enjoys discussing religion with Francis (and also enjoys listening to Francis and Maria praying). However, the exchange never takes place because the Christians fail to learn anything substantial from Islam, seeing it as their duty, even in this house, to preach Christianity to non-Christians. Maria preaches indirectly to Zora, as she had preached to the women in the house of Dilawer Khan, by teaching her Christian hymns and prayers, and giving her 'a little cross' as a parting gift. She even expresses the wish that Zora might have converted to Christianity (p. 60). The fakir, on the other hand, does not try to convert the Christians to Islam and emerges as less prejudiced than the Christians, even though Taylor might not have intended his readers to see the matter in this light.

The story of my life, Taylor's last work, was his autobiography covering the period 1808-74. It was edited by his daughter, Alice Taylor, and published posthumously in 1877. It contains a preface by his cousin, Henry Reeve, in which he provides biographical information not contained in the main text, while the final chapter, which details the last years of Taylor's life, was written by Alice.

The work brings into focus Taylor's relationship with Muslims. As an English officer working in an Indian state, he had to interact frequently with Indians from all classes and creeds. A significant number of them were Muslims. It is to his credit that he was neither supercilious nor arrogant in his conduct and hence could mingle with Indians with apparent ease. Early in the autobiography, he records with gratitude the hospitality he received from the family of the Nawab Futteh Jah Khan when he lay ill (p. 35). The good impression he formed at that young age seems to have lasted throughout his life.

Taylor intimates that he enjoyed the company of his Muslim friends in Hyderabad, and he had a particularly warm relationship with the aged 'Begum Sahib', the Muslim mother of William Palmer, whose daughter, Mary, he married. He seems to have been unusually liberal for his time in that he was deeply curious about the Muslim way of life. While en route to England on furlough, he wanted to visit Mecca disguised as a Muslim pilgrim, and a Muslim merchant from Jeddah named Salim, who had become his friend, promised to help him (p. 86). The plan was frustrated by the local authorities but he did visit several Muslim shrines in India.

Interestingly, Taylor does not talk much in his autobiography about any wish for the conversion of Muslims to Christianity. This is different from his policy towards the Hindus, for whom he does recommend conversion. He seems guarded when he expresses his opinions on Islam in this work, perhaps because he feared the censure of the educated Indian Muslims who would read it.

Besides these works, Muslims also appear as characters in Taylor's novels *Tara, a Mahratta tale* (1863) and *Seeta* (1873), and also in the short story 'Legends of the Dekhan. The fatal armlet' (1841). Observations on Muslims can also be found in his non-fictional works *Architecture at Beejapoor, an ancient Mahometan capital in the Bombay Presidency* (1866) and *A student's manual on the history of India* (1870), though they say almost nothing about Christian-Muslim relations. They repeat the usual commonplaces, and contain nothing unfamiliar or striking about Muslims or Islam.

SIGNIFICANCE

Philip Meadows Taylor was not the only 19th-century Anglo-Indian writer, or British expatriate writer in India, to represent Islam and Muslims in his writings. While Christian missionaries of that time commented on the doctrines of Islam in their religious tracts, many Anglo-Indian novelists represented Muslims as characters in their novels. Taylor's immediate predecessor, William Browne Hockley (1792-1860), may be considered an example. Beginning with *Pandurang Hari* (1826), he wrote five novels in which Muslims appear as characters. Representations of Muslims can also be found in other novels of the time. James Blythe Paton's *Bijli the dancer* (1898) is a unique novel with an all-Muslim cast. All these novelists portray Muslims more or less accurately in their works but what makes Taylor stand out is his greater degree of accuracy in depicting Muslim life. He makes Muslims speak in their own particular fashion rather than as Englishmen, with common Arabic and Persian words interspersed in their English. He was also more sympathetic to Muslims than the other novelists, so much so that some of his contemporaries complained he had idealised the Muslim characters in his novels.

Taylor's works did not leave any lasting impression on the minds of English readers. Ordinary British readers of his time continued to remain more or less indifferent towards India and its inhabitants, a fact lamented by some of the reviewers of his novels; see particularly the review of *Tara* in the *Calcutta Review* 139 (1864) 193-8, p. 193. Nor is there any indication that his writings affected the religious and social policies of the British

government of India, which anyway was modelled on the principles of the secular state. It is true that colonial writers who followed Taylor generally favoured Muslims over other religious communities in India, but that was less due to his influence than to other factors. The basic similarities between Christianity and Islam made Islam more palatable to them, and added to this was the British policy of divide and rule that played Muslims off against Hindus. Early 20th-century colonial writers generally praised Muslims more forcefully in order to highlight their disapproval of Hindus. Taylor, of course, did not subscribe to this sort of procedure. He was more or less friendly towards members of both religious communities. It must also be remembered that, by the mid-20th century, his views on India and its people had become outdated and obsolete.

Despite a lack of lasting influence, in his own time Taylor's works did affect the outlook of some of his contemporaries. Comparing Islam with Hinduism, Henry Reeve, who reviewed *Tara* for the *Edinburgh Review* (118 [1863] 542-51), found it a 'far more enlightened faith' than Hinduism (p. 544). He was Taylor's cousin and close confidant and so his opinion carries extra weight. Some reviewers of his novels adored the Muslim characters. Speaking of Zora as if she were a real person, the reviewer of *A noble queen* for *The Athenaeum* (issue 2630 [1878] 378-9) stated, 'Her abnegation of self, shown in her devotion to her grandfather and perfect trust in "Allah", are lessons that may well be taken to heart by many a Christian damsel' (p. 378). Alexander Shand, who reviewed this novel for the *Edinburgh Review* (147 [1878] 474-94), commented that 'the sentiments the author puts in the mouth of the Syud [Zora's grandfather] would do honour to the most liberal-minded of Christian missionaries' (p. 480). Such observations show that, through his sympathetic portrayals of the Muslim characters, Taylor was able to foster feelings of some warmth and respect towards Muslims, which was no mean achievement.

Of course, not all were so impressed. There were some readers who complained that Taylor had idealised the Muslims. The reviewer of *Tara* for the *Calcutta Review* (39 [1864] 193-8) maintained that a liberal Muslim like Fazil was inconceivable in reality. Likewise, the reviewer of *A noble queen* for the *Pall Mall Gazette* (27 [1878] 12) argued that Zora resembled more an English girl than a Muslim. The scepticism of these reviewers shows that Taylor was not as successful in rooting out the prevailing prejudices of his countrymen as he may have hoped. His works have lost even more of their relevance today, when opinion about the 'religious other' has become more liberal and life in India has become more familiar to outsiders.

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Ayusman Chakraborty

David Wesley Thomas

DATE OF BIRTH 1 January 1833
PLACE OF BIRTH Sherbrooke, Quebec Province, Canada
DATE OF DEATH 20 December 1909
PLACE OF DEATH Richmond County, Virginia, USA

BIOGRAPHY

David Wesley Thomas, son of Samuel and Julia Thomas, was a Methodist missionary in north India from 1862 to 1887. He was born in Sherbrooke, Quebec Province, Canada, on 1 January 1833. In 1836, his family moved to Bangor, New York, where his father died in 1842. He graduated from the State Normal School at Albany in 1857 and was ordained in the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1858, joining the Black River Conference. He married Mary Annable Law on 27 December 1860. Ordained an elder on 14 August 1861, he sailed with his wife to India, arriving in Calcutta on 15 January 1862.

He served at Shahjahanpur for about six months in 1862 before being appointed later that year to Bareilly, where he spent 27 years as superintendent of missions. He founded the girls' orphanage, organised famine relief and established an industrial school and a theological seminary, which became a lasting monument to his vision. He also secured land for what became the Woman's Hospital at Bareilly. He received an honorary MA from Genesee College in 1868 and a DD from Syracuse University in 1887. Retiring in 1900, he settled near Richmond, Virginia, where he died on 20 December 1900 and was buried in Hollywood cemetery. He was survived by his wife and brother, N.S. Thomas (Annable, 'The Rev. David W. Thomas', p. 655).

Judging by their titles, in addition to the work discussed below, two other works written by Thomas that could have been intended for Muslim readers were *Tashrīḥ al-taslīs* ('Explanation of the Trinity'), which was presumably an attempt to explain this fundamental doctrine to Muslims, and *Tafsīr-i Kitāb-i Paidaish* ('Commentary on the Book of Genesis'). If these could be found (there is apparently a copy of the latter in the India Office Library in London), they might contribute further to the limited knowledge available about this prolific missionary (Javid Alī, *Bartānavī mustashriqīn*, p. 24).

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Muʿjizāt-i ḥaqq wa bāṭil
'True and false miracles'

DATE 1877
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Urdu

DESCRIPTION

Thomas wrote this work to prove the authenticity and central importance of the miracles of Jesus in Christian theology. He also sought to denounce the notion of miracles in other religions, such as the ancient Graeco-Roman tradition, Islam and Hinduism. He first presented its contents in two lectures delivered at a district conference for local preachers of the American Methodist Episcopal Church in India in 1877 (he does not say where). In the first lecture he examines the miracles mentioned in the Bible, and in the second he discusses false miracles recorded in various traditions, including polytheism, Islam, and Roman Catholicism. The book is 167 pages long and is divided into two parts.

The first part explores four main questions: What is the true identity of a revealed religion? What is the true meaning of a miracle? What are the major objections to the authenticity of miracles? How can the genuineness of Christ's miracles be proved? While every religion claims to be revealed, this can only be proved by miracles (p. 5). A miracle, by definition, is an extraordinary event that is beyond human capacity and is inexplicable by natural or scientific laws which God has effected to prove any decrees or the authenticity of a prophet (p. 7).

Thomas sets the stage by presenting some frequently raised objections to miracles, which he answers with logical, historical and scriptural arguments to demonstrate the genuineness of Christ's miracles. For example, the strongest objections to the possibility of miracles are that they abrogate the laws of nature, are contrary to human experience and cannot be proved solely upon the basis of observation. Thomas counters by asserting that a genuine miracle is not the abrogation of natural laws but rather the application of a higher law so that the object is transformed from a lower to a higher state (pp. 21-2). Concerning their authenticity, he argues that the witnesses to Jesus's miracles offered undeniable proof of three kinds: first, there were sufficient witnesses to verify the event and they are preserved in four different written sources; second, all four witnesses are unanimous in their statements; third, there is no reason to suspect that the Apostles lied because there was no benefit to them or opportunity to attain respect, wealth or power by forging false miracles in the name of Christ. On the contrary, the reader can readily see that the Apostles suffered severe persecutions when they spread the good news of Christ's resurrection (pp. 27-8). It follows that Christ's miracles were from God and that they established Christianity as a divine religion.

The chief signs of the divinity of Christ were his miracles. They occurred to fulfil Old Testament prophecies, and they included his birth, death, resurrection and ascension, all miraculous in nature. In addition, Christ performed miracles in order to demonstrate his status as a divine messenger. In the New Testament (John 2:19-22), Jesus predicted his resurrection from the dead on the third day after his death as proof of his status (pp. 37-8). Thomas concludes this section with the assertion that none of the miracles performed by Jesus could be performed by anyone else, and this is how Jesus knew and demonstrated to others that he and his powers were from God (p. 46).

In this part, Thomas also questions the veracity and viability of certain qur'anic teachings such as those concerning polygamy and warfare, which he contrasts with those of the New Testament. Echoing William Muir's (1819-1905; *CMR* 24, 666-96) disparaging assessment of Muḥammad, he asserts that both the Qur'an and its messenger failed to meet the criteria required for acceptance as revelation and prophet.

In the second part, Thomas gives a brief description of different types of false miracles, including those of the Greeks, Romans, Hindus and Muslims. He compares the miracles of Jesus with those claimed by other religions and concludes that the latter do not meet the criteria for true

miracles and must therefore be false. In Islam, there are two sources for miracles, the Qur'an and Hadith. The miracles of Muḥammad as recounted in the Hadith cannot be accepted because the Hadith were fabricated, as the 'majority of the Muslim theologians' accept. For example, they state that animals, mountains, trees and stones prostrated before Muḥammad, but such miracles are illogical and futile, and the evidence given to prove them is weak and inauthentic (pp. 118-19).

Thomas then turns to the miracles of Muḥammad recorded in the Qur'an, of which Muslim theologians say there are five: the challenge to produce a verse or sura like any in the Qur'an itself; the splitting of the moon; the night journey from Mecca to Jerusalem; God's help at the Battle of the Trench through a bitter wind and invisible forces; and God's help through angels at the Battle of Badr. Thomas rejects the authenticity of all of these, for example, the miracle of Muḥammad's night journey because his wife Ḥafsa, who was supposedly a witness, claimed that he did not move from his bed. Thomas argues that the journey was merely a dream, and a journey in a dream is not a miracle. Furthermore, Muḥammad was the only narrator of the story and authenticity cannot be proved on the basis of a single witness (pp. 126-7).

Concerning the miracle during the Battle of Badr, Thomas argues that the events referred to do not qualify as miraculous because there are multiple other examples of much smaller armies defeating opponents of a greater number, including Sir Charles James Napier's (1782-1853) victory in 1842 against a great army even though he had many fewer fighting men than the Muslims who defeated their enemies at Badr (pp. 128-9). Thomas completely rejects the miracles recounted in the Qur'an and Hadith, and accepts only the miracles of the Bible as true.

SIGNIFICANCE

Thomas belonged to a time when religious truth was generally assumed to be restricted to one's own religion alone. The teachings of other religions were not only labelled as false, but their adherents and founders were thought inferior to Christians and Jesus Christ.

The book does not appear to have attracted much attention, either from Christians or Muslims.

PUBLICATIONS

D.W. Thomas, *Muʿjizāt-i ḥaqq wa bāṭil*, Lucknow, 1877

Farman Ali

Robert Durie Osborn

DATE OF BIRTH 1835
PLACE OF BIRTH Agra
DATE OF DEATH 1889
PLACE OF DEATH London

BIOGRAPHY

Robert Osborn was born in Agra, the son of an officer in the army of the East India Company. After attending school in Walthamstow, he followed his father into the service of the East India Company in May 1854 as an officer of the Bengal Native Infantry. Like most of the other administrators and soldiers in north India in his time, he had direct experience of the Uprising of 1857, besides being a commanding officer in actions against minor rebels. His other experience of engagement against Muslims came from the Afghan campaign in 1879. He rose in rank over time, from lieutenant to captain and major, and finally retired with the honorary rank of lieutenant colonel in May 1879.

G.C. Boase (1829-97) speaks of Osborn as an avid writer on matters involving religion and politics from an early age. He recounts how Osborn was known in his time to be a keen researcher on India, where, for the 14 years he spent there, he digested 'the tangled materials for his two works', *Islam under the Arabs* and *Islam under the khalifs of Baghdad*, because things were changing fast and it was not always easy to sift through the material to offer a 'lucid and graceful treatment of a perplexing subject'. As a soldier serving the East India Company and then the British Empire, Osborn was in an especially difficult position because of the sympathy he felt for Indian Muslims and, more generally, 'the rights of the native Indians'. His disapproval of the empire's treatment of Indians might have been responsible for his early retirement from the army. Boase suggests that Osborn was of the view that the British were responsible for the 'outraged native sentiments' and for the provocation of 'the Afghan war of 1879'.

Even though Osborn was born in India, he chose to retire to Hampstead, where he continued to write and became a 'London correspondent' for the *Statesman*, which was published in Calcutta. The topics on which he wrote, especially in 1879-80, involved his disagreement with the policies of

Lord Beaconsfield (1804-81). He also wrote about India for *The Scotsman*, *Nation* and *Contemporary Review*.

Both *Islam under the Arabs* and *Islam under the khalifs of Baghdad* include chapters that had previously been published as articles in journals. He planned a third monograph on Indian Muslims, though this was not completed. 'Christendom and Islam', one of his contributions to journals that was not included in the books, deserves separate treatment. His works show that, besides being a soldier, he was a serious thinker on matters involving religion, especially Islam.

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

'Christendom and Islam'

DATE 1873
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

This 36-page article, which appeared in *The Calcutta Review* in 1873, is presented as a review of Syed Ameer Ali's (1849-1928; *CMR* 24, 863-79) *A critical examination of the life and teachings of Muhammad*, published earlier in that year as a response to William Muir's (*CMR* 24, 666-96) *Life of Mahomet* (1861). In fact, it moves from hostile criticism of Ameer Ali's work to a vindication of Christianity as the inspiration of the progress made in European society and as the only true faith, as is demonstrated by this progress. Osborn makes clear from the start that, while he admires Ameer Ali as an author, he cannot accept the argument of his book. This is both because it presents Muḥammad and Islam in idealistic terms that defy historical fact –

> the Prophet, it appears, who had nine wives, and was not content even with that number, was, in truth [as Ameer Ali presents him], an ardent champion

> of monogamy; the religion of the Sword was really a species of Quakerism which waded knee-deep in blood through half Europe and Asia with no other desire than to administer the kiss of peace to all humanity; slavery, it need hardly be said, was 'completely abolished' by Islam (p. 275)

– and also because it directs immoderate criticisms at Christianity from 'a very lofty position' (p. 276). Osborn sees the book as an open challenge to Christianity and, in return, he intends to ascertain whether Ameer Ali's account of Muḥammad's life and teachings is accurate and whether this could form the foundation of faith in the modern world.

With regard to Muḥammad, Osborn allows that, until his migration to Medina, he was a figure to be admired, but in Medina he committed crimes, killing individuals and groups, that cannot be condoned. It is no good saying that he acted according to the 'the lights' of his time, because Ameer Ali is arguing that Muḥammad's morality was above that of Jesus, whereas in reality he exhibited 'the vengeful instincts of the Bedouin chief' (p. 281). It is the same with his relations with women. Osborn is particularly incensed by Ameer Ali's attributing of Jesus's attitude towards women to the influence of the Essenes, about whom neither Ameer Ali nor anyone else knew enough to make such a link. But Muḥammad was only acting 'neither better nor worse than might be expected from an Arab chief of that day, who perceived the ill-consequences of unlimited polygamy, but never thought of the relations between the sexes as anything but a felicitous arrangement for increasing the pleasures of men' (p. 283). The problem is that, since the Qur'an is supposedly 'the very word, the spoken thought of God' (p. 285), its teachings about women have become part of the fabric of Islam. This points to another intractable problem, which is that the God who supposedly revealed 'the moral laws which cramped and fettered men at every turn' (p. 287) must be above them, hence the inscrutable God of Islam, who acts in arbitrary ways. These, among other aspects of Muḥammad's life and teachings, show why he 'cannot be accepted by the West as even a particularly high type of humanity' (p. 287), let alone a prophetic exemplar who was guided by God.

From this criticism of Muḥammad, Osborn next turns to what he intends as the real thrust of his review. Ameer Ali, he argues, attempts to present Muḥammad and Islam as epitomes of moral teachings that can be accepted on their own merits, but Osborn argues that religious teachings, whether Christian or Muslim, can only be judged, not on the basis of any authority claimed through such evidence as miracles or divine intervention, but through the results they have produced in society. As he sees

it, only the example and teachings of Christ have produced progress in society, and thus the palpable progress that is associated with Christianity must be a sign that it alone comes from God.

> Can generation after generation be led into an ever higher life, and fuller development, while their mental food from childhood is a gross and palpable falsehood? Do we find this progress in lands where Christianity has not been known? Does such progress generally accompany truth or falsehood? Such questions as these every one will perceive, cannot be pushed aside offhand. (p. 294)

Osborn goes on to argue that there was something unique in the Hebrew society of the Old Testament that produced moral good, a sense of the presence of God directing and inspiring them. This presence took a unique form in the person of Jesus Christ, whose life and teachings were convincingly attested to by Paul and later by the four evangelists, whose separate and in places different accounts identify them as independent witnesses of the one unique person of Christ. The resurrection of Christ, above all, is a vindication of all that he stood for and did, and a demonstration that God is love and intends love as the principle of relations between humans (p. 308). This has informed European society, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to achieve the progress it has:

> It is 'the Spirit of Christ' that has abolished slavery, mitigated the horrors of war, made the relief of the poor and destitute an imperative duty on those that have abundance; sanctified domestic ties; and leavened the thought of Europe to a degree immeasurably greater than the acts. (p. 309)

The actions of God, Jesus and the Spirit throughout history are demonstrations of the triune nature of God, and this is confirmed by the triple nature of the human being (pp. 309-10).

In these last pages of the article, Osborn moves away from his examination of Syed Ameer Ali's book to offer a testimony to the truth of Christianity based on the evidence of the progress and enlightenment achieved in ancient Israel and modern Europe and also within human lives. It would seem that he leaves behind his criticisms of Islam because it has demonstrably failed to bring about the patently superior results that are due to Christianity. He shows in all that he says about Islam a considerable amount of knowledge about Muḥammad as an individual and the teachings associated with him. He also indicates that he regards Muḥammad as very much a man of his time and place, who possessed elements of moral refinement but, at least in his latter years in Medina, gave

in to the temptations of power. He has no doubt at all that the Qur'an was Muḥammad's own composition.

SIGNIFICANCE

While Osborn's stated purpose in this article is to criticise Ameer Ali's book, the article is in fact an unsympathetic assessment of the foundations of Islam itself, which gradually turns into an apology for Christianity as a divinely inspired religion and the only one that can ensure progress in society, as the recently history of Europe has convincingly shown. In taking the stance he does, Osborn shows himself to be a product of his own circumstances and time who accepts the material progress from which he benefits as entirely good and self-evidently the model for all societies throughout the world. This unalloyed Christian confidence leads him to argue against the claims of Islam with what amounts in places to ferocity.

The article stands as a prime example of the self-assurance that led Europeans in India to regard their rule of the country as a responsibility given to them by God to modernise the society and convert its people to Christianity.

PUBLICATIONS

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Islam under the Arabs and *Islam under the khalifs of Baghdad*

DATE 1872-8

ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

Islam under the Arabs and *Islam under the khalifs of Baghdad* are the first two of a planned three-volume series to be completed by *Islam in India*, which was to examine the religion 'as a spiritual force acting upon and being influenced by the indigenous religion' (*Islam under the Arabs*, p. xi), though this last volume never appeared. Osborn gives his reason for writing the works in the preface of the first volume. He explains that just as the Indian soldiers whom he and other English officers commanded knew nothing about British ways, so the British commanders knew nothing about the Indians. He set himself to write about the background of the Indian soldiers but, as he began, he realised that he could find no ready

explanation for the presence of Islam in India so he resolved to trace its history. Then, as he started to do so, he found that the distinctive character of Indian Islam only made sense if it was traced from the beginning with Muḥammad and the Qur'an. In *Islam under the khalifs* he expresses this more succinctly: 'The series, as a whole, may be regarded as an attempt to discover the veritable character of Islam, by an investigation of its actual results in the countries dominated by its influence' (p. iii).

Islam under the Arabs, which took Osborn seven years to write leading up to its publication in 1876, focuses on the origins of Islam in the Arabian Peninsula and its progress as a religion up to the end of the Umayyad dynasty ('the house of Ommaya') in the mid-8th century. He stresses that he is writing about the religion of Islam rather than the events in the lives of Muḥammad and the rulers who came after him (p. viii) and so he has

> passed over in silence, or with only passing mention, the conquests of the Arabs and their interminable wars with the Byzantine empire, because, important as these are historically, they had no influence on Muhammadan theology. Muhammadan theology was the product of internal discords. (pp. vii-ix)

The volume is xii + 414 pages long and comprises 14 chapters divided into three main parts: 'Islam', covering the time of Muḥammad and the earliest Muslim community in Mecca and Medina; 'The Fatimides', covering early Shīʿī sects, particularly the Qarmatians, the Fāṭimids and the Assassins; and 'The khalifs of the House of Ommaya', tracing the Umayyad dynasty from the pre-Islamic clan of Umayya, the period of its rule and its overthrow by the ʿAbbāsids. It is clearly not a linear history but instead traces the early development of various branches of Islam and the consequences of their hostility towards one another. It is based on both primary Muslim sources and also recent European histories (listed on pp. 413-14), including Gustav Weil's *Geschichte der Chalifen* (1846-51) and Armand-Pierre Caussin de Perceval's *Histoire des arabes* (1848); he became aware of Reinhart Dozy's *Histoire des musulmans d'Espagne* (1861) only as he was finishing. All the facts and judgements taken from these works are fixed within the frame of Osborn's own judgement about the nature of Islam as a faith that has been troubled by fundamental flaws from the outset. Several chapters were earlier published as articles, including 'Muhammad at Mekka' (part 1, ch. 1) and 'Muhammad at Medina' (part 1, ch. 2), which appeared in two volumes of the *Calcutta Review* in 1875.

As in the review article, 'Christendom and Islam', which he had published only three years before this, Osborn leaves little doubt here about

his personal attitude towards the subjects he discusses, and he frequently states his views with the outspoken candour that derives from knowing his readers are likely to concur. This is a book intended not to foster respectful relations but to assist understanding of the ways Muslims think. At the very beginning he makes clear that he is convinced Muḥammad was a fraud:

> There are modern biographers of the Prophet who would have us believe that he was not conscious of falsehood when making these assertions [that the stories in the Qur'an were revealed to him]. He was under a hallucination, of course, but he believed what he said. This, to me, is incredible. The legends in the Koran are derived chiefly from Talmudic sources. Muhammad must have learned them from some Jew near Mekka. To work them up into the form of rhymed suras, to put his own peculiar doctrines in the mouth of Jewish patriarchs, the Virgin Mary, and the infant Jesus (who talks like a good Moslem the moment after his birth), must have required time, thought, and labour. It is not possible that the man who had done this could have forgotten all about it, and believed that these legends had been brought to him ready prepared by an angelic visitor. Muhammad was guilty of falsehood under circumstances where he deemed the end justified the means. (pp. 19-20)

This is one element in his overall picture of Muḥammad, who he believed, like many other 19th-century historians of Islam, was sincere in the first years of his ministry but in later years shaped his proclamations to suit his own designs, with the implication that the Qur'an was entirely his own work.

Osborn sees Muḥammad's move from Mecca to Medina as a fundamental turning point, first for the religious reason that, while he was in Mecca, he could relate stories about earlier prophets who also appear in the Bible without being seriously challenged by anyone who doubted him, while in Medina among the Jewish tribes he could be contradicted and corrected (p. 43), and second for the practical reason that, in Medina, he intended to turn his followers into a force that could help him gain 'universal dominion. The character of the Koran becomes sadly altered under the pressure of these new necessities. Its dreary and monotonous pages are no longer relieved by those flashes of inspiration which occasionally cheer us in the suras delivered at Mekka' (p. 45).

In all that Muḥammad did in Medina, Osborn sees him as no more than the Bedouin chief he had described earlier in 'Christendom and Islam':

> He was the Bedouin Arab, and in this fact lies the secret of his success. The predominant characteristics of the ancient Arab were an almost inconceivable vain-glory and self conceit. He was never weary of contemplating and boasting of his own perfections. Muhammad was precisely the Prophet to win such a race. (p. 92)

Moving on to examine the first century of Islam, Osborn expresses as much disappointment about its religious character as he does about Muḥammad. At the centre of its failure as a civilisation, he thinks, was its static and unspontaneous character, which was the product of its inability to change and develop as new circumstances demanded:

> The khalif [...] was the vicar or lieutenant of God, and responsible to Him alone for the exercise of his authority. The Church of Rome has always aspired to such a position; but there is this broad difference between her pretensions and the position of the khalifs – the Church of Rome claims to be in possession of a spirit of knowledge and light which gives her a co-ordinate power of jurisdiction with the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. This has hitherto been the secret of her power. She has been able to adapt her teaching to the changing necessities of successive ages; and to incorporate into the Church every new manifestation of spiritual life which she found herself incapable of suppressing. The Muhammadan belief was quite otherwise. The khalif was simply the executor of a law which had been fixed finally and for ever. (pp. 161-2)

He sees the root cause of this in the Qur'an itself and its portrayal of God as an 'immovable Fatality' (p. 301). There is no room for growth and development in Islam because these might effect change in the original order set by God in the Qur'an (p. 301). The outcome is inertia in society and rejection of progress.

Osborn was evidently working on *Islam under the khalifs* at the same time as *Islam under the Arabs*, and some parts had evidently been completed years before, including 'The sect of the Assassins', 'The four Orthodox imams' (referring to the eponyms of the Sunnī legal rites), 'The Traditions' and 'The fall of Baghdad'. In the preface to the earlier book, he says that he expected this second volume to be published 'in about a year from this time' (*Islam under the Arabs*, p. x); it appeared in 1878. Unexpectedly, it was issued by a different publisher, suggesting that, although Osborn himself may have regarded his three volumes as forming a series, commercial interests led his publishers to think otherwise.

Islam under the khalifs covers the religious and intellectual life of Islam from the time of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs to the fall of Baghdad. It is

xiii + 406 pages long and divided into three parts, each comprising four chapters. These parts are headed: 'The church of Islam', covering through the course of the first century of ʿAbbāsid rule the four Sunnī legal rites, the compilation of the Hadiths, the beginnings of mysticism, and scholarly and religious advances; 'The rule of the Persians', covering the influence of Persians in the early ʿAbbāsid court, the Barmakids, the civil war between the sons of Hārūn al-Rashīd and other incidents of unrest, and debates over the status of the Qur'an and other questions of theology; and 'The decline of the khalifate', covering the caliphs' loss of political power and the increase of their religious authority, the Seljuks, the Assassins, the coming of the Mongols and the fall of Baghdad in 1258.

This volume contains a great number of biographies and stories, which are related directly and simply with few questions about the nature or quality of their sources or factual truthfulness. The characters of caliphs and courtiers are summed up with such stark simplicity that they lose realism. Thus, the Caliph al-Manṣūr 'was a man sordid and avaricious, incapable of friendship or of gratitude, suspicious, vindictive, and prodigal of blood' (p. 155), a beast without any qualities to redeem him. While it is clear that Osborn has read his sources, both primary and secondary, he appears to be interested only in conveying the main points of the story he is telling without troubling to present rounded accounts or to fill in details.

He does not discuss the religious nature of the society or culture he is describing in any depth, although he restates in his preface the view he expresses in the earlier volume, that Islam is incapable of development and discourages intellectual curiosity:

> Islam, in fine, may be said to lay down these two propositions for the practical guidance of men: (1.) The idea of progress is impious, and should be eradicated from the mind. (2.) The knowledge of God is a fixed quantity revealed in a book; the mind of man has no capacity to attain to it, more or less. (p. viii)

He restates the second point a little later with the same assertive confidence he exhibits in the earlier volume:

> Church and State are so completely identified, that the religious life is made subject to the supervision of the courts of law; and the constitution of society and the government is supposed to be the result of a series of Divine enactments. In religion, therefore, all spiritual development is treated as a crime against society, and punished accordingly. (p. 71)

SIGNIFICANCE

The Islam portrayed in these two volumes is a religion that does not stand comparison with Christianity. There is nothing in either the character of its founder or in the contents of its foundational document that suggests divine inspiration or endorsement, while Islam as culture and society stretching through history suppresses change and development because of the belief that all moral and social, as well as doctrinal, teaching has been completely and finally revealed, making them inflexible and unchangeable. The result is that Islamic history is replete with instances of tyrants prohibiting fresh endeavours and factions attacking and killing one another as ungodly innovators and heretics. It is astonishing that Osborn so rarely seems to examine his own Christian faith for similar flaws.

There are no indications that either volume was greeted as a landmark history, although there were enough polite compliments about *Islam under the Arabs* to fill a page in *Islam under the khalifs of Baghdad* (page following p. 406) and *Islam under the khalifs* was republished two years after its first publication. There are no signs that either volume contributed ideas to later histories, though, if they were mainly intended to help Osborn's fellow officers to understand something of the faith of their Muslim subordinates and maybe a wider general readership to appreciate a faith they were increasingly hearing about, original insights would hardly be appropriate. The chief importance of the works is that they witness to a Western Protestant Christian at the height of European achievement confidently demonstrating why a major competing faith and society was inferior and doomed to disappear simply because it was different.

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David Emmanuel Singh

Master Ramchandra

Yesū Dās Ramchandar, Ramchundra, Ramchandra, Ramchunder, Ram Candra

DATE OF BIRTH 1821
PLACE OF BIRTH Panipat
DATE OF DEATH 11 August 1880
PLACE OF DEATH Patiala

BIOGRAPHY

Ramchandra was born in Panipat into a Hindu Kāyasth family. Many Kāyasth worked in the Mughal administration and his father, Sunder Lal, was a tax collector. His early education was in Persian, as was common at the time, though he moved when he was eight to a school with an English curriculum. Following his father's untimely death in 1831, the family faced considerable financial difficulties, resulting in Ramchandra having to marry the daughter of a wealthier family the following year, when he was only 11. He worked as a clerk from the age of 18 until he was 21, when he was admitted to Delhi College on a scholarship.

He graduated in 1844 and was employed in the college as a teacher of science and mathematics. In addition, he wrote and translated into Urdu books on algebra, trigonometry, calculus and mechanics, many of which became text books for colleges in Agra, Benares and throughout Punjab and the north-west. *A treatise on problems of maxima and minima, solved by algebra* on differential calculus, published in Calcutta in 1850, was also published in London in 1859 with an introduction by the famous mathematician Augustus de Morgan (1806-71).

Ramchandra was one of the founders of a society aimed at educating Indians who did not have access to English education (he was a champion of Urdu as a medium of education because he thought it the nearest to an Indian national language and preferable to English for this purpose). Towards this aim, he started two journals, in 1845 the twice-monthly *Favā'id un-Nāẓirīn* ('Benefit for readers') and in 1847 the monthly *Muḥibb-i Hind* ('Lover of India'), though neither continued more than a few years. He would have known Aloys Sprenger (1813-93; *CMR* 24, 472-95), who became principal of Delhi College in 1845.

Ramchandra regarded himself as a rationalist and agnostic, but Joseph Thomas Thompson (d. 1850), a Baptist missionary, and John Henry Taylor (d. 1857), the principal of Delhi College from 1836 to 1841, encouraged him to read Christian literature. He eventually visited St James's Church and was prompted by the experience to read the Bible along with the Qur'an and *Bhagavadgītā*. The process resulted in his conversion to Christianity. Ramchandra was baptised on 11 July 1852, when he was 33, receiving the name Yesū-Dās ('Servant of Jesus'). The Mughal emperor's surgeon was also baptised at this service, which meant that it drew a crowd of more than 150 people and was reported in the local press. Ramchandra's conversion led to a number of students withdrawing from Delhi College and his separation from both his caste and his family. He remained estranged from his wife for nine years until she herself became a Christian.

It was from this time that Ramchandra began to write works against Islam. He might have been expected to write against Hinduism, his ancestral faith, though it is possible that he was aware of the need to resist the persistent claims made by Muslims and their attacks on Christianity.

During the Uprising of 1857, Ramchandra escaped from Delhi to the British camp in Mataula where for a time he made a living by translating the news before he became head of the Thomason Civil Engineering College in Roorkee in 1858. He returned to Delhi in 1859 once the British had retaken the city. According to his former student, Altāf Ḥusain Ḥālī (Qidwā'ī, *Māsṭar Rām Candra*, p. 55), Raḥmatullāh Kairānavī (*CMR* 24, 253-60), who was jailed by the British as a conspirator in the uprising, was only released because of Ramchandra's intervention on his behalf. It is important to note that Ramchandra was critical of the British, and that he decried their contempt for Indians. He held the reformist view that India could become self-sufficient only through a fundamental reform of its educational institutions and ways of thinking. He was frustrated that native Christians were not given priority over other Indians for jobs and was disappointed that Christianity was not promoted in government schools.

Ramchandra continued to teach at Delhi College and to worship in the local church until his retirement. He was an active member of the Delhi Society, which was founded in 1865 to promote social and educational reform and included among its members prominent public thinkers such as Mīrzā Asadullāh Khān Ghālib, Nawāb ʿAlā'addīn Khān ʿAlā'ī, Munshī Pyāre Lāl Āshob and numerous government officials. In a debate in 1886,

Ramchandra demanded that the government should set up schools for girls and he challenged the Delhi Society to play an active role in this (Qidwā'ī, *Māsṭar Rām Candra*, pp. 55-7). Ramchandra continued to organise schools even into his retirement in Patiala, and he was an advocate for education in the region right up until his death in 1880.

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Writings against Islam

DATE 1852-80
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Urdu

DESCRIPTION

Ramchandra wrote a number of works against Islam, though they have either disappeared or are difficult to find. What is known about them is drawn largely from accounts by others, mainly Ramchandra's son-in-law Edwin Jacob, in the memoir he wrote of his father-in-law, and Elwood Wherry, who summarises three of them in *The Muslim controversy*.

According to Jacob (*Memoir*, pp. 46-54; see also Powell, 'Contact and controversy', pp. 250-4), *Baḥs-i mufīd al-ʿāmm fī taḥqīq al-Islām* ('A common dispute, which is useful to everyone, on the investigation of Islam'), which was published by the Agra Tract Society in 1852, consisted of an exchange of letters stretching from 1850 to 1852 between Ramchandra and Ulfat Ḥusain, *qāẓī* of Delhi, whom he had been meeting, together with others, to discuss matters of belief. These letters were completed with a conclusion by William Muir (*CMR* 24, 666-96), who provided the title of the work and oversaw its publication, and accompanied by an appendix containing the 'Karachi questions' by ʿAbdullāh Ātham (*CMR* 24, 392-6), another convert to Christianity.

In his letters, Ramchandra's main argument was that many Muslim beliefs were inconsistent with reason and that the miracles claimed for Muḥammad were not historically verified. In his conclusion, Muir complemented this by claiming that the miracles of Christ recounted in the Bible were evidence of his divinity and that the absence of miracles to support the character and prophethood of Muḥammad was a shortcoming in Islam. ʿAbdullāh Ātham composed the 23 'Karachi questions' to challenge Muslims and to expose inconsistencies in Islamic belief.

The strategy evident in *Baḥs-i mufīd* was to challenge traditionally held Muslim beliefs through rational objections. As an attempt to show Muslims they were wrong and encourage their conversion, the work was a contribution to the heated exchanges that culminated in the 1854 Agra debates in which Muslims set out to defend the foundations of their faith.

Ramchandra is known to have written a number of other works concerning Islam. Elwood Wherry, writing about two decades after Ramchandra's death, gives descriptions of three of them and hints that, at the time, they

were easy to find 'by reference to the Mission Libraries' (*Muslim controversy*, p. 78). They were published by the Punjab Religious Books Society in Lahore, though the dates of their publication are not known.

According to Wherry (*Muslim controversy*, pp. 68-74), *I'jāz-i Qur'ān*, which he translates as 'The Qur'an refuted' (evidently interpreting the term *i'jāz* to give a meaning of the Qur'an being weakened, though Ramchandra may have been employing the usual Muslim meaning of 'miraculous nature', intending to show this is unsustainable), was 158 pages long and divided into five chapters. It was a response to Muslim claims that evidence shows the Qur'an must have been miraculously revealed to Muḥammad.

In ch. 1, Ramchandra points out that the stories in the Qur'an about pre-Islamic prophets do not constitute evidence that it was revealed because Muḥammad could have heard them from Jews in Mecca or from Waraqa ibn Nawfal, a relative of his first wife. He continues this in ch. 2, arguing that the accusations reported in the Qur'an that Muḥammad received stories from 'informers' could refer to Jews and Christians in Mecca, some of whose names are actually given by the medieval commentator al-Bayḍāwī (d. 1319), and again in ch. 3, where he shows that the Gabriel who is supposed to have brought the revelation to Muḥammad was not an angel but a Jew or Christian living in Mecca. In ch. 4, he argues that the religion supposedly brought to Muḥammad was not the religion of Abraham, as the Qur'an says, but could well have been derived from monotheist contemporaries in Mecca. He also points out the paradox in Muḥammad saying that he accepted all the scriptures but not encouraging his followers to read them. Lastly, in ch. 5, Ramchandra argues that Muḥammad did not base his claim about the Qur'an being a miracle on its style but on its contents, which he supposedly could not have had knowledge of unless it was revealed to him. In an appendix, he pursues this distinction further, showing that Arab contemporaries of Muḥammad attributed his stories to informers and did not comment on the uniqueness of the style of the Qur'an. According to Wherry, 'the book is especially suitable for the better educated classes of Muslim readers' (p. 74).

Wherry (*Muslim controversy*, pp. 74-6) says that the second book, *Taḥrīf-i Qur'ān* (1877), which he translates as 'The Qur'an corrupted' (or 'The corruption of the Qur'an'), was 210 pages long, divided into five chapters. Here Ramchandra boldly reversed the traditional Muslim accusation that the Christians corrupted the Bible, which Raḥmatullāh Kairānavī and Wazīr Khān made a central component of their arguments in the Agra debates, by asserting that the Muslims corrupted the Qur'an.

In ch. 1, he demonstrates from the commentary of Kamāluddīn Ḥusaīn (d. 1504) and, in ch. 2, from the commentary of al-Bayḍāwī (d. 1319), that there are grammatical, doctrinal and other changes in the text of the Qur'an. Then, in chs 3 and 4, he shows, by referring to Sunnī and Shīʿī witnesses, that accusations about changes to the text and the removal of substantial passages from the Qur'an have repeatedly been made throughout Islamic history. Finally, in ch. 5, he discusses passages that Muslims agree were abrogated, devoting particular attention to the verses that confirmed the three goddesses worshipped in Mecca as intercessors with God (the episode of the Satanic verses), which Muḥammad deleted. In a supplement, he argues against the Muslim claim that the abrogations were made on God's authority, and lastly points out that Muḥammad was unwise to say that he was the prophet of the last times 'because he thereby laid himself open to the charge of being the Antichrist' (p. 77).

Wherry finds the book convincing though dangerous because of the reaction it might provoke among Muslims. He hints that Ramchandra may have written it in order to turn the argument about the corruption of the Bible that was used at Agra by Raḥmatullāh Kairānavī and Wazīr Khān back on them: 'If the author intended this book as an offset to these Muslim writers, we may admit that he has succeeded well in shewing them that the Quran, when attacked by their own weapons, completely falls to the ground.' He also suggests that it may lead to demonstrating a basic flaw in Islam that will prepare the way to its demise: 'It points the way to that scholarly examination of the fundamental sources of the Quran, which will result in the absolute exposure of it as a human fabrication' (p. 77).

The work must have gained some popularity because a second edition was published in Amritsar in 1878 (Becht, *The book and the prophet*, p. 153 n. 2, says that he was able to find a copy of this edition).

The third work mentioned by Wherry (p. 77) is *Masīḥ ud-Dajjāl* ('The anti-Christ'), in which, he says, Ramchandra argued that Muḥammad was the Antichrist referred to in the Bible (see 1 John 2:18, 22; 2 John 7) and also in Islamic traditions about the Final Judgement. Wherry says no more about its contents, but remarks that 'such a book would arouse the fiercest antagonism of the followers of Islam and for that reason could not be regarded as a real help to the cause of Muslim evangelization' (p. 77), and so it has not been reprinted.

Other works on Islam that Ramchandra is known to have written include an unfinished commentary on the Qur'an that passed to Edwin Jacob after his death (*Memoir*, p. 126). The amount of preparatory study that must

have gone into this work, including extensive consultation of sources such al-Bayḍāwī's Qur'an commentary, and also the close reading of Muslim sources that is evident from other works such as *Taḥrīf-i Qur'ān* (see the references in Wherry, *Muslim controversy*, pp. 74-8), suggest an interest in Islam that went well beyond the immediate requirements of refutation. Although he was a former Hindu, Ramchandra clearly immersed himself in both contemporary and classical Muslim scholarly works. His intention must have been to discover in a systematic and thorough way what Muslims thought about their faith so that he could write about it with proper authority and presumably due respect. This is unusual in Christian authors of this time and unexpected in a Christian who had converted from Hinduism. It makes Ramchandra one of the most remarkable and atypical authors from the entire history of Christian-Muslim relations.

SIGNIFICANCE

These works reflect the main themes that were debated between Christians and Muslims in India in the later 19th century and give some indication of the strength of feeling with which points could be argued. They touch on many topics that are discussed in other works of the time, raising the question of whether Ramchandra influenced other authors or was influenced by them. A question of main importance is the relationship between the contents of these works and the topics debated between Karl Gottlieb Pfander, Raḥmatullāh Kairānavī and Wazīr Khān at Agra in 1854.

PUBLICATIONS

Ramchandra, *Baḥs-i mufīd al-ʿāmm fī taḥqīq al-Islām*, Agra, 1852

Master Ram Chandra, *Iʿjāz-i Qur'ān*, Lahore, [s.d.] (Wherry, gives Lahore as the place of publication, but no year, *The Muslim controversy*, p. 68, whereas Becht, states two editions were published in Delhi, 1870, *The book and the prophet*, p. 151)

Master Ram Chandra, *Taḥrīf-i Qur'ān*, [s.d.], 1877; second edition Amritsar, 1878 (on the place of publication of the first edition, Wherry, gives Lahore [*The Muslim controversy*, p. 74], whereas Becht, suggests Delhi [*The book and the prophet*, p. 152])

Babu Ram Chandra, *Masīḥ ud-Dajjāl*, Lahore, [s.d.]

STUDIES

S. Akbar Zaidi, *Making a Muslim. Reading publics and contesting identities in nineteenth-century north India*, Cambridge, 2021, pp. 100-2, 190-1

Becht, *The book and the prophet*, pp. 150-4

Powell, 'Contact and controversy'
I.T. Chand, *The story of a Delhi convert*, Madras, 1912 (provides a description of the context in which Ramchandra was active)
H. Weitbrecht, *A descriptive catalogue of Urdu Christian literature*, Lahore, 1902-8 (lists works by ʿAbdullāh Ātham)
E.M. Wherry, 'The writings of Babu Ram Chandra', in Wherry, *The Muslim controversy. Being a review of Christian literature*, Madras, 1905, 67-78
Jacob, *Memoir*

Charles M. Ramsey

A Moslem version of the Pentateuch in Arabic, Persian, and Hindustani

BIOGRAPHY

A Moslem version of the Pentateuch is an edition of an Arabic translation of the Pentateuch with added translations in Persian and Urdu. It was prepared in Lucknow and published by Naval Kishore Press in 1881. The edition states on the title page that the Arabic manuscript that forms the basis of the edition was owned by William Hoey (1849-1919), a magistrate and civil servant in Lucknow, who later taught Urdu (Hindustani) and Indian history at Trinity College, Dublin, and then at Oxford. A member of the Royal Asiatic Society, he possessed considerable linguistic skills in Arabic, Persian, Urdu, Sanskrit and German, and was known for a number of translations as well as *A monograph on trade and manufactures in northern India* (Lucknow, 1880). It is not known how he acquired this manuscript, though it is likely that he came across it while travelling in Egypt.

MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION

K. Karttunen, art. 'Hoey, William', in K. Karttunen, *Persons of Indian studies*, 2017, online; https://whowaswho-indology.info/3036

WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

A Moslem version of the Pentateuch

DATE 1881
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Urdu, with Persian and Arabic

DESCRIPTION

This work is listed by Edward Edwards, *A catalogue of the Persian printed books in the British Museum* (London, 1922, col.158), as '*Tarjama l-Tawriyya*. A Moslem version of the Pentateuch in Arabic, Persian, and Hindustani' (this citation can also be found in A.J. Arberry, *A catalogue of the library of the late A.G. Ellis*, 3 vols, London, 1943-45, vol. 1, p. 369; and J.F. Blumhardt, *Catalogue of Hindustani printed books in the Library of the British Museum*, London, 1889, p. 53). The British Library catalogue gives the title as follows: '*Hādhihi tarjamat al-sifr al-awwal* (*al-thānī ilakh*) *min khamsat asfār min*

al-Tawrīyah ilakh (An Arabic version of the Pentateuch, with interlinear translations in Persian and Hindustani, and with vowel signs added to the Arabic version, by the editor)', differing from Edwards in identifying the work as an Arabic and not a Muslim version of the Pentateuch. The 954-page Lucknow edition comprises an introduction in Arabic and the Arabic text of the five books of the Pentateuch from the manuscript in the possession of William Hoey, who is acknowledged on the first page of the edition beneath the title, together with translations into Persian and Urdu. The division into *sedarīm* ('readings') instead of chapters and verses, which follows the practice of the Coptic Church for public reading, suggests that it was, in fact, a recension of Saʿadia's text made for use in Coptic worship. Comparison of this with the Arabic translation of the Pentateuch from the original Hebrew that is part of the Egyptian Jewish scholar Saʿadia Gaon's (892-942) *Tafsīr*, which he made in the early 10th century, shows that it is a copy of his text (R. Vollandt, 'Saadiah Gaon and the transmission of his *Tafsīr*', *Manuscript Cultures* 24 [2024] 141-93, pp. 166-70). This manuscript has now disappeared and only comparison of the published text with other versions of Saʿadia's translation will show whether changes were made to it in India during the process of production.

A number of questions arise about the edition and its purpose. Full answers will only be given after further study of the edition, but some preliminary and admittedly speculative attempts can be made now.

First, only close comparison of this edition of the Arabic text with other manuscripts and editions of Saʿadia's translation will show whether and to what extent it contains changes and insertions. It is maybe not irrelevant that the Arabic edition, and also the Persian and Urdu translations, contain identifications of three of the rivers that flowed out of Eden. So, in Genesis 2:11 the land of Havilah, around which one of the rivers flows, is identified as India; in Genesis 2:13 the land of Cush, around which a second river flows, is identified as Ethiopia; and in Genesis 2:14 Assyria, to the east of which a third river flows, is Mosul. Of course, these additions could just as likely have been made by the Coptic editors as by the Indian editors, and the reason for their insertion must await further investigation.

Second, it should be easy to ascertain whether the Persian and Urdu translations were made expressly for this edition or were already in existence. By the mid-19th century the Book of Genesis was available in Persian in the translation of the Old Testament made by Thomas Robinson (1790-1873), Archdeacon of Madras from 1826 and Professor of Arabic at Cambridge University from 1837, and published between 1836 and 1839, and also in the translation made by William Glen (1811-57), a missionary with the Edinburgh Missionary Society, who lived for five years in Astrakhan,

where he worked on his translation before it was published in 1846 and the first copy was presented to Muḥammad Shah Qājār (r. 1834-48) in 1847. If either of these was used for the Lucknow edition, it must have been changed slightly to bring it into line with the Arabic. Further, a translation of the complete Bible in Urdu was available from 1843. Comparison of the Persian and Urdu translations in the Lucknow edition with earlier translations such as these will show whether or not the Lucknow translations were made expressly for this edition.

Third, a great deal of care and effort, as well as expense, must have gone into preparing this edition. If new translations into Persian and Urdu were used, they would have had to be checked and collated, and also paid for. On every page, the lines of Arabic all have the Persian and Urdu beneath them, requiring close attention from compositors. It is curious that no

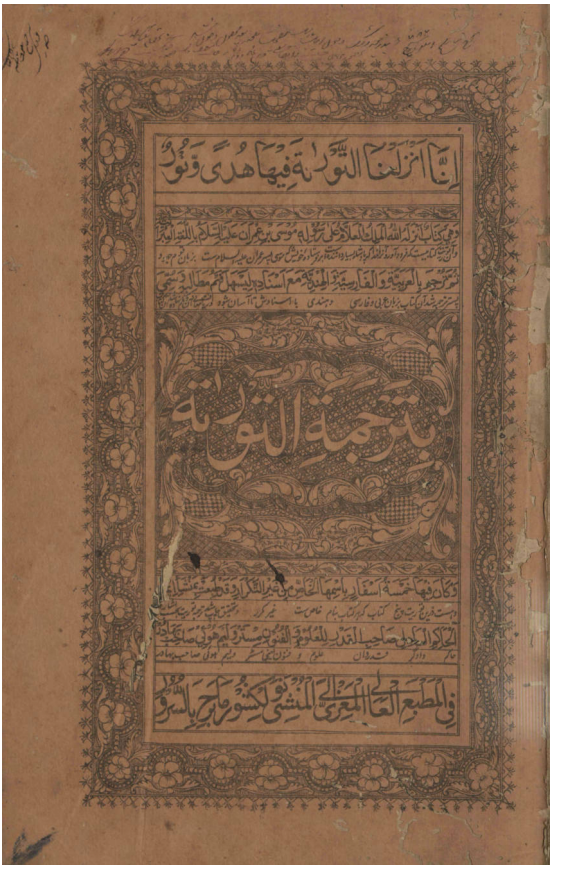


Illustration 9. Title page of *A Moslem version of the Pentateuch in Arabic, Persian, and Hindustani*

names of individuals who worked on the edition, oversaw its production and paid for it are given and that there are no indications of the reason for making it.

Fourth, while Edwards in his catalogue calls the edition a 'Moslem version of the Pentateuch in Arabic', there does not appear to be any decisive reason within the edition itself to judge it as either Christian or Muslim in inception.

Small scraps of evidence in favour of Christians producing it include the form of the opening invocation in the Arabic, *Bism Illāhi l-Ḥayy al-Azalī* ('In the name of God, the Living, the Eternal'), which is compatible with Christian Arab Trinitarian thinking, but departs from the Muslim *basmala* (unless this is part of Saʿadia's original translation, which comparison will show); the phrase 'the Lord descended' in the story of the Tower of Babel in Genesis 11:5, which is given literally in all three translations, has awkward anthropomorphic implications that Muslims in particular would find unacceptable; Hagar in Genesis 16 is identified as Abraham's concubine in all three translations, though, as mother of his son Ismāʿīl, in Muslim tradition she is generally accorded the higher status of his wife.

An equally inconclusive, though suggestive, piece of evidence in favour of Muslims producing the edition includes the first line of the title page, which appears only in the Arabic translation, a quotation from Q 5:44, 'It was We who revealed (*anzalnā*) the Torah: therein was guidance and light'. The explanation in the next line reads, 'And this is the book which Allāh, the King, the Best Knower, revealed (*anzalahu*) to his messenger Moses, son of ʿImrān, peace be upon him (*ʿalā rasūlihi Mūsā ibn ʿImrān, ʿalayhi l-salām*). Here Moses is referred to in the way a Muslim prophet would be.

Fifth, it as difficult to be certain about the purpose for which the edition was made as with the other aspects of it. It may have been produced in order to prove some point connected with the controversy over the Muslim accusation that the Christian scriptures were corrupted, but exactly how it may have served Christians or Muslims in this remains unclear. Whoever was responsible, their intention was clearly to make this version accessible to readers in Urdu-speaking parts of India, and their reason for this must be related to the fact that the text on which they worked was regarded as an ancient Arabic translation.

SIGNIFICANCE

Saʿadia's translated Pentateuch would have provided something quite different from what was available at the time in India. It was older and, since it was in Arabic, it may have been assumed by many to have been made

by Muslims and thus provided a version of the Bible that could be compared with more recent Christian versions such as Cornelius Van Dyck's (1818-95) Arabic translation, published in Beirut in 1865.

The edition would have been kept in a library as it was too bulky to carry around. It is noteworthy that neither Muslims nor Christians are known to have responded to it and it is particularly odd that, as far as can be seen, there were no mentions of it in Lucknow or Indian publications.

PUBLICATIONS

A Moslem version of the Pentateuch in Arabic, Persian, and Hindustani, 5 vols, Lucknow, 1881; RareBooks_FCC/id/856/rec/5 (digitised version available through Ewing Memorial Library, Forman Christian College)

STUDIES

None of these works refers to the Lucknow Pentateuch.

R.C. Steiner, *A biblical translation in the making. The evolution and impact of Saadia Gaon's Tafsīr*, Cambridge, MA, 2010, pp. 94-6, 100-1

P. De Lagarde, *Materialien zur Kritik und Geschichte des Pentateuch*, Piscataway NJ, 2009

U. Stark, *An empire of books. The Naval Kishore Press and the diffusion of the printed word in colonial India*, Delhi, 2007

J. Rooney, *The hesitant dawn. Christianity in Pakistan 1780-1886*, Rawalpindi, 1984, pp. 39-42

J. Sharp, *The gospel in many tongues*, London, 1912

Charles M. Ramsey

ʿAbdullāh Ātham

DATE OF BIRTH 1828
PLACE OF BIRTH Ambala, India
DATE OF DEATH July 1896
PLACE OF DEATH Ferozpur, India

BIOGRAPHY

ʿAbdullāh Ātham (or Āthim, 1828-96) was a Muslim convert to Christianity who became a member of the Church Missionary Society (CMS) and engaged in highly polemical debates with Muslims. He was born into a respected, probably Ashraf, family in Ambala. He moved to Karachi, where he joined a missionary school to learn English and also came in contact with Christians who introduced him to Karl Gottlieb Pfander's (*CMR* 24, 188-236) writings. His acquaintance with Christian scholars and the study of Pfander's works affected him deeply and caused him to doubt his Islamic faith. In his struggle with a number of Islamic doctrines, he composed a series of 23 questions, which he sent to religious scholars in Delhi and elsewhere. These were published in 1867 in a treatise titled *Chand savālāt Islām kī bābat* ('Some questions related to Islam'). Not receiving any reply, Ātham embraced Christianity in 1852.

Ātham's conversion, which was one of the earliest among Indian Muslims, had a significant impact on both Muslims and Christians. Muslim scholars were made to realise through it the effects of Christian proselytism and their own duty to defend their religion. At the same time, it encouraged Christian missionaries to expand their missionary efforts in Muslim circles. Previously, missionaries had been under the impression that they should focus their efforts on the Hindu population, who were easier to convince. After his conversion, Ātham held a variety of positions in the civil service, becoming Extra Commissioner of Sialkot, Ambala, his home town, and Karnal.

Following his retirement in 1883, Ātham joined the ministry of CMS, which provided him with opportunities to engage with Muslim scholars. His best-known encounter took place in 1893 in Jandiala, where he debated with Mīrzā Ghulām Aḥmad (1835-1908), the founder of the Aḥmadiyya movement. This debate, which lasted 15 days and is known as *Jang-i muqaddas* ('The holy war'), covered a wide range of topics such as

the superiority of Christian and Muslim scriptures, the divinity of Jesus and the prophethood of Muḥammad.

In addition to his writings mentioned below, ʿAbdullāh Ātham is also known to have written further leaflets, treatises and short books that were published during his lifetime. Most of them are inaccessible or may have been lost. Herbert Udny Weitbrecht (*A descriptive catalogue and review of Urdu Christian literature*, Lahore, 1902, vol. 1, pp. 10-11) and Elwood Morris Wherry (*Muslim controversy*, London, 1905, pp. 113-14) attribute the following works to him: *Ārām-i Āthamī* ('Ātham's rest'), *Aql bar daʿwā-i taḥrīf wa tansīkh-i Bāʾibal* ('Reason concerning the claim of corruption and abrogation of the Bible'), *Baḥth mā bayn tawḥīdiyya wa-tathlīthiyya* ('A debate between Unitarianism and Trinitarianism'), *Qarāʾin al-Qurʾān* ('The coherence of the Qur'an'), *Nikāt-i Islām-i Aḥmadiyya* ('Critical remarks on Sayyid Aḥmad Khān's interpretation of Islam'), *Jawāhir al-Qurʾān* ('Essence of the Qur'an'), and *Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān Bahādur kī chand ghalaṭiyān qābil-i iʿtirāḍ* ('Some objectionable mistakes made by Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān').

Ātham died in 1896.

MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Primary

[unsigned], 'The progressive character of Protestant Mission to the heathen', *Church Missionary Intelligencer* 4/7 (1853) 147-58, pp. 153-6

CMS Missionary Register (1855) 347-50

Proceedings of the Church Missionary Society (1893-1894) 119-22

Secondary

D. Becht, 'Aphorisms. 'Abdullāh Ātham', in D. Becht, *The Book and the Prophet. The contribution of Indian Christians to the Muslim-Christian debate of the 19th-century*, Tübingen, 2018, 156-65, pp. 156-61; https://publikationen.uni-tuebingen.de/xmlui/bitstream/handle/10900/80747/DieterBechtBookandProphet.pdf

Y. Friedmann, *Prophecy continuous. Aspects of Ahmadi religious thought and its medieval background*, London, 1989, pp. 187-9

WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Aṣliyāt-i Qurʾān
'The fundamental teachings of the Qur'an'

DATE 1873
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Urdu

DESCRIPTION

Ātham's short treatise on the Qur'an, only 24 pages long, responds to three assertions which he mentions at the beginning: first, that the Qur'an claims to be merely an explanation of previous scriptures; second, that it presents itself as the best way to follow the teachings of Jesus; third, that it does not introduce any new teachings. To substantiate these, he draws exclusively on qur'anic passages without referencing the Bible or any other sources. He quotes verses to support each of them, summarises their content, and goes on to repeat the familiar Muslim assertion that the Qur'an accuses Jews and Christians of misinterpreting their scriptures, which has led them away from God's true teachings. In response, he argues that the Qur'an does not claim these scriptures were altered but that its purpose is to correct misinterpretations, positioning itself only as an explanation of the earlier texts. He supports this by stating that the Qur'an presents teachings already contained in previous scriptures. In his view, this is why the Prophet Muḥammad refrained from performing miracles, for, since the Qur'an introduces no new teachings, there is no need for miraculous displays.

To further his argument, Ātham addresses the Muslim belief that the Qur'an itself is a miracle. He claims that the Qur'an does not assert its own miraculous nature, nor does its language or eloquence indicate anything supernatural. Diminishing the Qur'an's significance even more, he controversially claims that Muḥammad was not illiterate, but actually knew how to read and write. He also addresses potential counter-arguments from Muslims, rejecting Muḥammad's claimed miracle of the splitting of the moon on the grounds that no historical source mentions this event. Furthermore, he criticises the Qur'an's teachings about warfare, concluding that, even if Muḥammad had performed miracles, these teachings would still be impure. He lists verses that, in his view, endorse slavery and irrational beliefs, which further demonstrate that the Qur'an lacks divine inspiration.

In the conclusion, Ātham challenges his Muslim readers to refute his criticisms if they believe him to be wrong.

SIGNIFICANCE

Ātham's treatise is an example of how Muslim converts to Christianity engaged with the Qur'an after their conversion. Some of his criticisms, such as that Islam was spread by force and that Muḥammad was unable to perform miracles, echo earlier Christian polemics, though his use of qur'anic passages to argue that the Qur'an is merely an explanatory text of previous scriptures seems to be innovative. It is significant that the presupposition of this argument, that the Qur'an accepts the Bible as an unaltered source, had been widely debated in both Christian-Muslim polemics and Islamic scholarship, and was at the centre of the debates between Karl Gottlieb Pfander and Raḥmatullāh Kairānavī. Ātham revives this discussion, showing how the Qur'an assumes that the Bible has not been corrupted. What makes his work notable is not so much the claim that the Qur'an confirms previous scriptures, but rather his conclusion that it presents itself merely as an explanatory tool for them.

Although Ātham is highly critical of Islam and the Qur'an, his statements in this work are less polemical and abrasive than in his later writings, in which, for example, he identifies the Prophet Muḥammad as the Antichrist.

PUBLICATIONS

ʿAbdullāh Ātham, *Aṣliyāt-i Qur'ān*, [s.l.] 1873

Andarūna-i Bā'ibal
'The inner meanings of the Bible'

DATE 1881
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Urdu

DESCRIPTION

Andarūna-i Bā'ibal ranks among the few longer works written by Ātham, who mostly expressed his views in short treatises. It runs to 196 pages, divided into three chapters and an appendix. The first and second chapters deal with the Torah and other books of the Old Testament and provide a summary of the prophetic stories contained in them. Here, he strives to demonstrate a common thread running through the entire Bible that

clearly points to the appearance of Jesus Christ. The third chapter covers themes of the New Testament and also includes a concise discussion of Islam. Ātham argues that the advent of Islam is foretold in the Book of Revelation, where the coming of the horrors announced by the fifth angel in ch. 9 resemble those that accompanied the coming of Islam. To support this, he draws on various passages from the Qur'an. He concludes that Muḥammad was a false prophet, calling him the Antichrist (*Dajjāl*).

Continuing this theme in the appendix, Ātham argues that the Qur'an, unlike the Bible, teaches that warfare and coercion as means of gaining converts is permitted, and it also promises young boys and virgins for the pleasure of devout Muslims in the afterlife. The Bible, which contains no such indulgent extravagant descriptions, must therefore be superior to the Qur'an, a point supported by the fact that miracles are attributed to Jesus in the Gospels while none are attributed to Muḥammad in the Qur'an.

SIGNIFICANCE

This work does not introduce new ideas in the ongoing controversies between Muslims and Christians. Indeed, many of its points echo those widely found in missionary literature, such as Pfander's influential works. Ātham stands out primarily because of his Islamic background, which made Muslims particularly sensitive to his criticisms and eager to refute his criticisms. In particular, his denigration of the Prophet as the Antichrist provoked strong reactions, ultimately leading to the debate between him and Mīrzā Ghulām Aḥmad in Jandiala in 1893. In this encounter, Ghulām Aḥmad repeatedly used Ātham's statements about the Prophet to prove his hostility and demonstrate his provocative approach towards Islam.

PUBLICATIONS

ʿAbdullāh Ātham, *Andarūna-i Bā'ibal*, [s.l.] 1881

Kamran Ahmad Khan

Alfred C. Lyall

DATE OF BIRTH 4 January 1835
PLACE OF BIRTH Coulsdon, Surrey
DATE OF DEATH 10 April 1911
PLACE OF DEATH Freshwater, Isle of Wight

BIOGRAPHY

Alfred Comyn Lyall began work as an Indian Civil Service officer about two years before the start of the Indian Uprising of 1857. His elder brother served in the Indian Army, and his younger brother became Lieutenant Governor of Punjab. Lyall himself became Lieutenant Governor of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh (Awadh). When he eventually returned to London in January 1888, he continued to serve on the Council of India from 1888 till his retirement in 1903. He remained an advisor to the UK government on Indian affairs and was especially called on during the agitations for separate Muslim electorates in 1907-9. His significance for his contemporaries in England can be judged from the number of paintings and lithographs of him in the National Portrait Gallery.

Born in 1835 and educated at Eton and Haileybury (founded by the East India Company), he began to work for the Indian Civil Service as part of the Bengal cadre in 1855. Soon after his arrival, he had direct experience of the 1857 Uprising in the northern hotspot of Meerut. He served variously as a commissioner (1867), secretary in the Home and Foreign Departments, Lieutenant Governor (1882-7), and member of the Council of India in England (1888-1903). He also played a part in the establishment of the University of Allahabad, where he served as chancellor, and his achievements were recognised through many awards, including KCIE (1887), KCB (1881) and GCIE (1896).

MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Asiatic studies, religious and social

DATE 1882
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

Lyall's *Asiatic studies* comprises 11 chapters (ten on India and one on China) that were originally published as separate articles over a period of 11 years. References to Islam or Muslims occur throughout and particularly in ch. 9, which is entitled 'Islam in India'. This chapter originally appeared as an essay in *The Theological Review. A Quarterly Journal of Religious Thought* in 1872. Here, the version in *Asiatic Studies*, 1882, where it is 29 pages long (pp. 228-57), will be discussed.

Lyall starts by examining William Wilson Hunter's (1840-1900) *The Indian Musalmans* (London, 1871), which considers whether Muslims are 'bound in conscience to rebel against the Queen'. After the Uprising in 1857, they were widely perceived as 'a source of chronic danger to the British power in India' (p. 229) and Hunter's aim was to investigate the causes of their disaffection from the British Empire. He believed the inspiration and theological underpinning for their attitudes came from Wahhābī-inspired 'fanatic missionaries' and also from Muslim memories of being rulers in India before a 'Christian empire' arrived.

Lyall broadly agrees with Hunter's references to the Wahhābīs, but he takes issue with his criticisms of British policy and his justification of the reasons for Muslim disaffection (p. 230). He also takes issue with Hunter's tendency to generalise from his knowledge of the one part of India he knows. For himself, he refuses to accept that the current state of India and its Muslim population is entirely the responsibility of the British rulers.

Hunter gives the reasons for Muslim disaffection as: exclusion from higher education following the recommendations of Macaulay's memorandum that advocated reform of education according to European models; the abolition of the system of Muslim personal legal specialists; perceived restrictions on the performance of 'the duties of their faith' (p. 283); meddling in Muslim religious foundations and the endowments attached to them; failure to demonstrate clemency when one empire replaced another; lack of sympathy and public wrongs for over a hundred years. Lyall's rebuttal of these is supported by the kind of first-hand knowledge of Muslims that Hunter lacked, leading him to remark that Hunter's views failed to represent 'the actual feelings and utterances of the general body of Mahomedans' (p. 247) and to suspect that they were not only derived from incomplete exposure to Indian Muslims but were also imaginary. For this reason, he rejects Hunter's claim that Muslims regard themselves as a persecuted people under the Christian empire that replaced theirs, because, although Muslims may dislike Christian fairmindedness and the 'levelling administrative system', nevertheless 'they judge us, fairly enough, by the Oriental standard […] as applied to rulers and they appreciate the situation not incorrectly' (p. 233).

Lyall does acknowledge what he calls marginal or exceptional 'murmurs' among Muslims (p. 234). He accounts for these by identifying Wahhābī ideology as their source and by distinguishing this from the attitudes of the majority of Indian Muslims. Wahhābīs are fanatics, and even if ordinary Muslims are unhappy about the loss of power to the British, they are 'not incapable of accepting with dignity such changes in fortune' (p. 235). If it is any consolation, he believes Muslims know it was not Britain that defeated them: the Muslim empire had already broken into pieces and a Christian empire saved India by reconstituting it for the better. If some Muslims feel resentful, this should be allayed with balanced truth and honest redress of unwitting mistakes and not by planting the idea in their mind that this Christian empire is 'chiefly responsible' for their sense of being persecuted (p. 226).

Lyall goes on to remind his readers of the familiar notion that, in Islam, politics and religion are looked on as two sides of 'the same medal [coin]'

(p. 236). This intimate connection has often been taken by commentators as the source of inspiration for the Wahhābīs in India, but it must not be assumed that all Muslims hold this view since local realities are far more diverse than the over-generalised rhetoric about Muslims and Islam that Christian writers often favour. The historical reality is that Islam is a religion that does not lend itself to acceptance of rule from outside and

> the sentiment that justifies to itself violent assertion can never be entirely dormant in an exclusive monotheistic religion, which claims as a right and a duty universal spiritual despotism, while it has been levelled down by a neutral government to mere denominational equality. (p. 243)

At the same time, Christianity is a missionary religion and some Indians suspect the British government in India of supporting the spread of Christianity. Throughout history, proponents of the two faiths denounced one another in harsh polemics, though in situations where one or other was in control. But now for the first time a situation has arisen in which Christian and Muslim scholars can debate with one another on terms of equality. Thus, William Muir and Sayyid Aḥmad Khān (*CMR* 24, 666-96 and 424-47) have debated the life of Muḥammad 'on neutral Asiatic ground [...] in fair literary argument and a beginning of scholarly exegesis' (p. 245).

Lyall avers that, despite such signs of mutual recognition, it is fair to say that the majority of ordinary Muslims resent British rule, though Hunter goes too far in claiming that 'the best men are not on our side' (p. 246) and that the Wahhābīs pose a major threat. Nevertheless, he and also William Nassau Lees (1825-89; *CMR* 24, 295-9), a former army officer in Bengal and educationist in Calcutta who has expressed his views in letters to *The Times*, do lay a number of charges that should be answered. The first is the use of the state grant for higher education, whether it should support education in English along European lines or in Indian languages along traditional lines. Lees observes that Lord Macaulay in his Minute of 1836 had insensitively favoured the former without realising the seriousness of the consequence that, by depriving Muslims of the study of their traditional texts in state-supported institutions, the government was effectively driving the whole Islamic tradition of education out of the public sphere and abolishing the means by which Muslims could attain qualifications in 'Oriental classics'. This had the result of rendering them unqualified to enter public service and opening the way for Hindus to dominate it. Lyall acknowledges the truth in this, observing that 'these reforms, these innovations, were far too premature' (p. 250), though he

thinks that it is difficult to 'shut out the rush of light and air which have followed our throwing open the windows of the West, because at first it chills and dazes the conservative Mohamedan' (p. 251). Speaking practically, the civil service requires the best minds and 'by using inferior tools we should incur a peril far more serious than any that can grow out of the reactionary susceptibilities of Mohamedans' (p. 251). In short, 'It is impossible but that those who hold back in modern India will find themselves left behind' (p. 252).

Lyall goes on to defend the government against accusations of using funds from Muslim pious foundations for education according to the European system and of discontinuing appointments of *qāẓī*s as state officials. Such criticisms come from relatively few people, he argues, and are really to be expected from people who do not take to being ruled by aliens, 'while the Mahomedan element is necessarily and by its nature an element of some contrariety and restlessness' (p. 255). In a word, Muslims in India who resent the loss of their former superiority should accept the reality of the current situation. They are 'living under the most just and most enlightened government that has ever been tried in their country' (p. 256) and must recognise that they are only one element within a larger population that must be governed 'on the principles of order and progress, of civil liberty and religious equality' (p. 258).

Lyall's approach to the treatment of Islam in India is underscored throughout by spirited pragmatism, which he relies on to urge acceptance of the reality in which the British rule and the Muslims are ruled. They may grieve over their loss of power, but they simply have to come to terms with this. For him, progress has come with the new order and, while complaints arising from injured religious sensitivities should be treated as sympathetically as possible, nothing should stop this.

In what he writes here, Lyall does not anywhere acknowledge openly that the problems between the British and Indian Muslims arise from religious differences. Nevertheless, he makes clear that he sees the difficulties facing Muslims in the new political order as issuing from their faith and he hints repeatedly that this faith is not suited to the needs of a community that is controlled from outside. He leaves unexplored the implication that the more adaptable religion of Christianity must be superior.

SIGNIFICANCE

At the beginning of *Asiatic studies*, Lyall explains that he has brought together his essays because 'they have been thought to be worth the experiment of republication together' (p. v). This gives some indication that

they had been received well when they appeared as journal articles. The collection itself was reviewed rather belatedly by J.B. Andrews ('Asiatic Studies by Sir Alfred C. Lyall', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* 32/2 [1899] 358-61).

Ch. 9 reflects an attitude typical of many works from the later 19th century, that Islam was a religion unsuited to meet the demands of the modern world (since its laws were bound up together with its doctrines in a book that was accepted as an eternal revelation, they could not be changed to accommodate new situations). Coupled to this was the view that the Islamic empires were in terminal decline, demonstrated by both the extinction of the Mughal Empire and the paralysis of the Ottoman Empire. Lyall had no need, and maybe no wish, to argue explicitly that Islam was the cause of the problems encountered by Muslims in India, though this is evident in all that he says. In this chapter he was vigorously exhibiting his confidence in European culture with its roots in Christianity and, sometimes impatiently, his conviction that Islamic culture could not cope with the progress that was coming to British India.

Asiatic studies, religious and social was published again in 1899 although, with no explanation given, ch. 9 is retitled 'The religious situation in India' and has been radically altered to contain far fewer details about Islam and none of the detailed disagreements with Hunter (see pp. 304-8). In a later edition entitled *Asiatic studies, religious and social; being a selection from essays published under that title in 1882 and 1889*, published in 1907, the chapter has been omitted completely.

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STUDIES

Padamsee, 'Spectacles of dispossession'

David Emmanuel Singh

Elizabeth Lydia Oxley

DATE OF BIRTH 8 January 1848
PLACE OF BIRTH Rotherham, Yorkshire
DATE OF DEATH 14 May 1914
PLACE OF DEATH Coonoor, India

BIOGRAPHY

Elizabeth Lydia Oxley was born in Rotherham in January 1848, the younger daughter of John Oxley (1824-85), a lawyer, and his wife Mary. Nothing is known of her education. In 1876, she and her elder sister Sophia (d. 1929), both unmarried, were accepted as missionaries by the committee of the Zenana Bible and Medical Mission (ZBMM) and sent to Madras, where Lydia was assigned to 'Mohammedan work' and Sophia to 'Hindu work' (ZBMM minute book 5 April 1876; 'South India. Madras', p. 8). In 1880, they transferred to the newly founded Church of England Zenana Missionary Society (CEZMS) and continued to work in Madras, Lydia until 1908, whilst Sophia resigned in 1904 (CEZMS, *Roll of missionaries with particulars of service*, p. 238).

Oxley helped to found four schools across Madras, which by 1894 had taught the Bible to some 25,000 women and girls. This work was remarkable enough for Walter Ayscoughe Rice (1861-1948; *CMR* 24 889-99) to cite her in his *Crusaders of the twentieth century* (London, 1910, pp. 62-3). She regularly gave public addresses in aid of the poor and expressed a desire for the 'breaking down' of caste and religious 'prejudice' among her audiences (Barnes, *Behind the pardah*, 1894, p. 248).

She also wrote energetically. She published *Hassan's story* (1891) and *What came of a tiger hunt* (1896) for young readers, though most of her publications were non-fiction, concerned with the domestic lives of Indian Muslims, especially women. She contributed several instalments of 'Mohammedan work' to *India's Women*, the official magazine of the CEZMS (1885, pp. 241-3; 1886, pp. 239-41; 1887, pp. 243-4; 1893, pp. 352-4; 1895, pp. 400-2). Her article 'Mohammedan work in the city of Madras' also circulated in this journal in 1891 (pp. 248-50), as well as a 'Report of Mohammedan schools' in 1894 (pp. 400-2). Another report, 'Work amongst Mohammedans at Coonoor', was published by the Church of South India in the *Madras and Tinnevelly Diocesan Magazine* in 1907 (p. 514).

Miss Oxley, as she had been known, died in Coonoor, in Tamil Nadu, the southernmost state of India, on 14 May 1914.

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'Committee's notes', *India's women and China's daughters* 34 (1914) 160 (announcement of E.L. Oxley's death)

WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Selim's pilgrimage. A tale of Hindu Muhammadan life

DATE 1883
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

Selim's pilgrimage. A tale of Hindu Muhammadan life (in which 'Hindu' means Indian) was published in 1883 by the Religious Tract Society in its Monthly Shilling Volumes for the Young series. It appeared anonymously, though Oxley is more or less confirmed as the author by a note which reads 'by the author of "Selim's pilgrimage"' printed in the 1891 edition of *Hassan's story*, which is also assumed to be by her. It is a 117-page novel, divided into 12 chapters, each of which corresponds to a phase in the life of the main character Selim, whom we meet when he is 25 years old, married, with two children. Illustrated with six pen-and-ink plates, it is set in the 'hot and sultry days of Southern India' (p. 7). Selim is introduced in ch. 1, 'Doubts and fears', making his ablutions and praying at isha'a (*'ishā'*), 'for was he not a faithful follower of the Prophet?' (p. 8). Oxley

describes the prayer minutely, giving two pages to Selim's actions and intentions. But Selim is troubled by a thought: 'Suppose it be true that there is *one* mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus!' (p. 11). It is revealed that he attends a Christian school – the kind the author had a hand in founding – and his exposure to the Bible brings him to wondering whether the 'quick and powerful' Word will 'penetrate into the hard hearts deadened by the chilling influence of Islam?' (p. 12). Selim is troubled by his attraction to Christianity, certain that if he were to renounce Islam, it would kill his father and he would lose his family and community. The thought that the Prophet Muḥammad may have been an imposter is particularly painful for him. Oxley makes it clear that Selim has been raised never to question the sanctity of the Qur'an. He is ashamed of his doubt and attributes it to the work of Iblīs (chief of the devils), fearing that the same fate, of being cast out of heaven, might also await him.

This is the opening scene in *Selim's pilgrimage* and it is representative of the voices Oxley gives her characters, making them think and speak as an English missionary writer might expect prospective converts would. Oxley is teaching her young readers about Islam through the narrative she unfolds and the characters that populate it. Their actions, speech and thoughts are always contextualised in rudimentary and often prejudicial information about Islamic and Indian institutions. For example, when Selim greets his young wife in ch. 2, 'A Muhammadan home', he laments that she talks little to him, as is the way 'amongst the Muhammadans' (p. 21). He is 'more enlightened than most of his people' and wants a companion 'rather than a submissive child' (p. 21). He wishes his wife to be more of an equal partner but knows that she is incapable of this. Islam has conditioned her to be fearful of, and reverential towards, her husband and to believe that she is inferior to the men in her life. She has no education or sense of identity (Oxley only gives her a name much later in the chapter). Her existence is limited to the *zenana* and to performing a 'weary round of petty daily duties' around it (p. 22). Here, we encounter the well-worn trope that Muslim women are intellectually, emotionally, socially, and even physically stunted. Oxley does not exoticise or eroticise the *zenana* – the Indian equivalent of a domestic harem – as extravagantly as some Orientalist writers and painters did during the 19th century. However, she still makes clear that Leila (the name she finally gives Selim's wife) is fond of her 'lovely clothes and jewels' (p. 23), just as a child might be busy dressing and decorating a doll.

Ch. 3, 'In the women's apartments', expands the viewpoint to include that of Selim's brothers, the younger Hassan and older Ibrahim. Ibrahim

discovers that the teenage Hassan has been reading a translation of the Bible and becomes angry: 'This is the book forbidden by our religion!' (p. 33). Oxley pauses the dialogue between the brothers to inform her readers that the Prophet Muḥammad did not, in fact, forbid reading of the Bible but considered that the laws of Islam had abrogated those of the Christians. Here, Oxley adds her own appeal: pray to God that 'these poor Mussulmans' may see that 'Jesus Christ alone is the Way, the Truth, and the Life!' (p. 34). The missionary tone is palpable at all times. Oxley does not take any risks with her readership, making sure to comment on every interaction so that young Christians will take her meaning and her mission to heart. *Selim's pilgrimage* has several episodes where Selim withdraws into himself and is wracked with guilt and fear. At this particular point, he particularly worries that the 'last and lowest' of the seven compartments of hell (Jahannam) is reserved for insincere believers like himself (p. 36). The chapter ends with Selim, overcome, feverishly reading the Bible translation that Ibrahim banished.

Chs 4 and 5 have little do with Islam as a topic, though outwardly the characters always behave dutifully in a way that is bound by their faith. Ch. 6, 'Ali Khan's daughter', has more to say about marriage as an Islamic institution. It introduces Jara-un-Nissa, who is 'extremely well educated for a Muhammadan woman' (p. 53), and her supportive husband, Ali Khan, who is 'more enlightened than the generality of his countrymen' (p. 54). As well as Selim and Hassan, Oxley portrays Jara and Ali Khan as liberal and enlightened, giving them positive traits, and underlines their exceptional character: 'Few Mussulmans care to have their daughters educated' (p. 60); Ali Khan is 'unusually free from prejudice' and 'rational' (p. 61). Their 12-year-old daughter, Nur-un-Nissa is then introduced, the prospective bride for 17-year-old Hassan. Nur expresses her fear regarding Muslim marriage, not least a looming threat of polygamy.

In ch. 7, 'The pilgrimage to Mecca', there is a sense that Oxley is speaking to her readers through Selim, who thinks longingly of north India as a place where 'many Mussulmans had become Christians' and 'lived peaceable and useful lives [...] without much fear of persecution' (p. 66) in contrast to his home in the far south, where 'to become a Christian [...] probably meant death' (p. 66). Selim is ordered by his ailing, aged father to make the Pilgrimage to Mecca in compensation for his (the father) never having done so, thus violating the 'command of the Prophet' (p. 68). Selim leaps at the chance to please the Prophet and to keep Iblīs at bay. He locks his Bible away and assures himself that kissing the Kaʿba will bring him 'peace of mind' (p. 73). Oxley joins a long line of 19th-century British

authors of both fiction and non-fiction when, in making Selim declare he will no longer think for himself because 'to do so was the act of an infidel' (p. 73), she suggests that Muslims are snared by Islam and not only discouraged from, but threatened with punishment for free thinking. Chs 8 and 9 describe the betrothal between Hassan and Nur.

In ch. 10, 'Ramazan', Selim becomes a mouthpiece for mission as he continues to be worked upon by the 'loving Lord' (p. 93). Oxley does not make explicit what it is in Christian scripture, faith or culture that appeals to Selim apart from his being guided by a desire to 'know the truth' (p. 94), and takes it for granted that Christianity holds the truth and is only waiting to be discovered and embraced by her protagonist. There is an evangelical tenor to the text. God is communicating with Selim, filling his spirit with the 'true light of the Gospel' and encouraging him away from the 'deep darkness of Islam' (p. 94). Selim listens at last and claims himself as a follower of Christ just as the month of Ramaḍān comes around. Not only that, he reads the parable of the Prodigal Son in Luke 15 to his wife and she is thrilled to think that God may receive her gladly, just as 'that father received his son' (p. 101). Oxley criticises the subjugation and stagnation imposed upon Leila by Islam but portrays her as showing no flicker of doubt or dissent when her husband proposes that they abandon Islam.

Ch. 11 is a picturesque sketch of the wedding between Hasan and Nur and a poignant lament for his and Selim's father, who dies shortly after the ceremony, tended by a mullah and reciting the *shahāda*. Ch. 12, 'The pilgrimage', follows Selim and his remaining family as they travel to Mecca via Baghdad. Selim reads his Bible daily and comes to contrast the taxing disciplines that Islam imposes – fasts and pilgrimages and 'unmeaning ceremonies' – with the 'simplicity of the gospel story' (p. 117). He performs all the rites associated with Hajj, but in his heart he pities the Muslims around him. The Christian God finds him again as Selim recites John 14:27, 'Peace I leave with you' (p. 121).

Selim's pilgrimage concludes with Selim moving his wife, children and mother to the north of India, where Leila can take her rightful place as 'head' of a Christian household (p. 122), free from the lowly status forced upon her in the south. He professes his faith and withstands any resulting persecution with the 'grace of Christ' (p. 123). The last line of the short novel is a refrain Oxley makes several times: Selim is freed from 'darkness and bondage' and brought into 'light and liberty' (p. 123).

Naturally, the work is not theologically rigorous. Scripture is only cited rarely and with little or no commentary, as Oxley can safely assume that her readers' Sunday schooling will equip them with what they need to

appreciate her meaning. The characters are likewise broadly rendered archetypes: Ali Khan the dogmatic patriarch; Selim the sensitive and enlightened convert; Leila the pious, meek and ignorant Muslim wife. Oxley takes it for granted that Islam is darkness and Christianity is the true light, but she does not primitivise her characters too intensely. Even Ibrahim, the most fiery and zealous of the cast, is never violent or brutish, for example. Nor does Oxley condemn Islam in overly vociferous terms or in any real detail, apart from repeated yet perfunctory assertions that it obstructs women's progress and promotes ignorance among its followers, both male and female.

SIGNIFICANCE

Selim's pilgrimage appeared in numerous booksellers' lists but was not reviewed or cited, though that is perhaps not surprising given that it is a children's book that was intended to equip juvenile readers with a better understanding of Islam in India, inspiring them to pray and strive for the successful conversion of Indian Muslims to Christianity. Although it was quite innovative in its use of character and narrative to educate English boys and girls about the fruits of mission in southern India, it does not appear to have attracted much popular or critical success. It can be regarded as an interesting artefact and a literary advertisement for the CEZMS, written by an Englishwoman active in the mission field. It vividly exemplifies evangelical missionary perceptions of and attitudes towards Islam in its day.

PUBLICATIONS

[E.L. Oxley], *Selim's pilgrimage. A tale of Hindu Muhammadan life*, London, 1883

Katherine Laura Jennings

John Drew Bate

DATE OF BIRTH 26 August 1836
PLACE OF BIRTH Plymouth
DATE OF DEATH 26 January 1924
PLACE OF DEATH Paddington, London

BIOGRAPHY

John Drew Bate was born in Plymouth on 26 August 1836. He was baptised as an infant according to the Church of England rite on 28 December 1836, though he was baptised again by full immersion in 1854 and joined George Street Baptist Church, where he became a Sunday school teacher. He entered Regent's Park College, London, to train for the ministry and matriculated at London University in 1862 but did not take a degree. He married Beatrice Tagg, and shortly afterwards, on 11 August 1866, the couple sailed to India to serve with the Baptist Missionary Society. They arrived in Calcutta in January 1867. After a brief period in Bengal, they were transferred to Allahabad in 1868 and remained there until he retired due to ill health in 1897.

Both John and Beatrice developed interests in the culture and languages of India. Beatrice published the *North Indian tune book* in 1886, to which John may have contributed (Guenther, '*Ghazals*, *bhajans* and hymns', p. 165). In 1875, John produced *Hindee dictionary*, copies of which the government of India placed in all schools where Hindi was spoken. He also contributed articles to the *Baptist Magazine*, among other periodicals.

From an early point in his career, Bate made a study of Islam and went as far as to learn qur'anic Arabic. He planned a multi-volume work, *Studies in Islam*, though only one volume, entitled *An examination of the claims of Ishmael*, was published in 1884. Handwritten chapters from other parts are kept in the Bate archive. His interest in outreach to Muslims was rare among Baptists at this time. It was pioneered by George Henry Rouse, who spent the years 1862-3 and 1872-1908 in India, and it was taken up by Bate, though it was not until the early 20th century that more Baptist missionaries specialised in this work, including Lewis Bevan Jones (1880-1960) and William Goldsack (1871-1957), whom the Baptist Missionary Society set aside in 1914 for ongoing work with Muslims.

In 1873, Bate became a member of the Asiatic Society of Bengal and, in 1881, of the Royal Asiatic Society, London. In his retirement, he joined Folkstone Baptist Church. He died in London on 26 January 1923, and Beatrice on 14 January 1828. Of their children, five of whom died in India, their eldest daughter, Edith Emily Bate (d. 1957), who donated Bate's papers to the Royal Asiatic Society, served with the Baptist Missionary Society in Allahabad and Delhi, working with women through the Zenana Mission.

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

An examination of the claims of Ishmael and other writings

DATE 1884

ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

Bate's *An examination of the claims of Ishmael as viewed by Muḥammadans*, which he wrote in India, was published in Banáras (Varanasi) in 1884. On the title page it is described as the first 'Chapter' of 'Section i' of a work entitled *Studies in Islam*, a comprehensive examination of the claims made by Muslims that he planned to extend to at least three volumes. It includes a preface (pp. i-vii), an analysis of its argument (pp. ix-xiii), and an introduction, the main text and conclusion (pp. 1-352). Bate's sources include works by Sayyid Aḥmad Khān (d. 1898; *CMR* 24, 424-47), William Muir (d. 1905; *CMR* 24, 666-96), Charles Forster's (*CMR* 17, 139-47) *Historical geography of Arabia* (1844) and *Mahometanism unveiled* (1829), Edward Pococke's (*CMR* 8, 445-58) *Specimen historiae Arabum* (1660) and several travel accounts, including Richard Burton's (*CMR* 17, 368-83) *Pilgrimage to*

El Medinah and Meccah (1855). Like Forster before him, Bate cites Edward Gibbon's *Decline and fall of the Roman Empire* but expresses dislike of Gibbon's secular approach to writing history. He describes Forster's works as 'exceedingly erudite' (p. 110) and a 'magnificent achievement' (p. 213), but he disagrees profoundly with Forster's conclusion that Islam fulfils the promise made by God in Genesis 17:20. While Forster represents Islam as aiding Christianity in civilising the world, Bate sees enmity between the two religions as fulfilling the prediction that Ishmael's hand would be 'against every man' (Genesis 17:20). In his view, the blessing promised to Ishmael's heirs had no spiritual component and Islam has never 'proved a blessing to those races of the human family which have had the misfortune of being subject to' it (p. 203). In the same vein, with regard to Reginald Bosworth Smith (d. 1908; *CMR* 17, 294-306) he writes, 'Those who are of the opinion that the advocates of Christianity are hard upon the system introduced by Muḥammad sometimes seek to palliate or condone the evils inherent in that style, by urging that Islam has performed a noble mission' (p. 204), but he himself dissents from this view. He argues that any scientific advances made by Muslims owe nothing to Islam but are due to other factors, because they lack inventiveness and are no more than 'skilled copyists' (p. 222) and that traditions attributing a love of learning to Muḥammad are fabrications (p. 219). He believes that, wherever Islam spreads, it retards human progress and produces 'fatalism, despotism, polygamy and slavery' (p. 228). In fact, 'polygamy' and 'divorce' in Muslim societies are no more than 'pure licentiousness' (p. 269) because Islam places 'no real limits' on 'the intercourse of the sexes' (p. 270).

Informed by E.A. Freeman's opinion (he cites Freeman's *The history and conquest of the Saracens*, London, 1876), he asserts that apologists for Islam 'are apt to exaggerate' (p. 219). Islam may have been an improvement on the religion of 7th-century Arabia but it is too wedded to that century and locality to progress (p. 290). He believes he might be able to agree with the apologists for Islam if they stopped at seeing the faith as a 'scourge' raised up by God to punish 'Popish nations on account of their wickedness' (p. 217), but three classes of writers on Islam 'miss their way' (p. 207). First are those who think it does not matter which religion people follow as long as they are 'sincerely attached to some religion', and believe that all stand an equal chance of salvation because there is 'no such thing as objectivity in religion' (p. 207). He identifies Reginald Bosworth Smith as an example of this class, who see all religions as equally true (p. 208). The second class hold that all religions are equally false. Here he names Gibbon. The third class evaluate religions in terms of the contributions

they make to human progress, yet 'Islām does not profess to be a civilising agency, but an agency for the salvation of men's souls' (p. 209). This class enumerate Islam's contribution in the field of secular knowledge but overlook Islam's spiritual bankruptcy.

Some later parts of *Studies in Islam* that were never published have survived in their original manuscript form in the Royal Asiatic Society, marked 'not for publication'. They comprise 546 foolscap pages divided as follows: Section i, ch. II, 'Periklyte, or Paraclete?' (380 pages), Section i, ch. III, 'The prophet like unto Moses' (55 pages); Section ii, entitled overall *The genuineness and authority of the Scriptures*, ch. I, 'The charge of corruption brought by Moslims against our Scriptures' (150 pages); Section ii, ch. II, 'The Moslim doctrine of the cessation of the authority of our Scriptures' (105 pages); and Section iii, entitled *The claims of Muhammad*, ch. I, 'The claims of Muhammad considered in connexion with his personal character' (208 pages). It is not known whether Bate planned any further sections of this extensive work, though, as it stands, this manuscript shows he could navigate his way through the major topics of debate between Christians and Muslims at this time as seen, for example, in the public exchanges between Karl Gottlieb Pfander (d. 1865; *CMR* 24, 188-236) and Raḥmatullāh Kairānavī (d. 1891; *CMR* 24, 253-60) and their seconds at Agra in 1854. Section i, ch. II recalls the Christian belief that the Paraclete promised by Jesus is the Holy Spirit and argues that the identification of Muḥammad as the Paraclete was due to Muslim enthusiasm to locate predictions of him in the Bible, which led to the 'ingenious [...] manipulation of mere letters' (p. 13). This refers to the way in which some Muslim scholars have 'corrected' the Greek term *Parakletos* to *periklutos* (involving a change of vowels), which means 'much praised', and equated it with the Arabic term *aḥmad*, a cognate of Muḥammad, which has more or less the same meaning, 'more praised'. Section i, ch. III examines the claim that Deuteronomy 18:15 contains a prediction of Muḥammad. Bate argues that, although Muslims emphasise similarities between Moses and Muḥammad, there is no evidence that Muḥammad applied this verse to himself. In section ii, Bate discusses the charge that the Bible has been corrupted, arguing that Muslims do not agree 'as to the methods by which our scriptures came to be corrupted' (section ii, ch. I, p. 6) and that there is no evidence that the Torah was corrupted during the exile of the Jews in Babylon, as Muslims allege. In section ii, ch. II, a continuation of the defence of the authority of the Bible, Bate cites references in the Qur'an to the Torah, Psalms and Gospel, and discusses the doctrine of abrogation. He observes that the author of the Qur'an nowhere enjoins faith in his

book to the exclusion of the Old Testament, but makes belief in all the books necessary and 'makes no distinction among them' (section ii, ch. II, p. 10).

In section iii, ch. I, Bate examines Muḥammad's character and concludes:

> That Muḥammad was influenced by a desire to introduce among his fellow-countrymen a reformation of image worship, we do not deny, but when we are required to believe that he was the greatest and best of all the human race, in all time, that he was beyond suspicion of sincerity in all his words and acts, and that he was perfectly free from error of judgement and from moral taint, we are required to believe what is in plain opposition to all the facts that are known concerning him. (p. 8 from the end)

Bate asserts that Muḥammad was 'satanically inspired [...] in the composition of his book' (p. 89) and was guilty of 'pretension, falsehood, hypocrisy' and 'deception' (p. 23). He outlines the incident of the Satanic Verses (pp. 44-6) and Muḥammad's marriage to Zaynab (p. 89) as evidence that he fabricated 'revelation' to pursue his personal desires.

SIGNIFICANCE

This work demonstrates how much someone could learn about Islam and about popular debates between Christians and Muslims at a time when formal training in this was not available for field missionaries, either before they went to India or in India itself. As one of the first Baptists to develop an interest in evangelising Muslims, Bate's work also shows how the approach of missionaries such as Karl Pfander crossed denominational boundaries. Both missionaries set out to delegitimise Islam as a spiritual system, which, if Muslims accepted their arguments, would leave – or so they believed – no alternative for them other than to become Christian. Later, the Baptist missionary Lewis Bevan Jones (d. 1960) argued that, while this approach did produce converts, Muslims tended to convert to what they saw as a superior intellectual tradition rather than a faith offered in the form of grace and the experience of God's love, and also that other Muslims became even more bitter in their hostility towards Christianity (*The people of the mosque*, London, 1930, p. 298). Jones called for an approach that avoided controversy and for the type of literature produced by Pfander, Bate and others to be withdrawn. He recommended that missionaries should avoid mentioning any defects in Muḥammad's character and should probably not refer to him at all in their preaching, but rather that they should acknowledge 'the more important elements in Muslims' faith and practice' and build on that (p. 301). Best of all, Christians

should demonstrate their faith by living 'a holy life' among Muslims 'and in their sight'.

PUBLICATIONS

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MS London, Royal Asiatic Society – JDB/1/2, *Studies in Islam*

STUDIES

C. Bennett, *Baptist engagement with Islam*, Newcastle upon Tyne, 2025, pp. 115-19

Clinton Bennett

Three British women authors

BIOGRAPHIES

In the early 19th century, a number of women of British families living in India wrote about their experiences amongst Muslims, each publishing her writings in the form of a journal intended for readers primarily in the United Kingdom and North America. These accounts present insiders' views into what the women felt their purposes were in India and how they perceived the Muslims and Islamic beliefs and culture they encountered.

Fanny Parkes, born in Wales in 1794, was the earliest to publish an account of her time in India. In 1822, at the age of 27, she married Crawford Parkes, a writer (a clerk) for the East India Company. In the same year, she moved to India to be with her husband and spent most of the next 24 years there. It is not known whether she had a Christian belief, as she does not refer to matters of faith in her journal, but she nevertheless offers examples of relations between Christians and Muslims through her observations of others. She and her husband returned home from India for the last time around 1845, and she died in London in 1875.

Helen Catherine MacKenzie (née Douglas) was born in 1819, presumably in Scotland. In 1843, at the age of 24, she married Colin MacKenzie, a Scotsman who was a lieutenant-general in the Indian Army, and she went to India with him in 1846. She remained there for six years. Her writings about her time there reflect missionary interests and activities, and she offers a conservative Christian perspective on Muslims and Islam in India. She died in the United Kingdom on 31 March 1910.

Anna Harriette Leonowens was born on 6 November 1831 in Ahmednagar (present-day Ahilyanagar) to the east of Bombay, although she claimed to have been born in Wales. She was probably brought up in India and in 1849, when she was 18, she married Thomas Leon Owens, a clerk with the British Army. They lived and worked in India, Australia, Singapore and Penang before her husband died of a stroke in 1859. Leonowens eventually worked for five years as a governess for the royal family of Siam (Thailand). After she left Siam, she lived in North America and there wrote extensively about her past life. In her works, she refers to herself as a Christian and,



Illustration 10. Anna Leonowens

while her faith is very rarely the focus of her writing, her observations and commentary provide insight into Christian-Muslim relations. She died in Montreal on 19 January 1915.

MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Primary

F. Parkes, *Wanderings of a pilgrim, in search of the picturesque, during four-and-twenty years in the east; with revelations of life in the zenáná*, 2 vols, London, 1850

H.C. MacKenzie, *Life in the mission, the camp, and the zenáná; or, Six years in India*, 3 vols, London, 1853

A.H. Leonowens, *Life and travel in India. Being recollections of a journey before the days of railroads*, Philadelphia PA, 1884

Secondary

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J.E. Taneti, *History of the Telugu Christians. A bibliography*, Lanham MD, 2011

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Editors, art. 'Anna Harriette Leonowens', *Encyclopedia Britannica*; https://www.britannica.com/biography/Anna-Harriette-Leonowens
I. Sen (ed.), *Memsahibs' writings. Colonial narratives on Indian women*, New Delhi, 2008
S. Morgan, *Bombay Anna. The real story and remarkable adventures of the King and I governess*, Oakland CA, 2008
E. Baigent and L.K. Yorke, art. 'Leonowens [*née* Edwards], Anna Harriette', in *ODNB*
A.J. Arbuthnot, revised R.J. Stearn, art. 'Mackenzie, Colin', in *ODNB* (includes references to Helen MacKenzie)
K.K. Dyson, *A various universe. A study of the journals and memoirs of British men and women in the Indian subcontinent, 1765-1856*, Delhi, 1978

WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Writings on encounters with Muslims in India

DATE 1850-84
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

Helen MacKenzie, *Life in the mission*

Helen Catherine MacKenzie's *Life in the mission, the camp, and the zenáná, or, Six years in India*, which was first published in 1853, is her account of events, together with anecdotes and reflections, from her six years in India. An impressive 13 editions were published between 1853 and 1857, and at least one 1857 edition appeared under the title *Six years in India. Delhi, the city of the great mogul, with an account of the various tribes in Hindostan; Hindoos, Sikhs, Affghans, etc*. In the original edition, which comprises three volumes totalling 665 pages, Muslims or Islam are referred to in about half the pages.

As in her other writings, MacKenzie's Christian faith is conspicuous in this book and, of the three works explored here, her account is the most directly concerned with Christian-Muslim relations. During both her journey to India and her time there she promoted Christian practices that had been developed in the great Protestant awakenings of the 16th and 17th

centuries, such as 'field-preaching' and prayer meetings. She asserted that these had been common in the early Church and referred to the first four chapters of the Acts of the Apostles to defend her position (p. 14).

She often compares her own Christianity with Islam, which she takes for granted is false, and expresses suspicion of faith that lacks fervour or is tied to a government position or financial gain (pp. 66-7). She writes about a sermon she heard by a chaplain who praised religion as 'good and profitable' but left out all details of the Christian faith, including 'what [religion] was' and 'how it was to be obtained'. For her, it contained so little about true religion that a Muslim mullah 'might have been thankful for the loan of [the sermon], if he had found himself unprepared some Friday morning' (p. 5). Clearly, the Christian message should not be interchangeable with a Muslim address.

Since, in her view, Christianity is the only true religion, she presents instances of Muslims accepting Christianity or rejecting Islam positively. They include a Muslim 'learned doctor' who converted to Christianity through the efforts of the Christian catechist Behari Lal Sing (p. 66), a clever and well-read man named Muhammad Ali Khan, who is open to reading the Bible and has '*disbelief* in Islam' (p. 56), and a convert from Jallander who was baptised in spite of being advised against this lest the local Muslims attack him (p. 324). But such instances are rare, and MacKenzie discerns a general tendency among Muslims to be firmer than Hindus in their prejudices against Christians.

Although she believes that Christianity is superior, MacKenzie is nevertheless open to learning more about Islam and Muslims, and she sometimes speaks highly of individual Muslims she has met. For example, she wants to learn about the Shīʿa festival of 'Muharram' and notes that it is 'in remembrance of Hasan and Hoseyn, the two sons of Ali'. She makes sketches of what she sees of it, including Muslims dressed up as camels, with turbans and their bodies painted orange to represent the camels on which Ḥusayn fled from his enemies (p. 68). She also visits the homes of emirs (pp. 97-9) and offers them gifts for their wives, prompting the chief emir to declare that his gratitude will last for the rest of his life. In addition, while she is in Calcutta she observes that the Muslim servants who wait at the tables are always dressed immaculately in white and are always kind. She also mentions being greeted ('made salám') by Muslims (p. 37).

Alongside these stories, she includes others that show Muslims expressing superiority over Christians (pp. 63, 91). Both she and her husband were influenced by the missionary, author, and debater Karl Gottlieb Pfander (*CMR* 24, 188-236), who was known for his confrontational missiological

approach, and she recalls a Muslim in discussion with him arguing that the physical closeness of Christian men to women who were not their wives, kissing them and clasping them around their waists, is a testimony against Christianity. She remarks that the Muslim must be exaggerating about actual kissing and she expresses the hope that Pfander will explain to him that in fact Christianity does not sanction such practices and instead teaches Christians to 'abstain from all appearance of evil' (p. 63). She also writes about approaching five Afghans on camels and noticing that, as she drew near to them, one man nudged his wife to tell her 'to wrap herself up more closely'. MacKenzie herself felt judged by this because the Muslim man must have looked down on her because of what he regarded as her indecent immodesty (p. 92).

MacKenzie records that her husband accused Muslims of converting people to Islam 'by force', and she agrees with him (p. 323). She also tells how he recommends his Hindu comrade to read Pfander's *Mīzān ul-ḥaqq* ('The balance of truth') because it will help his comrade to find arguments that he can to confute Muslims (p. 323).

MacKenzie consistently assumes that Islam is inferior to Christianity and that sharing the gospel is the ultimate goal, though she does at the same time portray certain Muslim individuals, groups or practices positively.

Anna Leonowens, *Life and travel in India*

Anna Harriette Leonowens's *Life and travel in India, being recollections of a journey before the days of railroads*, which in the original edition of 1884 is 325 pages long and divided into 12 chapters, is an account of her explorations in India. It contains more descriptions of her surroundings than opinions or personal reflections, and Islam or Muslims are referred to in about a third of its pages.

She refers to Muslims as fascinating and well-educated, and sometimes as aggressive and as possessing moral failings such as treating women badly and using violence (pp. 153, 149, 103, 192). Her description of Roman Catholicism in India is perhaps harsher than her descriptions of Islam (pp. 57-9), and she notes that she has found some Muslims and Christians who have become what she calls 'Hindooized', following religious practices that lean heavily towards Hinduism (p. 56).

She goes into great detail about the architecture and history of the Islamic monuments she sees (p. 252), and portrays the city of Ahmedabad

as impossible to describe in its beauty and magnificence and preserving a 'high degree of civilisation' from the period of Moghul rule (p. 300). With appreciation and wonder she describes harems and Muslim weddings and funerals as well as the many Muslim sects she comes across. Overall, she appears to admire Indian Muslims and has nothing to say about their differences from Christians, though she does make some criticisms that resemble those of her contemporaries.

Fanny Parkes, *Wanderings of a pilgrim*

Fanny Parkes's *Wanderings of a pilgrim, in search of the picturesque, during four-and-twenty years in the east; with revelations of life in the zenāna* gives detailed descriptions of her time in India between 1822 and 1846, including accounts of women's life in harems. In the original two-volume 1850 edition, which numbers 1,010 pages, references to meetings with Muslims and descriptions of Islam occupy about a quarter of the total. In the glossary, she defines Islam simply as 'the religion of Muhammad' (vol. 1, p. xxix), and in ch. 26, where she outlines the history of Islam including a short biography of Muḥammad, she calls him no more than the 'founder of the system of religion that is named after him' (vol. 1, p. 243). As these examples suggest, her references to Islam and Muslims are often as factual as she can make them.

Wanderings of a pilgrim does not include any accounts of Parkes's own beliefs, so it is hard to know what her faith was. Her most positive reference to Christianity is in her expression of support for those who care for Indian girls sold to be slaves and bring them up in a Christian home, though she later declares these efforts to be a failed experiment (vol. 2, pp. 294-5). Parkes is generally pessimistic about the Christians she meets, suggesting that both those who seek positions of leadership in the church and those who convert to Christianity may do so more for financial than spiritual reasons. She observes that bishops display less faith than fakirs since they receive more money and live in greater luxury (vol. 2, p. 36), and she questions the motivations of converts who 'pray themselves into high salaries, who never thought of praying before' (vol. 1, p. 145).

In addition to criticising those who profit from Christianity, Parkes has a generally negative view of Christians who are intent on proselytising and trying to make converts. She calls into doubt the effectiveness of conversions when giving an account of a meeting with a young Indian who introduces himself as a Christian. He offers to help provide her and her

friends with food and, after feeding them, he recites a Christian creed and the Lord's Prayer in Hindi. She remarks that he sounds like a parrot as he does this and concludes that he does not comprehend his 'newly acquired religion' (vol. 1, p. 175).

Unlike MacKenzie and other mission-focused writers who emphasise the differences between Islam and Christianity and highlight commonalities as a way into witnessing to their own faith, Parkes observes commonalities and connections without doing this. She refers to a 'rosary' on which Muslims recite the names and attributes of God and expresses surprise that Christians, Hindus and Muslims, though they are very 'distant and distinct' from one another, use rosaries for the same purpose (vol. 1, p. 258). She also notes instances of close relationships between followers of the two faiths such as that of a Christian colonel whose wife and children were Muslims. He built a mosque for them across the road from the church, showing his support for his wife's religion and for his children being brought up as Muslims (vol. 2, p. 193). Parkes also refers to the family and friends of a Muslim woman who planned to marry a Christian (which is forbidden in the Qur'an) supporting her in doing this (vol. 1, p. 412), and finally she recounts the story of a Christian mother who was proud of her daughter marrying a rich Muslim prince, signifying that faith was less important than wealth when it came to finding a spouse (vol. 1, p. 449). Her recounting of these stories demonstrates clearly her belief that she thought the differences between the faiths were far from insurmountable.

SIGNIFICANCE

These three women authors' works exemplify the range of opinions represented in 19th-century Western women's accounts of India, with some very oriented towards conversion, some more religiously neutral, and some leaning towards anti-conversion. While these three women were very different from one another, they all wrote about Muslim harems and conversions from Islam to Christianity (albeit disagreeing on the desirability and authenticity of them), and they favoured detailed descriptions, often complimentary, of Islamic festivals, architecture, religious practices, dress, and people.

PUBLICATIONS

Fanny Parkes, *Wanderings of a pilgrim in search of the picturesque, during four-and-twenty years in the east; with revelations of life in the zenāna*, 2 vols, London, 1850, repr. Karachi, 1975, London, 1988; wanderingsofpilg01parluoft / wanderingsofpilg02parluoft (digitised version available through Archive.org)

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Mrs Colin MacKenzie (Helen Catherine MacKenzie), *Life in the mission, the camp, and the zenáná; or, Six years in India*, 3 vols, London, 1853

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Anna Harriette Leonowens, *Life and travel in India, being recollections of a journey before the days of railroads*, Philadelphia PA, 1884, repr. New Delhi, 2017; 007663908 (digitised version available through Hathi Trust)

STUDIES

Eaton, *Fanny Parks*

Gallagher, 'From the Siamese harem'

Habbegar, *Masked*

Taneti, *History of the Telugu Christians*

Snook, 'Counter-colonial travel writing', pp. 18-31

Sen, *Memsahibs' writings*

Morgan, *Bombay Anna*

Dyson, *A various universe*

Ashlee Quosigk

Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān

DATE OF BIRTH 17 October 1817
PLACE OF BIRTH Delhi
DATE OF DEATH 27 March 1898
PLACE OF DEATH Aligarh

BIOGRAPHY

Sayyid Aḥmad Khān (Sir Sayyid) was a leading Indian educational reformer and religious thinker. He was born and brought up in Delhi in the home of his maternal grandfather, Khwājah Farīduddīn (1747-1828). In January 1837, he entered the service of the East India Company and, in his 38 years of service, rose to the highest ranks open to Indians, *Ṣadr-i ṣudūr* and *Ṣadr amīn*. He wrote on a wide range of historical, religious and social topics, and is broadly regarded as one of the foremost public intellectuals of pre-Partition India.

Sayyid Aḥmad's earliest religious writings point to three major influences on his initial outlook: Shaikh Aḥmad Sirhindī (1564-1624/5) and the Naqshbandī Mujaddidī Sūfī order, to which he was linked intimately through his family; the theological, mystical and social thinker Shāh Walī Allāh (1703-62) along with his scholarly legacy; and the Barelvi *mujāhidīn* movement of Sayyid Aḥmad of Rai Bareilly (1786-1831) and Shah Ismāʿīl (1773-1831), who sought to restore Muslim political sovereignty and envisioned a society based on *sharīʿa*.

The 1857 Uprising marks a major turning point in Sayyid Aḥmad's life. This was a period of great personal loss, in which his mother and brother were killed and his childhood home destroyed. He was awarded the Star of India for his gallant support of British interests but, despite many efforts, he could not stem the tide of anti-Muslim sentiment. During this period, he took up the premise that 'pure' Islam, taught by the Qur'an and lived by the Prophet, consisted of religious (*dīnī*) guidance and did not directly address matters of culture and society. The way forward for the Muslim community, he argued, was one of integration into the social, political and economic spheres of the British Empire. He did not see any religious prohibition against the full participation of Muslims in all spheres of society.

Sayyid Aḥmad's most substantive religious writings were composed in the period after 1857. Soon after the Uprising, he was assigned to Meerut,

north-east of Delhi, where he composed several works aimed at rapprochement with the British. He wrote *Asbāb-i baghāwat-i Hind* in 1858, translated as *Causes of the Indian Revolt* and published in 1873, in which he emphasised that the revolt was neither pre-meditated nor representative of the Muslim community's resolve but arose from the concern shared by Hindus and Muslims alike, that the British were determined to convert India into a Christian land. He published three further pamphlets as part of a series entitled *Accounts of the loyal Muhammedans of India* that highlighted Muslim service and loyalty to the British crown. In 1858, he also turned his attention to the study of Christianity and the Bible. He published *Taḥqīq-i lafẓ-i 'Naṣārā'* ('Enquiry into the word "Christian"'), portions of which were included in his extensive exegetical study of the Bible, *Tabyīn al-kalām*. In 1868, he published another work important for Muslim-Christian relations, *Aḥkām ṭa'ām ahl-i kitāb* ('Regulations concerning the food of the People of the Book'). Drawing upon the legal opinions of Shāh 'Abdul'azīz (1746-1824), in this he argued that it was permissible for Muslims to sit at table with Christians and Jews and to even to eat food prepared according to Christian and Jewish dietary customs. The same attitude is evident in his *Musāfirān-i Landan*, the travelogue he wrote about his journey to Britain in 1869, accompanying his son Sayyid Maḥmūd (1850-1903), who was one of India's first beneficiaries of a grant to study in Britain.

In the 1860s, Sayyid Aḥmad's writings indicate a shift in his thinking towards naturalist theology. He sought to explain the supernatural in rational terms and to reinterpret scripture and miraculous accounts in the lives of religious persons. Having accepted post-Newtonian natural sciences as established truth, he called for metaphorical interpretation (*ta'wīl*) of all biblical and qur'anic texts that appeared to violate what could be experienced in the natural world. For him, reason (*'aql*), which he equated with the 'law of nature', was the ultimate criterion for truth. Any event contrary to nature signified a breach of the divine promise as established in creation and was thus inconceivable. Such a conviction about an all-inclusive, fully determined and closed nexus of natural law implied the negation of miracles and supernatural events as well as the rejection of the efficacy of petitionary prayer.

In 1870, he wrote *A series of essays on the life of Mohammed and subjects subsidiary thereto* as a response to William Muir's (1819-1905) *The life of Mahomet from original sources*, published in 1861. In this, he emphasised Muḥammad's progressive character. He expanded it into a much

larger study in Urdu on the life of Muḥammad, published 18 years later as *Al-khuṭubāt al-Aḥmadiyya fī l-ʿArab wa-l-sīra l-Muḥammadiyya*.

A series of essays on the life of Mohammed introduced the rather cryptic inclusion of a new dating system, the *nabvī* calendar, which Sayyid Aḥmad included in all his subsequent writings. This commenced on 22 December 609, which he calculated as the occasion of the first revelation of the Qur'an and the start of Muḥammad's prophetic minstry. In contrast to the traditional *hijrī* dating, which marks the Muslim community's exodus from Mecca to Medina, this calendar acknowledges the unity of Muḥammad's career. Whereas the exodus to Medina marked the shift in Muḥammad's role from religious leader to statesman, this new calendar emphasised monotheistic solidarity between Muslims, Jews and Christians rather than the particularity of Islam.

Sayyid Aḥmad's writings and public career from this time forward emphasised Muslim inclusion in the British Empire and charted a faith that was enlightened and consistent with the *mores* of polite society. In 1864, he founded the Scientific Society, an association for the vernacular translation and propagation of works of Western science and scholarship, and he became devoted to educational and social causes. In 1875, he established the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College at Aligarh, the beginning of the first secular university for Indian Muslims. He was resolved to bring about broad socio-religious reforms, reflected both in the character of his college and in his two journals, *Aligarh Institute Gazette*, which was founded in 1866, and *Tahzīb ul-akhlāq* ('The Mohammedan Social Reformer'), which was founded in 1870, an auspicious time when the dates of Christmas and *ʿĪd ul-Fitr* occurred on the same day. The opening article '*Taʿaṣṣub*' ('Prejudice'), which is still included in Indian school syllabuses, reflects the editorial agenda that was maintained in the journal for nearly 30 years. He writes:

> Due to misplaced zeal, we Muslims have wrongly considered prejudice to be a virtue. But of humanity's meanest traits, prejudice is the worst. [...] Prejudice forbids listening, understanding, and the careful consideration of differing opinions. [... Muslims must see others as] our brothers and it is obligatory for us to love them, care for them, and develop friendship with them. (*Tahzīb ul-akhlāq,* December 1870, p. 2)

He also wrote a number of important religious works in this period, including the three-volume *Tabyīn al-kalām* ('The Mohomedan commentary on the Holy Bible', 1862, 1865, 1887), and the six-volume *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān* ('Commentary on the Qur'an', 1880-95).



Illustration 11. Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān with Nawāb Muḥsin al-Mulk and Sayyid Maḥmūd, his son, the first Muslim high court judge in the British Raj

By going back to the sources of the Islamic religious sciences, Sayyid Aḥmad in his religious thinking attempted a comprehensive response to challenges confronting the Muslim community. He tried to develop a theology on the pattern of the Muslim response to Greek philosophy and science during the early ʿAbbāsid period. His development, however, was interwoven with his experience of working and living among British Christians and with the direct study of Western ideas in general and of the Bible in particular. There has been conjecture about his purpose in engaging with the Bible and Christian theology but, in the main, he called for acceptance of the Bible as the revealed word of God. Freed from the distortions of erroneous dogmatic interpretation and read in the light of the Qur'an, he argued that it continued to be relevant and even salvific.

Sayyid Aḥmad saw the necessity of a radical reappraisal of Islamic religious thought. His strides in this direction opened a pathway for many to follow, though what has been considered his wilfulness in interpretation as he attempted to rationalise the supernatural events recounted in scripture frequently led to censure by contemporary and later critics.

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Tabyīn al-kalām
'The Mohamedan commentary on the Holy Bible'

DATE 1862-87

ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Urdu and English

DESCRIPTION

Tabyīn al-kalām fī tafsīr al-Tawrāt wa-l-Injīl ʿalā millat al-Islām ('Elucidation of the word in commentary on the Torah and Gospel according to the religion of Islam') comprises three distinct parts. The first, published in 1862, serves as an introduction; the second, published in parts in 1863 and in full in 1985, is mainly a commentary on Genesis 1-11; and the third, published in *Taṣānīf-i Aḥmadiyya*, part 1, vol. 2, in 1887, is a commentary on Matthew 1-5. In actuality, the third part was composed before the other

two, and excerpts from all three parts were circulated in the form of journal articles as each was written. The first two are in Urdu with an English paraphrase. The third is only in Urdu. The inclusion of the English paraphrase reflects Sayyid Aḥmad's desire to engage Christian readers. This is consistent with the way in which he composed the work with the assistance of Jews and Christians as well as Muslims and also had portions printed and distributed prior to the final collation, allowing for comments and revisions.

The printing of *Tabyīn al-kalām* as articles began in Meerut in 1860 or 1861 and continued in Ghazipur when Sayyid Aḥmad moved there in 1862. Instalments were circulated and later re-edited and collated into the three parts. Sayyid Aḥmad worked closely with Alṭāf Ḥusain Ḥālī (1837-1914), ʿInāyat Rasūl ʿAbbāsī Chirāyākoṭī (1809-1905), Fāʾiḍ al-Ḥasan Sahāranpurī (1816-87), and a Jew named Sālim (Ḥālī, *Hayāt-i jāved*, pp. 75-6), who provided additional insight into sources and assisted with the Hebrew typesetting. Chirāyākoṭī was closely connected with the Jewish communities in Delhi and Calcutta and provided sources cited in *Tabyīn* such as the works of Saʿadia Gaon (d. 942; a copy of his Arabic translation of the Torah, including Persian and Urdu interlinear translations, was printed in Lucknow in 1881, see *CMR* 24, 387-91) and Rashi (d. 1105). He studied Hebrew and adopted aspects of Jewish dietary rules, ritual prayer and dress, which included a signature red *fez* hat. He also carried a reference letter to facilitate entry into synagogues such as the one in Delhi (Asghar Abbas, 'Peish alfāẓ' [unpaginated introduction], Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān, *Tabyīn al-kalām fī tafsīr al-Tawrāt wa-l-Injīl ʿalā millat al-Islām*, 3 vols, Aligarh: Sir Sayyid Academy, 2004, vol. 1).

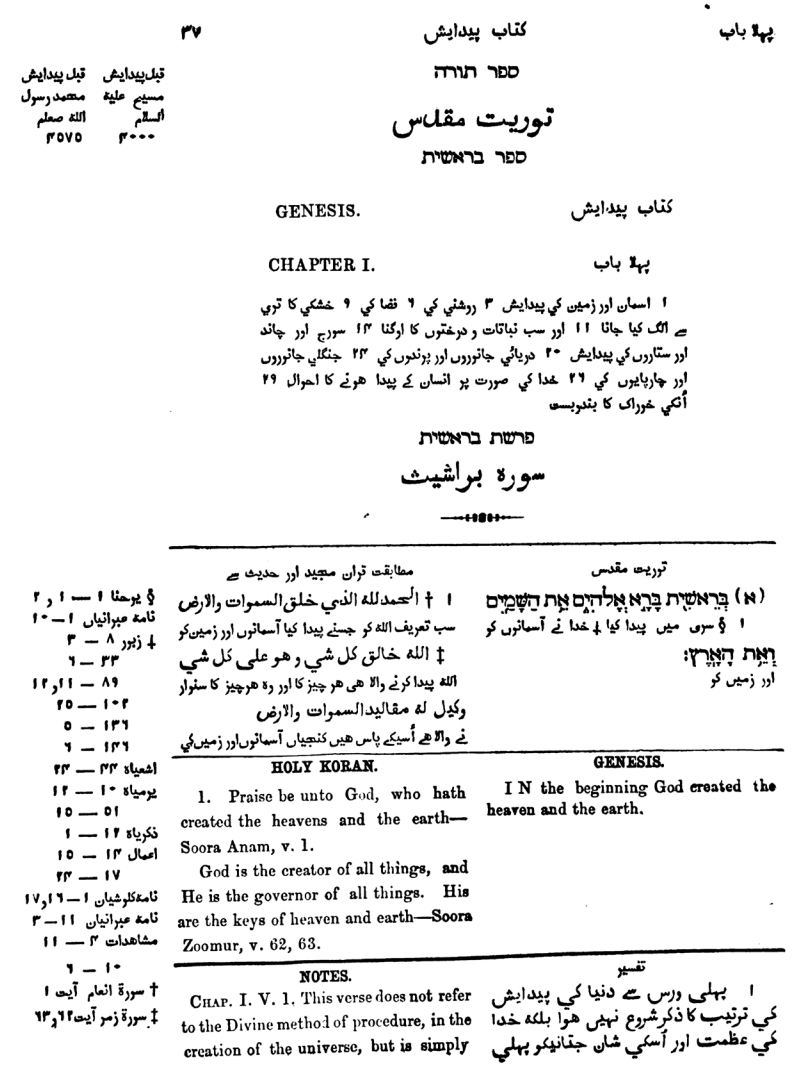
The first part, *Hādh muqaddimāt* ('Initial discourses') is an orderly presentation in ten discourses of Sayyid Aḥmad's thoughts on the Bible, as follows: 1. Prophets are sent for the salvation (*najāt*) of humankind; 2. What is revelation (*waḥy*) and [what is] the divine word (*kalām ilāhi*)?; 3. What are the books referred to in the Qur'an as *Tawrāt*, *Ṣuḥuf-i anbiyāʾ, Zabūr* and *Injīl*?*;* 4. What confidence can Muslims have in these books?; 5. How many books were sent down from God to prophets, and are they all included in the Bible?; 6. What are the methods employed in Islam to enquire into a religious book and confirm its authenticity?; 7. What is the opinion among Muslims regarding the corruption of the Bible?; 8. Are the books that compose the Bible identical with the original writings of the inspired authors?; 9. What trust do Muslims have in the versions of these books?; 10. What is meant, according to Islam, by one commandment of God cancelling another or being cancelled by another? These discourses

are followed by two appendices charting biblical events in Gregorian and minus-*Hijrī* dates.

The subjects dealt with in this introductory part address the controversy concerning the textual integrity and the authority of the Bible as it had been brought to a head by Karl Gottlieb Pfander (1803-68; *CMR* 24, 188-236) and Raḥmatullāh Kairānavī (1818-91; *CMR* 24, 253-60) during their debate in Agra in 1854. The ten discourses address two primary obstacles that would hinder a serious Muslim reading of the Bible: the belief that the biblical text has been corrupted (*taḥrīf*), and the conviction that the biblical revelation has been abrogated by the Qur'an. Before Muslims could join in the study of the Bible with a 'pure heart' (*nekh dillī se*), these historical concerns required reasoned consideration. So Sayyid Aḥmad's purpose here is to demonstrate that the Bible has not been corrupted or abrogated and that reading the text with care is spiritually profitable. In this way, he attempts to remove obstacles that might hinder Muslim readers from theological engagement with the text.

The second part, *Kitāb paidāish* ('The Book of Genesis'), contains an edition, translations and commentary of Genesis 1-11. The Hebrew text is set out with an interlinear Urdu translation and the Authorised Version below in one column, with parallel passages from the Qur'an and Hadith in Arabic, together with Urdu and English translations, in the opposite column. The actual commentary with notes from Muslim, Christian and Jewish scholars appears beneath. Sayyid Aḥmad explains that the first five books in the extant Hebrew Bible are entitled *Tawrāt* (*Kitāb paidāish*, p. 8), by which he means that this is the Torah that is commended in the Qur'an. The recension made by Ezra, he argues, was confirmed by Jesus and this is ample testimony for these writings to be deemed assuredly sound and without any textual adulteration (*taḥrīf-i lafẓī*), though their meaning has been compromised (*taḥrīf-i maʿānī*), so they require careful reading and explanation. The task of contemporary interpreters, he argues, is to free the Torah from the clutches of dogma, whether Jewish, Christian or Muslim.

In this lies a distinguishing feature of Sayyid Aḥmad's commentary on Genesis: in order to deal with all the accretions that custom and tradition have added to the meaning of the text, he introduces two hermeneutical principles. The first is that, since revelation is always rational, simple reason must be employed to determine whether a verse is to be read figuratively or literally. If natural revelation, which is the law of nature, is the original *sharīʿa* it cannot be negated, so if scriptural revelation, which includes prophetic speech, exists within nature (*ṭawr 'l-fiṭrat*) it must



پہلا باب | کتاب پیدایش | ۳۷

ספר תורה

توریت مقدس

ספר בראשית

کتاب پیدایش — GENESIS.

پہلا باب — CHAPTER I.

۱ اسمان اور زمین کي پیدایش ۳ روشني کي ۶ فضا کي ۹ خشکي کا تري سے الگ کیا جانا ۱۱ اور سب نباتات و درختوں کا اوگنا ۱۴ سورج اور چاند اور ستاروں کي پیدایش ۲۰ دریائي جانوروں اور پرندوں کي ۲۴ جنگلي جانوروں اور چارپایوں کي ۲۶ خدا کي صورت پر انسان کے پیدا ہونے کا احوال ۲۹ اُنکي خوراک کا بندوبست

قبل پیدایش مسیح علیہ السلام ۴۰۰۰ — قبل پیدایش محمد رسول اللہ صعلم ۳۵۷۵

פרשת בראשית

سورۂ براشیث

توریت مقدس

(א) בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֵת הַשָּׁמַיִם
۱ § سرو میں پیدا کیا ‡ خدا نے آسمانوں کو
וְאֵת הָאָרֶץ׃
اور زمین کو

معابقت قران مجید اور حدیث سے

۱ † الحمدللہ الذي خلق السموات والارض
سب تعریف اللہ کو جسنے پیدا کیا آسمانوں اور زمینکو
‡ اللہ خالق کل شي و هو علی کل شي
اللہ پیدا کرنے والا ھی ھر چیز کا اور وہ ھرچیز کا سنوار
وکیل لہ مقالید السموات والارض
نے والا ھے اُسیکے پاس ھیں کنجیاں آسمانوں اور زمینکي

§ یوحنا ۱ — ۱ و ۲
نامہ عبرانیاں ۱ — ۱۰
‡ زبور ۸ — ۳
۶ — ۳۳
۸۹ — ۱۱ و ۱۲
۱۰۲ — ۲۵
۵ — ۱۳۶
۶ — ۱۴۶
اشعیاہ ۴۴ — ۲۴
یرمیاہ ۱۰ — ۱۲
۱۵ — ۵۱
ذکریاہ ۱۲ — ۱
اعمال ۱۴ — ۱۵
۲۴ — ۱۷
نامہ کلوشیان ۱ — ۱۶ و ۱۷
نامہ عبرانیان ۱۱ — ۳
مشاهدات ۴ — ۱۱
۶ — ۱۰
† سورۃ انعام آیت ۱
‡ سورۃ زمر آیت ۶۲ و ۶۳

HOLY KORAN.

1. Praise be unto God, who hath created the heavens and the earth—Soora Anam, v. 1.

God is the creator of all things, and He is the governor of all things. His are the keys of heaven and earth—Soora Zoomur, v. 62, 63.

GENESIS.

I N the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

NOTES.

CHAP. I. V. 1. This verse does not refer to the Divine method of procedure, in the creation of the universe, but is simply

تفسیر

۱ پہلي ورس سے دنیا کي پیدایش کي ترتیب کا ذکر شروع نہیں ھوا بلکہ خدا کي عظمت اور اُسکي شان جتانیکو پہلي

Illustration 12. A page from Sir Sayyid Aḥmad's commentary on Genesis 1:1

conform to this divinely established order. The second principle is that, since texts have internal coherence that controls interpretation of them, priority must be given to information actually in the text itself rather than in outside sources or even later revelation. These became Sayyid Aḥmad's major contributions to the Urdu exegetical tradition, and they also marked the beginning of his lifelong quest to identify interpretative principles that could become recognised and adopted by all interpreters.

An example of this occurs in the commentary on the creation account in Genesis 1, where Sayyid Aḥmad explains that the divine will once spoken was certain to be accomplished, though the progression of creation proceeded gradually through inherent processes (*nechar ke qā'idē ke mutābiq*, p. 74). What was happening is that once the law of nature was instated by God, the events of history unfolded through a process of cause and effect. A consequence of this principle is that scripture affirms the process of evolutionary creation which came about gradually, as is apparent in the fossil record.

Another example can be seen in Sayyid Aḥmad's discussion about sin and death. For Christians, he observes, Adam and Eve's act of disobedience incurred original sin, which altered the human condition and resulted in a state of separation between God and humans. This could only be rectified by Jesus's atoning sacrificial death. But for Sayyid Aḥmad himself as a Muslim, Adam and Eve's act was not about a cosmic battle between good and evil but was rather a tale of human self-awareness. In eating the forbidden fruit, they attained the 'light of knowledge' that comes naturally at the age of accountability. He interprets this story as a metaphorical account of the end of innocence and the consequent awareness of sin, pain, and death. Adam and Eve, like all other humans, became conscious of the fact that what a person does, or fails to do, has ongoing consequences (p. 150).

It is in this part of the commentary that Sayyid Aḥmad announced his most quoted interpretative principle: God's word does not contravene God's work (p. 35). His objective was to define when a passage should be read figuratively rather than literally, and the method that issued from this was that the literal meaning (*ḥaqīqī maʿnā*) of the passage should be applied first, but if the result is inconsistent with plain reason then a figurative alternative must be considered, such as allegory, metaphor or simile (p. 31). Thus, if the fossil record evidences an ancient earth then the 'days' of the creation account must be interpreted figuratively, although figurative readings must be consonant with the context and structure of the passage.

Sayyid Aḥmad published Part 3, *Injīl-i muqaddas Mattī az bāb-i awwal tā bāb-i panjam* ('The Holy Gospel of Matthew from the first chapter to chapter 5'), in *Taṣānīf-i Aḥmadiyya* in 1887. However, it was the first part of the work he wrote. It was the prototype for the whole of Sayyid Aḥmad's commentary on the Bible and it is useful for comprehending his initial approach throughout, although careful reading of it shows that it predates the shift in Sayyid Aḥmad's thinking towards naturalist rationalism and the rejection of the supernatural.

In Part 3, even more than in the other parts, Sayyid Aḥmad expresses incontrovertible support for the Bible's authenticity. The extant text of Matthew, he writes,

> is the same as that read by the earliest disciples [...] to think that their *Injīl* and our present *Injīl* are different is absolutely incorrect [. ...] In my view, the essential point is this: the word of St Matthew – beyond any doubt – is worthy of acceptance. (*Injīl-i muqaddas Mattī*, p. 25)

This was an important clarification. It addressed the concerns of Muslims, such as Raḥmatullāh Kairānavī, who rejected the text as corrupted beyond remedy, and also of Unitarian Christians, such as Raja Ram Mohan Roy (1772-1833) and William Adam (1796-1881) in Calcutta, who called for ch. 1 of the Gospel of Matthew to be omitted (*The precepts of Jesus, the guide to peace and happiness*, Calcutta, 1824). Sayyid Aḥmad also took pains to clarify here, as he does again in Part 1 of *Tabyīn*, that the writings referred to in the Qur'an as *al-Injīl* are not what Christians call the Gospel of Matthew but rather the New Testament as a whole.

At the beginning of this part he gives a summary of what it contains: a concise history of the Christian religion (*mazhab*) until the coming of the Islamic religion (*mazhab*); the Jewish religion (*mazhab*) before Christianity; highly regarded scholars and Sufi masters and their view of the Messiah, his context and his preaching; the Messiah's disciples; disagreement (among Christians) over the divinity of Christ (of which he gives 13 examples); the identity of St Matthew, and the date and language of his Gospel. He also includes a table of contents for each of the five chapters of the Gospel of Matthew that he studies. The commentary itself comprises spiritual and social guidance, which is most evident in what he says about the Sermon on the Mount, where he explains the necessity of both internal and external faithfulness because a disciple must be transformed from the inside.

This study of Matthew 1-5 offers a first glimpse of what Sayyid Aḥmad envisioned for the whole of the commentary. It contains extended quotations from the Qur'an and Hadith and from leading Muslim authors such as Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī, Ibn al-ʿArabī and a few others in the Arabic original together with an Urdu translation, as well as a few couplets of classical Persian poems. It sustains an ethos that had been aptly characterised in the maxim of Sufi scholars of Delhi such as Shāh ʿAbdulʿazīz, son of Shāh Walī Allāh, who famously insisted that 'All things can be reconciled when there is a will' (J.M.S. Baljon, *Religion and thought of Shāh Walī Allāh Dihlawī*, Leiden, 1986, pp. 16-18). It was believed that the fundamental differences

among Muslim thinkers could be overcome if attention was moved from the disagreements between them to *tawḥīd* as the central message of divine revelation. Sayyid Aḥmad extends this ethos into engagement with Christians through interpretation of the Bible.

In the Sufi worldview to which Sayyid Aḥmad alludes here, there was an underlying spiritual progression towards *tawḥīd-i wujūdī*, union with the divine Unity. As he explains, moral conduct and virtuous behaviour are insufficient without the interiorised (*bāṭinī*) ethic of the heart (*Injīl-i muqaddas Mattī*, p. 112). Moral action, the kind that is necessary for right living and peaceful coexistence with others, proceeds from internal transformation. He points out in the introductory essay to this third part of *Tabyīn*, 'A brief history of the Christian religion', that first-century Christians regarded theological opponents as 'weaker brothers' rather than as 'unbelievers' (*Injīl-i muqaddas Mattī*, p. 20). It is his aim here to rekindle such tolerance of difference and forbearance towards opponents.

This third part of *Tabyīn* demonstrates a moral vision that seeks to rise above polemical confrontation. One consequence of this is that the writing has a distinctively different tone from that of, for example, Raḥmatallāh Kairānavī or John Muehleisen Arnold (1817-81; *CMR* 17, 224-30), who examine the scriptures of the other in order to undermine their foundations and reveal the 'falsities and perversions of the Koran, so as to render the comparison available for actual missionary operations' (Muehleisen Arnold, *The Koran and the Bible*, preface). By contrast, Sayyid Aḥmad takes seriously the command of Jesus to do unto others as you would have done unto yourself (Matthew 7:12), and Muḥammad's injunction that the Almighty will not show mercy to someone who has not shown mercy to others (*Injīl-i muqaddas Mattī*, p. 102). This is the impulse that can be detected in the parts of *Tabyīn* that were written earliest; it is more pronounced in the third part, but it is evident throughout. The recognition of this underlying attitude facilitates the interpretation of ambiguous statements that require a broader context in order to be properly understood. It also adds texture to the composite picture of Sayyid Aḥmad's purpose in studying the Bible. He regarded the scriptures of the Jews and Christians, the present Bible, as bearing witness to *tawḥīd*, the central message of Islam. Fundamentally, Muslims share with the two other traditions a belief in scripture as the revealed word of God. He applied categories from the science of Hadith to say that, whereas the Qur'an is *matlū* (*verbatim* revelation), the Bible is *ghayr matlū* (indirect dictation) like the Hadith. Though some may regard *matlū* revelation as superior to

ghayr matlū, jurists ascribe parity to the two when they are establishing matters of doctrinal authority. There remain important differences with regard to assessing the revelation recorded in these scriptures, and yet Sayyid Aḥmad concluded that, when it was properly read, the Bible was of spiritual benefit to Muslims and useful for interpreting the Qur'an.

Sayyid Aḥmad is convinced in this commentary that neither the meaning of the references to *taḥrīf* in the Qur'an nor the facts of history warrant the view prevalent among Muslims of his time that the Bible has been corrupted and its value rejected entirely. On the contrary, he demonstrates that the Bible has played a positive role in salvation history as God states throughout its pages the unchanging call to monotheistic faith. He also rejects the interpretation of abrogation according to which a new revelation supersedes or revokes a command that has already been given in a sacred text. Rather, he reinterprets the concept of abrogation to mean that divine commands issued at a particular time and for a determined purpose retain value and can be reapplied in new contexts. Thus, even after the revelation of the Qur'an, the Bible continues to be relevant if it is read critically and with awareness of various interpretations. Muslims should read the earlier scriptures in the light of the clear qur'anic message of *tawḥīd*, and as followers of Muḥammad they are also followers of Jesus the Messiah (*Injīl-i muqaddas Mattī*, pp. 82, 84).

In assessing Sayyid Aḥmad's vision and the depth and quality of his exegesis, it is important to keep in mind his basic assumptions and the limitations imposed upon him by his training and the materials available to him. From the mid-1860s onwards, he continued to reflect on questions of historical criticism. Even in his later days, he was not afraid to abandon his earlier positions in favour of newly won convictions, as he shows in detail in his *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*. In this later work, he affirms his earlier stance on the Bible as revelation, even as he challenges central tenets of both Christianity and Islam.

SIGNIFICANCE

Tabyīn functions as a window into the mind of a seminal thinker among modern Muslims. Sayyid Aḥmad is one of the very few religious thinkers who have regarded the scripture of the other positively and have made an extensive and careful study of it. This was out of more than politeness or expediency, because he recognised that the Bible could be a help to Muslims as well as Christians and Jews. He saw that there was great benefit in reading them together. As he explains in the first lines of his exegesis of the account of the creation of the world in Genesis 1,

> Without this history, the world would be in darkness, not knowing where it came from or to where it is going. In the first page of this book, a child may learn more in an hour than all the philosophers in the world learned without it in a thousand years. (*Kitāb paidāish*, p. 30)

Instead of disputing from a distance, Sayyid Aḥmad gathered Muslims, Christians and at least one Jew to explore the intertextuality between the Bible and the Qur'an and to accept them as complementary works that proceeded from the same divine Source.

This major work was highly unusual in the history of Christian-Muslim relations and it raised a wide range of challenges, as can readily be seen in the diverse responses to it. The underlying reason for this is to be found in Sayyid Aḥmad's desire to understand and reconcile the revelation found in the Bible and Qur'an: 'The guidance and light brought by that prophet [Muḥammad] will be stated in this commentary upon the divine word that comprises the Old Testament and New Testament.' (*Injīl-i muqaddas Mattī*, p. 15).

It is important to note that some early responses to *Tabyīn al-kalām* from both Muslims and Christians were positive. A letter from a certain Maulānā Faṣīḥ (possibly Muḥammad Faṣīḥ Ghāzipurī) for example, noted that a group of Muslims met weekly for the sole purpose of discussing Sayyid Aḥmad's writings on the *Injīl*:

> Thanks be to God – countless thanks – that there is a man in this generation that gives prudent guidance. Your *tafsīr* is read here every Tuesday. And its worthy praise is evoked in reading each sentence, and thankfulness to God for you flows from our hearts. (Ḥālī, *Hayāt-i jāved*, p. 171)

Among Christians, T.J. Scott, Principal of Bareilly Theological Seminary, wrote in the same vein: 'Oh that all nations of the world, particularly the Muslim peoples (*ahl-i Islām*), could attain the opinions (*rā'i*) of Maulvi Sayyid Ahmad Khan Bahadur' (Padrī Rajab 'Alī, 'Illumination: knowedge and religion', *Nūr Afshān* [4 October 1883] 314-15, p. 315).

Others were vocal in their criticisms. A relatively early reaction came from the United Presbyterian missionary John Robson, working in Ajmer (1836-1908; *CMR* 24, 274-9), in a two-part review that was published in the *British and Foreign Evangelical Review* in 1867 and 1868. There, he chided Sayyid Aḥmad for his inadequate grasp of the Hebrew language and exegetical method, and heaped criticisms on his tendency to make the teachings of the Bible conform to Muslim doctrine. He found little to say about Sayyid Aḥmad's rejection of fellow-Muslim accusations of corruption of

the biblical text and its abrogation by the Qur'an, as though grudging the courage he showed. But then, at the end of his review, Robson more or less inadvertently underlined the dimensions of Sayyid Aḥmad's achievement when he pointed out that any Indian who read the Bible would look for exegetical help, just as they did when they read the Qur'an, and when they saw the 'care, reverence and sacrifice' that is evident in this work, 'this will make them regard it as a much better guide both as regards acquaintance with the subject and earnestness of purpose, than any with which Christian teachers have furnished them' (*British and Foreign Evangelical Review* 17 [1868] p. 66). So, Robson was saying, *Tabyīn al-kalām* should be taken as a challenge to Christians to show 'our superior scholarship and acquaintance with the subject' (p. 66).

Responses changed dramatically following the 1883 reprint of the first two parts of *Tabyīn* because by then it was being read in light of Sayyid Aḥmad's later works, most specifically *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*. As the editor of *Nūr Afshān*, Rajab ʿAlī, explained, 'These [writings on the Bible in *Tafsīr*] inflicted incomparably greater damage than the combined voluminous attacks of Raḥmat Allāh [Kairānavī] and Hadī ʿAlī', two of the foremost Muslim polemicists (Padrī Rajab ʿAlī, 'Murāsalat' [Correspondence], *Nūr Afshān* (6 April 1882) 106-9, p. 108). The reason was not because Sayyid Aḥmad attacked the Bible in his commentary on the Qur'an, which he clearly did not, but rather that he attempted to deconstruct the supernatural elements in biblical accounts, including the stories of Jesus's birth, his miraculous healings and his death on the cross.

The shift in the response draws attention to the development of Sayyid Aḥmad's thinking. His theology had not fully crystalised in 1865 when he was working on *Tabyīn* but, by 1883, he had adopted a naturalist rationalism that denied the possibility of supernatural intervention in the created world. This aspect of his theology provoked extensive criticism and caused many of the innovative ideas in this earlier work to be overlooked.

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Aḥkām ṭaʿām ahl-i kitāb
'Regulations concerning the food of the People of the Book'

DATE 1868
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Urdu

DESCRIPTION

In the years after the traumatic events of the 1857 Uprising, Sayyid Aḥmad Khān looked critically at the poor state of relations between most of the Muslim population of India and the British. He wanted Muslims to thrive through loyalty to British – perceived as Christian – rule and peaceful acceptance of it. Most Muslims were convinced that it was not permissible for them to have free and friendly social intercourse with the British, and many considered eating and drinking with Christians contrary to *sharīʿa*. To challenge this attitude, in 1866 Sayyid Aḥmad wrote an extensive essay in the newly established *Aligarh Institute Gazette* entitled *Aḥkām ṭaʿām ahl-i kitāb* ('Regulations concerning the food of the People of the Book'), and printed this as a tract 90 pages long in 1868. He based the arguments in it on passages from the Qur'an and Hadith and on a number of *fatwā*s by the eminent scholar Shāh ʿAbdulʿazīz Dihlavī (1746-1824; *CMR* 24, 127-35).

In the preface, Sayyid Aḥmad briefly states his basic conviction that eating food prepared in Christian homes as well as practising conviviality with Christians is *ḥalāl* (acceptable according to *sharīʿa*). In the main body of the book, he lists nine common concerns raised by Muslims, each followed by a detailed response. He ends with a lengthy conclusion. The concerns and his responses can be summarised as follows:

1. Are the British of the present time to be considered People of the Book (*ahl-i kitāb*) as referred to in the Qur'an? Answer: Yes. The British, in all their sectarian variety and irrespective of what they believe and practise as Christians are to be considered People of the Book.

2. Does the term for food, *ṭaʿām*, include meat from properly slaughtered animals (*zabīḥah*)? Answer: Yes, because all commentators of the Qur'an have taken the term *ṭaʿām* to include slaughtered animals and all kinds of food.

3. Is it necessary for the animal to have been slaughtered according to the prescriptions of Islam? Answer: We must distinguish the food of the People of the Book that has been explicitly allowed to Muslims, and question only whether the meat being served has been slaughtered according

to the prescriptions of the *sharīʿa*. Here the principle applies: what is certain is not invalidated by what is doubtful. A sound Hadith, reported by Abū Dāʾūd, supports this principle. Further, it is licit to follow the clear legal teaching of any of the legal schools, especially if the point in question has not been given a clear answer in one's own school. Also, if doubt arises as to whether a *mushrik* ('associator') has killed the animal, the Muslim can inquire about it and then act accordingly. But the possibility does not make the eating of food offered to the Muslim guest by People of the Book generally forbidden.

4. Can food that is served in a British home be accepted, since normally those who prepare their food are low-caste persons? Answer: Yes, it is licit. What ultimately counts is not the identity of the cook, but rather the practice of the Prophet who ate food prepared by Christians without any hesitation, and this despite all the doubts that were expressed about this matter in his time.

5. How can one be sure that the vessels the British use for cooking and eating are ritually clean? Answer: The clear teaching of the relevant and sound Hadiths is that the Prophet did not criticise his Companions when, during military raids, they drank water from the vessels of *mushrikūn*. Furthermore, Shāh ʿAbdulʿazīz teaches in his *fatwā*s that the important question is whether the vessels used are clean or unwashed. To eat from vessels that have not been cleaned, is forbidden.

6. How can it be permissible to sit around a table and to use a knife and fork, and thus unmistakably to copy the Christians? Answer: To use knife and fork and to eat sitting around a table are nowhere forbidden. These customs are, in fact, followed by Muslims in other parts of the Islamic world, such as Turkey. So, to follow them does not constitute an imitation of an exclusively Christian custom and does not clearly define the one who follows it as a Christian. If the Muslims of India are not aware of these matters, and in consequence draw wrong conclusions, it is their own fault.

7. Where is conviviality (*muwākalat*), which is to say eating together with Christians, established as permissible according to the *sharīʿa*? Answer: Conviviality with Christians is licit because the relevant qur'anic verses state not only that 'their food is lawful for you' but also that 'your food is lawful for them' (Q 5:5) and thus imply approval. The Hadith relevant here is listed by Abū Dāʾūd in the chapter of his collection on hospitality (*ẓiyāfat*). As Shāh ʿAbdulʿazīz shows, since no explicit prohibition of eating and sitting together with the People of the Book is stated, by simple logic it is not forbidden.

8. How can it be acceptable to eat together with People of the Book when this inevitably leads to an increase of mutual love and affection? Answer: Eating together with the People of the Book is clearly permissible. The most revered jurists have stated that to eat with the People of the Book on occasion is permissible. However, even these legal scholars have failed to make the crucial distinction between the People of the Book and people belonging to other religions. The prohibition against cultivating friendships between Muslims and Christians is only of the kind that would imply surrender to their religious beliefs. The crucial distinction is between the love among Muslims as members of the one *umma* on the one hand, and the love Muslims owe to all people around them – as practised by all the great Sufis – thus attracting non-Muslims to Islam. This kind of love does not imply succumbing to their religion. Such love is practised between Muslims and their non-Muslim spouses as well as their offspring, and it is practised by them towards neighbours in general.

9. Although conviviality is permissible, is it not against the common good to issue a *fatwā* allowing this since people might then take the food of the British without caring anymore whether it contained forbidden things or not? Answer: To accept this kind of reasoning would amount to saying that the validity of every legal prescription concerning *ḥalāl* and *ḥarām* depends on whether it promotes the common good or not. It would mean that the hitherto valid principle 'Need makes licit forbidden things' would be changed into the principle of 'Necessity renders forbidden that which is allowed'. This amounts to making what is legal illegal and what is illegal legal, and simply amounts to unfaithfulness in matters of religion.

In the conclusion, which is written in Arabic with an Urdu translation, Sayyid Aḥmad makes three remarks about the connected but wider issue of how Muslims should relate to Christians in the given political situation. In the first, citing Q 41:33-5 and 25:63, he requests Muslims to be forbearing and pursue friendships with the British, and to strive for peace with them in humility. In the second, he reminds his readers that they live as subjects and as neighbours of the British, under their legal protection. The British have bestowed manifold benefits upon us, he explains, by administering justice. They do not rule by subordinating one group to the other but rather with equity, protecting the rights of all people regardless of their religion. They do not prohibit the performance of religious duties such as ritual prayer, fasting, payment of alms and pilgrimage, nor do they prohibit assembly for the Friday prayer and communal prayer on feast days, except in instances of revolt and rioting and other forms of extremism. They dispense justice over us in disputes that relate to marriage, divorce

and inheritance, and they legislate in accordance with what has been handed down and transmitted in our *sharīʿa*. In these circumstances, why should Muslims not accept the British rule of law? They protect our lives and administer our affairs, take care of our cases of killing, and they are doing well by us.

In his third remark, Sayyid Aḥmad explains that it is the duty of the people to obey the orders of the ruler (*sulṭān*) and to follow orders in matters relating to this world (*dunyā*). When the Muslims of India think of a model for themselves, he explains, they should remember times when the people of Islam were ruled by non-Muslims. There have been three instances of this: the first, when the children of Israel were subjects of the Pharaoh and he ruled over them; the second, when the first Muslims were living in pagan Mecca before the *hijra*; and the third, when the first Muslims emigrated to Christian Abyssinia. As far as they could, in all these situations Muslims obeyed the laws of those who ruled over them and lived together with them.

SIGNIFICANCE

The work was important and useful as a practical guide in a situation of adversity. Indian Muslims were not their own masters at the time Sayyid Aḥmad was writing and, as an alternative to rejecting everything that did not conform to Muslim customary practice, he made inventive use of the Muslim tradition to provide permission and advice for Muslims living in proximity to *mushrikūn*, which came with British rule.

Understandably, his arguments met with some hostility and elicited at least one response, which came from Imdād ʿAlī Akbarābādī in his *Imdād al-iʿtisāb maddāhīn fī ʿAḥkām ṭaʿām ahl-i kitāb'* ('Aid for the offence of the admirers of "Regulations concerning the food of the People of the Book"', Cawnpore, 1868). He argued that Sayyid Aḥmad recommended Muslims to ignore established dietary norms and to eat food that had not been slaughtered or prepared according to traditional religious practice (and was therefore not *ḥalāl*). If Muslims do not need to follow these norms when in a Christian or Jewish home, then why should they adhere to them anywhere else? Would this not lead to the end of this accepted religious practice? Akbarābādī was also concerned that studying in European schools would lead to ignorance of the socialisation and intellectual formation derived from studying the madrasa curriculum. This was a shift of authority from Muslim sources to European ones, which seemed to open the way to rejection of Muslim faith and conversion to Christianity. Akbarābādī's criticisms followed an established line of argument that was typical of the

Deobandī movement and other traditionalists, but Sayyid Aḥmad's view was growing in currency and ultimately became the accepted way in many regions in India.

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Christian Troll and Charles M. Ramsey

Safar-nāmah musāfirān-i Landan
'Account of the travellers to London'

DATE 1870

ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Urdu

DESCRIPTION

Safar-nāmah musāfirān-i Landan was one of the results of the journey to England made by Sayyid Aḥmad in 1869-70. His ostensible reason for embarking on this was to accompany his younger son, who had won a government scholarship to study at Lincoln's Inn, though he also intended to observe English educational establishments and to search out material for a response to Sir William Muir's (1819-1903; *CMR* 24, 666-96) *The life of Muhammad* (1858), which he thought calumnious. (Muir, who was Sayyid Aḥmad's superior as lieutenant-governor of the North-Western Provinces, had awarded his son the scholarship and had given Sayyid Aḥmad a grant towards his journey.) This work had hurt Sayyid Aḥmad deeply and he was determined to reply: he wrote in a letter on 20 August 1869, 'I am determined to write a full length study in refutation even if its preparation turns me into a pauper and a beggar' (Muḥammad Ismāʿīl Pānīpatī, *Maktūbāt-i Sir Sayyid*, vol. 1, Lahore 1976, p. 431). He sold and mortgaged property in

order to pay for the journey (Graham, *Life and work*, p. 69) and, accompanied by his younger son and another son, a young cousin and a servant, he left Benares on 1 April 1869, travelling by train and cart to Bombay, on to Suez and Alexandria, across the Mediterranean to Marseilles, up through France and across to Dover and on to London, where he arrived in early May. He stayed in England for 17 months, returning home on 2 October 1870.

Sayyid Aḥmad's initial plan was to write regular articles from England that would appear in the *Aligarh Institute Gazette*, which he had founded in 1866, and then publish them in an illustrated book. This worked for the first four months, but he stopped writing because of the hostility caused in India by a letter he wrote six months after arriving in London. In this he praised the culture he saw around him to the disadvantage of his own Indian culture: he commented that, compared with an Englishman, an Indian was like *maile kuchaile vaḥshi jānvar* ('a dirty, ragged, wild animal'). He resumed in January 1870, though his writing no longer contained the exuberance of the earlier articles. He did not write any account of his journey home.

Nothing came of the planned book during Sayyid Aḥmad's lifetime, though in 1881 the articles describing the first month of the group's journey appeared in *Tahzīb ul-akhlāq* ('The Mohammedan Social Reformer'), a journal he had founded when he returned home, and a few years later Major-General G.F.I. Graham included lengthy translations and paraphrases of them in *The life and work of Syed Ahmed Khan*. Only in 1961 were the majority of the articles brought together by Muḥammad Ismāīl Pānīpatī in *Musāfirān-i Landan*.

Pānīpatī's edition also contains copies of letters Sayyid Aḥmad wrote back to India while on his journey. In these, he reveals his intention to find works that would enable him to respond to William Muir and his plan to study the British educational system in order to reproduce it in Aligarh.

In his articles, Sayyid Aḥmad describes how he visited libraries and schools in London and attended events such as Queen Victoria's birthday celebrations and the opening of parliament, and in addition went to 'famous and spacious mansions, museums, engineering works, shipbuilding establishments, gun-foundries', was 'present at the meetings of several societies, and [...] dined at clubs and private houses' (from a letter of 15 October 1869, quoted in Graham, *Life and work*, p. 183) and was made an honorary member of the Athenaeum Club (Graham, *Life and work*, p. 106). He attended Charles Dickens's last public reading of his works and met many famous people, including Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881; *CMR* 17, 165-75), with whom he 'talked long and earnestly' about Carlyle's

lectures *On heroes, hero-worship, and the heroic in history*, which included a detailed appraisal of Muḥammad as a prophet-hero (Graham, *Life and work*, pp. 98-9). He also travelled outside London, to Cambridge, Bristol, Winchester and elsewhere.

In what he writes, he makes plain that he has been deeply impressed by what he has discovered in England. Everything about the country, its landscape, institutions and the attitude of its people appears superlative. Europeans are civilised and elegant, possessing superior technology and governance and a lively spirit of enquiry. So, after seeing that the railway stock used in Egypt has been entirely made in England or France, he can only declare, 'There is no doubt that the European sucks in a love of cleanliness and beauty in all things with his mother's milk. The people of other lands have it not' (Graham, *Life and work*, p. 146).

Sayyid Aḥmad's main concern was to share with his fellow-Muslims his discovery of new thought patterns and new learning. All this was to serve as the kernel for his educational venture, on which he embarked on 26 December 1870 soon after his return from England. He first founded a Committee for the Better Diffusion and Advancement of Learning among Muslims of India, and next organised a national essay-writing competition for deliberations on the ways and means to spread modern scientific education among Muslims. In addition, his son, who had accompanied him to England, presented a scheme for the founding of the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College in Aligarh (see Syed Muhammad Mahmood, 'Proposed scheme of MAO College [1873]', in Rahat Abrar [ed.], *AMU minority character. A documented history*, New Delhi, 2025, 7-11). In 1875, Sayyid Aḥmad established the Madrasat ul-ʿUlūm, which evolved into the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College in 1877 and became Aligarh Muslim University in 1920.

Sayyid Aḥmad's inquisitive mind and quest for knowledge permeates his travelogue. On board the ship from Alexandria to Marseilles he is excited to meet Ferdinand de Lesseps (1805-1894, the French engineer of the Suez canal (Graham, *Life and work*, pp. 150-2), and also Nasiban, the illiterate Muslim maid who is on her twenty-first trip to England as part of her job (p. 153). In Bristol, he is amazed to see the Clifton Suspension Bridge over the River Avon, which he regards as a feat of technology. He is struck by the fact that it has been built by public subscription, and he urges his countrymen to emulate this glorious example of self-help and philanthropy and not to depend only on the state for public welfare (*A voyage to modernism*, pp. 204-5). This exhortation paid rich dividends: on his return home, he was able to raise substantial funds to establish the

educational institution in Aligarh that was to benefit millions of students, both boys and girls, mostly from underprivileged Muslim families in India. That he had an observant eye is evident from what he writes about his landlady, Mrs Ludlam. He shares with delight his account of this enterprising, financially empowered and decent lady with fine manners (Graham, *Life and work*, pp. 186-7), alerting his readers to the cause of female education and gender parity. Her sister, who was a voracious reader, receives his praise as well; she borrowed from him some books on Islam, which he was reading as part of his project to refute Muir's biography of the Prophet (Graham, *Life and work*, p. 187). In order to gain firsthand experience of the British educational system he makes a study of the ways in which the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge function. He introduced many of their best features in his own College, including halls of residence, dining with British teaching staff, a debating society, a hobbies workshop, games and sports, critical thinking, moral training and values, and civic awareness.

In all that Sayyid Aḥmad writes about his journey there is very little about Christianity, even though he visited churches, was present at services and met church figures. There is nothing about any religious inspiration behind the advanced civilisation he almost lyrically praises, even though European authors at the time regularly attributed the advances in their culture to Christianity and contrasted it with what they saw as the immobility of Indian and Middle Eastern culture under the repressive hold of Islam. Maybe Sayyid Aḥmad's silence here is indicative of his thoughts, though the net result of his experiences in London and other parts of England was an ardent enthusiasm to assist Muslims in India to take advantage of all the changes their country was going through and to bring their faith into the world in which they lived.

He did not compromise his Islam, keeping up the daily prayers and refusing wine at meals on ship and brandy as a medicine (Graham, *Life and work*, pp. 82, 92). In all the photographs taken of him he appears wearing his characteristic fez.

SIGNIFICANCE

The articles brought together in *Safar-nāmah musāfirān-i Landan* show as clearly as any of Sayyid Aḥmad's other works his openness to new ideas, experiences and artefacts, even though they may not be directly connected with Islam, might upset traditional Indian Islamic customs, or be associated with the British or Europeans. He did not see in them threats to Islam as a tradition of belief, despite the fact that they might upset the

forms that were familiar to Indian Muslims. The attitude he reveals suggests strongly that he was able to discern what was essentially Muslim and to employ whatever he came across in its service.

The admiration for English, and more widely European, ways that Sayyid Aḥmad shows enthusiastically in these articles found expression in his later writings and ventures. Without abandoning Islam in any way, he sought to find ways to bring Muslims and their beliefs into fuller appreciation for and engagement in the world that had moved far forward in the countries he visited and was changing daily in India itself. Maybe more than anything else, the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College in Aligarh benefitted from his visit and what he wrote about it.

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David Thomas

Edward Rehatsek

DATE OF BIRTH 1819
PLACE OF BIRTH Ilok, Austro-Hungary
DATE OF DEATH 1891
PLACE OF DEATH Bombay

BIOGRAPHY

Edward Rehatsek was born in Ilok, Austro-Hungary (today in the eastern-most part of Croatia), overlooking the Danube, on 3 July 1819, the only son of his Czech father, Franjo Rehaček, and his German mother, Marija. Baptised a Catholic, he was schooled in Hungarian, Slavic, German and Latin. On the basis of his letters, one scholar has argued that early in his life he regarded himself not as a Hungarian but as a Slav whose homeland was Croatia (Franković, 'Prepiska', pp. 129-30).

As a young man in Austro-Hungary, Rehatsek was educated in European languages and engineering sciences. He was attracted to revolutionary and subversive literature and his letters refer to both successful and abortive attempts to procure banned books on a wide range of topics, including politics, philosophy and religion. While still young, he regarded himself as an atheist and, in his letters, he expressed particular admiration for the ideas of the French philosopher and Orientalist Constantin-François Volney (1757-1820; *CMR* 21, 101-12). He does not say which aspect of Volney's thought he found most attractive but, on the basis of his own ideas at the time and also his later writings, it would appear that he was attracted to Volney's criticism of religious traditions, his advocacy of rationalist Deism, and his promotion of the radical theory that Christ was a myth not an historical figure.

In 1843, Rehatsek sailed to North America, arriving in New Orleans and soon settling in or near Cincinnati. He learnt English and worked as an engineer, reportedly amassing sizeable wealth. In 1847, he moved to India, where he settled in Bombay. Initially employed in public works, he soon took a position at the Free General Assembly's Institution (later Wilson College), where he taught Latin, science and mathematics and, by 1867, he was an examiner in Latin at Bombay University. Although he continued to teach Latin and mathematics, by 1871 he had been appointed examiner in Arabic and Persian at Bombay University.

Over the course of 30 years Rehatsek produced a large number of English translations, including from Arabic, Persian and French, as well as philological studies that still remain influential in Islamic studies, South Asian studies, Arabic and Persian studies and Parsi studies. In Bombay in 1863, he won a prize for an essay on reciprocal influences between the European and Islamic traditions and, in 1866, he published *The Emperor Akbar's repudiation of Esllám*, a translation of selections of the Mughal courtier 'Abdulqādir Badā'ūnī's Persian account of the emperor and the new religion that Badā'ūnī, and also Rehatsek himself, believed Akbar had originated. This translation established Rehatsek's *bona fides* as a translator from Persian and anticipated the succession of translations, many from previously untranslated texts, that he would produce throughout his life.

By 1871, Rehatsek had retired from his teaching position in order to devote himself entirely to scholarly pursuits. In 1873, he was made a Fellow of Bombay University and, in 1874, a member of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society. In 1877, he was elected a member of the Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft (German Oriental Society) and in 1879 he took up the Wilson Philological Lectureship at the University of Bombay, where he delivered lectures on Semitic languages.

As a translator, Rehatsek made important and enduring contributions to the study of Islam. After his prize-winning essay on the reciprocal influence of European and Muslim civilisation, his published articles include translations from and studies of the *Masnavī* of the celebrated Persian poet Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī (1873-5), some work on Arabic talismans (1873-4), Arabic astral sciences (1875), Sabean inscriptions (1871-4), Christianity and the pre-Islamic Arabs (1870s-1880s), Shī'ism (1876), Islamic numismatics (1871-4), occultism, magic and the occult sciences (1871-4, 1878-80, 1885-89), Christianity in Persia before the Arab conquests (1877), and Christianity among the Mongols (1877).

Works from the final decade of his life include an article on the 'Life of Jesus according to the Muḥammadans' (1881); a discussion of whether or not the Arabs burnt the Library of Alexandria (1884); an article on Jesuit missionaries at the court of the Emperor Akbar (1886); another article translating Akbar's letters asking for translations of the Christian scriptures (1887); articles on the travels of Europeans and Christians to Arabia, Persia and India (1882, 1883, 1886, 1891); articles on Christianity in Goa (1870s-80s); an article on Muslim heresiology (1878-80); a philosophical essay, 'Relations of Islam to Christianity, and of Christianity to civilisation' (1887); and an influential translation from Arabic of an account of

the Christian martyr-saints Bilawhar and Yudasaf (1890), whose story was identified in the 19th century as deriving from the life of the Buddha.

Rehatsek died in Bombay on 11 December 1891 and was 'cremated in Hindu fashion' according to his wishes (Royal Asiatic Society, 'Mr. Rehatsek', p. 157). Never having married and being childless, he reportedly donated all his money to provide scholarships for Indian children and all his books to a library in Bombay. His unpublished manuscripts were eventually sent to his patron and collaborator in England, F.F. Arbuthnot (1833-1901), who donated them in 1896 to the Royal Asiatic Society in London, where they have remained ever since.

A man of his time, Rehatsek's ideas about the history of Islam and Christianity are the products of post-Enlightenment epistemology now shown to be essentialist, reductive and motivated by colonialism and imperialism, and so containing much that today is recognised as erroneous. But his commitment to unexpurgated, faithful translations of Arabic and Persian works of history, philosophy, ethics and literature have done much to ensure his lasting influence on subsequent generations of scholars.

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Works on Christianity and Islam

DATE 1877, 1887
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

Rehatsek wrote very little about relations between Christianity and Islam as two faith traditions. His main interests lay elsewhere, in the languages of the Islamic world, textual studies and unusual compositions. In his great body of writings, only two works shed any light on his attitude towards the traditions of Christianity and Islam, and that from the oblique angle of relations between the Western and Eastern worlds. One is his first substantial work, his *Prize essay on the reciprocal influence of European and Muhammadan civilisation*, which he wrote in its first version in 1863-4, and the other an article entitled 'The relations of Islam to Christianity, and of Christianity to civilization', which he wrote about 15 years later, in 1887.

Rehatsek wrote his *Prize essay* in 1863-4 and published it in enlarged form under the title *Prize essay on the reciprocal influence of European and Muhammadan civilisation during the period of the khalifs and at the present time* in Bombay in 1877. In this later publication he explains in the Preface that the prize was offered by Sir Charles Trevelyan (1807-86), at the time 'the Finance Minister of India' (p. vi), for an essay in Hindustani or Urdu, with an English translation, on the following theme:

> Compare the influence of Greek learning on the Arabs, under the Abbaside Caliphs of Bagdad and the Ommyade Caliphs of Cordova, with the subsequent influence of Arabian learning on the reviving European mind after the Dark Ages; and from the comparison infer the probable influence which the mature intellect of Europe should exercise in its turn, now that it is once more brought in contact with the Muhammadan mind in India. (p. v)

Rehatsek wrote his essay in English and translated it into Persian, contravening the rules of the competition. This did not go well with the assessment committee, who included among their members Sir William Muir (1819-1905; *CMR* 24, 666-96), and they judged that, even though Rehatsek's essay was better than the only other submission, the prize should be divided equally between the two competitors.

The essay in its enlarged form is divided into an Introduction and four chapters, in accordance with the four points in the instruction for the

competition. The main text is 113 pages long with an additional 30 pages of notes.

The brief Introduction (pp. 1-4) makes the point that progress in civilisations is the result of absorbing into themselves the intellectual advances made by other civilisations. Within the early Muslim community under the Rightly-Guided Caliphs and the Umayyads of Damascus there was little intellectual development apart from in the realm of poetry.

In ch. 1, entitled 'Sketch of Arabian learning during the reign of the Abbaside Khalifs of Baghdad' (pp. 5-35), Rehatsek traces the development of the main scholarly disciplines under the early ʿAbbāsid caliphs, particularly al-Maʾmūn (r. 813-33), as they drew on help from Greek works in translation. The chapter is effectively a series of sketches of the major philosophers and physicians of the ʿAbbāsid era, among whom Ibn Sīnā stands out, with some reference to religious differences within Islam. For this history, he acknowledges a debt to Gustav Weil's *Geschichte der Chalifen*, published between 1846 and 1851 (p. 26).

A minor, though distinct theme running through the chapter is that the Arabs did little for themselves apart from compose poetry. In the early centuries, the sciences and the impetus for theological debate came mainly from the Greeks, and the leading scholars in philosophy, medicine and astronomy were often Christians. Of course, this is in line with Trevelyan's request, but it leaves the impression that the Arabs themselves were helpless.

In ch. 2, 'A general view of history and science under the Ommyade Khalifs of Cordova' (pp. 36-64), Rehatsek traces the history of Islamic Spain from the first invasions in the early 8th century to the fall of Granada in the 15th century, drawing liberally on Pascual de Gayangos's two-volume *History of the Muhammadan dynasties in Spain*, a translation of Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad al-Maqqarī's (1577-1632) *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*, published in 1840-3 (e.g. pp. viii, 36). He then relates the activities of four leadings physicians before turning briefly to the philosopher Ibn Rushd (pp. 62-3). He concludes that the period known as the Dark Ages in Europe coincided with 'the most brilliant period of the history of the Arabs' (p. 64), with the result that the Crusaders knew nothing about their enemies: 'They imagined that they were going to fight barbarians scarcely worthy to fall under their noble swords. But they had to deal with a nation which was as valiant as it was enlightened, and Arab civilization triumphed over that formidable attack' (p. 64).

In ch. 3, 'The revival of learning in Europe' (pp. 65-82), Rehatsek lists at length words that were borrowed from Arabic into Spanish and other European languages. This was in accordance with the rule that

> one sign among many that the tongue which had formerly manifested such a mighty power of influencing others, and of engrafting its own vocables on them, and has left such permanent traces of its superiority, must have enjoyed the advantage of high culture in the sciences most useful to man. (p. 70)

He gives details of trades, arts and sciences learnt by Europeans from the Arabs, including 'those which were useless and detrimental; such were astrology, alchemy, blood-revenge, magic, and trial by ordeal' (p. 74).

As learning was revived in Europe, it declined in the Arab world, so much so that numerous errors crept into Arabic works. Rehatsek cites the example of the Persian historian Mirkvand's *Rawḍat al-ṣafā'* from the 15th century, in which the Greek philosophers are so badly distorted that they are made believers in the oneness of God (pp. 79-83).

In ch. 4, 'Influence of European learning on the Muhammadans of India during the present age, and what is required to make it more effective' (pp. 83-113), Rehatsek outlines the scholarly interest in the Arab world that has recently developed in Europe, including the editing and translating of works by Muslim authors. He goes on to say that Indian Muslims have also published such works themselves, though they have favoured scholarship that is now outmoded. 'Hence it happens that highly accomplished and educated Muhammadans who have not enjoyed the advantages of European learning have the crudest notions of geographical and historical facts which are familiar to every school boy' (p. 89). If the free-will principles of the Mu'tazila, who flourished under al-Ma'mūn, had been retained, the petrification into which Islamic scholarship has sunk may have been avoided, but as it is Islam in India has decayed into superstition and folk-religion.

One remedy is for Muslims, together with other Indians, to mix with Europeans and learn from them. Another is to make changes to the Indian education system, including education for women. 'Associations, mechanics' institutes, debating and reading clubs can do much for the promotion of learning and enlightenment' (p. 110), he continues, and the innovative works of individuals such as Sayyid Aḥmad Khān must be applauded (p. 111). In a word, Indian Muslims should greet the new knowledge and

technology that is being introduced rather than shun it because it is not Muslim. They

> will best promote their own interests, prosperity, and advancement if they cease to brood in dark melancholy over the past greatness and glory of ancient times, and stir up all their energies to an active life, enterprising in education, in science, in commerce, and in all useful arts. (p. 113)

In this prescription for economic and intellectual advancement, Rehatsek applies the European Enlightenment thinking that had formed him. His overall argument in the essay is that civilisations advance by learning from one another, as is instanced in the ʿAbbāsid Empire and late medieval Europe. Just as in those periods the inferior civilisation learned from the superior, so now in India Muslims should abandon their irretrievable past and open themselves to an intellectually and culturally prosperous future. He is not saying they should abandon their religion, but they should free themselves from its current outmoded form that traps them. As he sums it up: 'Enlightened Christianity encourages discussion and research on all points, whilst Muhammadan dogmatism suppresses it whenever it can' (p. 93).

In 1887, Rehatsek returned to this general theme in a 36-page article entitled 'The relations of Islam to Christianity, and of Christianity to civilization', which appeared in the *Calcutta Review*. As its title indicates, it is divided into two parts, the first making a comparison between the potential for social change in Islam and Christianity (pp. 1-22) and the second exploring the relationship between Christianity and social change (pp. 22-36). Rehatsek's overall aim appears to be to ascertain the importance of religion as a force for change within society and also a force for constraint.

He starts by declaring that, just as Christianity 'is not a *sine qua non* of civilization, although but few impartial men will deny that it has been favourable to the development of it' (p. 1), Islam can be the same provided that Muslims stop dictating the law to other religions and are prepared to learn from them: 'the time has arrived when the texts repugnant to progress, such as those concerning the duty to wage war against infidels, to despise them, to take blood-vengeance, &c., must gradually fall into abeyance' (pp. 1-2). Islamic civilisation flourished in the past and gave impetus to change in Europe through what was borrowed in the Crusades (here Rehatsek draws on his earlier essay). The same can happen again as long as Muslims are prepared to learn from others, as some are doing in India. 'Not only in commercial but also in other affairs, the Indian Moslems are

beginning to show that they are, under British influence and example, quite able to cast off their lethargy, and to take their share in the advancement of civilization' (p. 9).

In order for change to take place, it is not necessary for Muslims to abandon Islam entirely. The civilisation founded on Christianity is full of 'oppressions and every kind of fraud', and 'it, therefore, follows that in order to attain in course of time a civilization like that of Europe, Moslems must not necessarily become Christians' (p. 11). Here Rehatsek moves into unrealistic optimism: he declares that Christianity must itself change 'to suit the advanced state of our race', and suggests that, in Islam, 'the reforming sects, the Wahibis for instance, [might] so interpret certain passages of the Qorân as not to clash in the least against the requirements of modern civilization and progress' (p. 11). He underlines this by summarising the poor results of Christian mission among Muslims, which he attributes to outmoded forms of Christian doctrine, and looks forward to change. He summarises with approval thoughts of the missionary T.P. Hughes (1838-1911):

> In all the theological movements of the Protestant church, the feeling is more or less evident, that the radical conceptions of Christian doctrine stand in need of a transformation, and that the one-sided intellectual rule which makes a number of theoretical scholastic propositions the standard of piety, must make way for another representation of Christianity. (p. 14)

– nothing less than new formulations of the Trinity and person of Christ are needed.

In the following pages, Rehatsek examines relations between Muslims and those who govern them in parts of the world where European influence has come either through direct rule by European nations or through European influence on local rulers. As he sees it, the outlook is fair:

> An extensive commerce has spread its net over Mahammadan countries. Railways, steamers, telegraphs have been established, western political ideas have found admittance, social reforms have been introduced, slavery has, at least theoretically, been abolished in several countries, and in many respects European models are imitated in the administrations of governments. Fanatics gnash their teeth at all these improvements, but advanced and truly educated Moslems hail them with joy, without any fear that their religion will be subverted by them. (p. 15)

He is aware, however, that Islam must change because, in its present form, it is in decline. He leaves unanswered the question of whether it can change, recognising that attempts such as that led by Sayyid Aḥmad Khān 'are but as a drop in the ocean of the uneducated masses, who consider

them as heretics, and would prefer to remain altogether uneducated [...]. This is the dilemma' (p. 22).

At this point he turns to argue that 'a purely Christian civilization, without any admixture of heathenism, has never before existed, and has also hitherto nowhere been evolved'. He does not return to Islam.

In this essay, Rehatsek's real interest is the relationship between religion and social change. His perception is that, while Christianity has never been regarded as providing the full scheme for social construction, with the result that societies in Christian countries have progressed under a variety of forces, Islam has been taken as the foundation for society, with the result that innovation has been rejected as un-Islamic and stagnation has set in. However, he recognises periods in Islamic history when this has not been the case, and calls for rejection of restrictive forms of Islam. The problem is to find a mechanism for changing Islam that does not distort it beyond recognition.

SIGNIFICANCE

Neither the essay nor the article appears to have attracted much attention. William Muir writes that the essay 'is replete with suggestive information and remarks; and more especially in the important branch of the subject relating to the advantages to be gained by the Muhammadan mind in India from European learning' (*Prize essay*, p. vii), though that seems more a dutiful comment than an enthusiastic compliment. No one seems to have responded to the ideas in the article.

If there is one point of weight in either of the works, it is that, in them, Rehatsek does not characterise Islam as set and therefore unable to tolerate change. Many European scholars in the 19th century portrayed it in this way as a result of deducing that, since not only the doctrines of Islam but also the legal regulations that governed individual and communal conduct were set out in the revealed sources, they were eternally applicable and unchangeable prescriptions. Rehatsek takes the opposite view and is able to cite instances from Islamic history to support his case. A weakness in his argument, however, is that he cannot see how the current conception of Islam among Muslims themselves, particularly in India, as complete, perfect and immune from criticism can be changed. As was demonstrated in the next century, his optimistic hope that the Wahhābīs might lead the way forward (*Prize essay*, p. 11) was to prove spectacularly misplaced.

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Gregory Maxwell Bruce

William Hooper

DATE OF BIRTH 1837
PLACE OF BIRTH East Harptree, Somerset
DATE OF DEATH 3 October 1921
PLACE OF DEATH Mussoorie, Utrakhand

BIOGRAPHY

Born in Somerset, William Hooper, studied Sanskrit at Oxford University and obtained Bachelor of Arts (1859), Master of Arts (1861) and Doctor of Divinity (1887) degrees. He undertook missionary training at the Church Missionary College in Islington, and was commissioned for service on 21 June 1861. He began work in Benares, India, where he served from 1861 to 1868, and was ordained in Calcutta in 1862. In 1868, he returned to England to serve as curate and vicar in various churches until 1872, when he went back to India to become Principal of St John's Divinity School, Lahore, where he stayed from 1874 to 1879.

Hooper's predecessor as principal of the Divinity School at Lahore was his fellow CMS missionary Thomas Valpy French (1825-91; *CMR* 24, 338-44), who was appointed first Bishop of Lahore in 1877. Hooper agreed with French that Urdu should be the medium of instruction at the school, because Islam was deeply rooted in the Punjab and 'the theology of Mohammedans is expressed through the medium of Urdu, in terms borrowed from the Arabic' (Stock, *History*, vol. 3, p. 133). Like French, he also believed that the study of Hebrew was important for those involved in ministry to Muslims. Under Hooper's leadership, the Lahore school gained a significant reputation.

However, Hooper's 'heart was with the Hindus on the Ganges, rather than with the Mohammedans of the frontier Province' (Stock, *History*, vol. 3, p. 150). In 1882, he moved to Allahabad to open St Paul's Divinity School for the United Provinces and for the Hindu population (Richter, *History*, p. 424, and he remained there until 1887. He recognised that, since there were both Hindus and Muslims in this region, teaching had to be offered in both Hindi and Urdu. Proficient in both languages, he translated several works into Hindi and was involved in the committee working on a revised Hindi Bible.

Following his time in Allahabad, Hooper served as minister at Mt Albert, Auckland, New Zealand, from 1889 to 1891 before returning to India, where

he served as a Church Missionary Society missionary at Mussoorie, United Provinces, and was reported in 1914 as living 'in the hills, at Mussoorie, diligent as ever in literary work' (Stock, *History*, vol. 4, p. 223). He died there in 1921.

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Christian doctrine in contrast with Hinduism and Islam

DATE 1887
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

Hooper's *Christian doctrine in contrast with Hinduism and Islam, intended for young missionaries in north India* was published in 1887 (the second edition of 1896 is used here). It emerged from lectures to the young women of the Normal School in Allahabad to help them in 'dealing with the Hindu and Muhammadan women whom they would have to visit as missionaries when their course of training was over' (*Christian doctrine*, p. iii). Hooper wrote it 'on the voyage home' (p. iv), presumably when he was travelling back to Britain on furlough after leaving St Paul's Divinity School, Allahabad. It is 141 pages long and comprises an Introduction and

three parts in which Hooper sets out the Christian doctrine of sin and salvation and makes comparisons between aspects of it and equivalents in Hinduism and Islam. Here, his arguments concerning Islam are discussed.

In the brief Introduction (pp. 1-2), Hooper makes clear that the work is not a 'systematic exposition of Christian doctrine or of non-Christian belief' but a practical guide for younger missionaries to the concept of salvation, which he sees as the centre of Christian belief. He establishes that Christians, Muslims and Hindus all agree 'that man, in his present state in this world, needs deliverance' (p. 2), and this is his starting point.

In Part 1, 'From what is salvation a deliverance?' (pp. 3-48), which comprises an Introduction (pp. 3-4) and two chapters, 'Sin' (pp. 5-27) and 'The consequences of sin' (pp. 28-48), Hooper first shows that, while Muslims agree with Christians that salvation is deliverance from the consequences of sin, they do not go as far as Christians in seeing it as deliverance from sin itself (pp. 3-4). Muslims believe that individuals act 'by a kind of inspiration from God' which directs them, and are therefore not responsible for what they do, while Christians believe in free-will, which means that individuals decide for themselves how to act and bear responsibility – although it can be shown that Islam does actually include belief in free-will because it teaches about reward and punishment (p. 8). Christianity differs from Islam in regarding sin as self-centredness and therefore hatred towards God (p. 24). Muslims cannot see how this is possible because they do not understand how humans can choose for themselves.

In talking about the consequences of sin, Hooper refers to the natural outcome of sinning, which is the tendency to repeat the sinful act until it becomes a habit, and also to the inherited inclination to act sinfully, which is original sin. Muslims do not acknowledge this, though it can be proved from the Bible (pp. 34-9). He goes on to talk about punishments from God in this life and about death as the ultimate punishment, observing that Muslims believe that punishment in the afterlife is everlasting: 'the Quran asserts this repeatedly and in the strongest terms' (p. 44). In the rest of this part, he explores the difficulties in allowing that there can be any alternative to the inevitability of punishment following sin and ends by refuting universalism (p. 48). In this way, he establishes that humans are in need of being saved from their actions and from themselves.

In Part 2, 'The way of salvation' (pp. 49-118), which like Part 1 comprises an Introduction (pp. 49-57) and two chapters, 'The Saviour' (pp. 58-102) and 'The means of salvation' (pp. 103-18), Hooper first asserts that both Christians and Muslims (and also Jews) accept that it is God who saves humans (though Hindus do not accept this). In fact, Muslims believe it so

staunchly that they object to Christians calling Christ 'Saviour' because they understand that only God saves (p. 49). At this point, he discusses the conception of God in the faiths and acknowledges that Muslims more or less agree with Christians that God is personal and created the world out of nothing. But there are a number of defects in their belief: that the Qur'an tends to anthropomorphise God by giving Him human attributes; that God is the sole agent and there is no free-will; and that God is a bare unity without any internal distinctions in His being. This radical monotheism prevents Muslims from accepting the Gospel teaching that God is love, because this would mean He was loving from eternity, which would require an object of His love (pp. 50-1).

Moving on in his main argument, Hooper contends that God saves humans, without human involvement, 'simply and solely by His own free grace and mercy' (p. 55). Muslims cannot understand this, and assume it means that 'God has appointed some work for us to do in order to be saved', such as observance of the Pillars of Islam, not seeing that God Himself has provided the 'way' of salvation (p. 56). Christians insist that this way requires a mediator, but Muslims only allow mediation in the form of intercession (p. 58) because they do not understand the difficulty of salvation since they do not know the meaning of sin (p. 59).

The mediator provided by God must be human and he must have credentials in the form of miracles and predictions of his coming. Muslims accept this, though Muḥammad cannot reliably be proved to have performed any miracles (p. 68), and the predictions about him that Muslims claim to find in the Bible, particularly Deuteronomy 19:15-18 and John 14:16-17, cannot safely be connected with him (p. 69). Further, he did not teach anything new; in fact, Islamic teachings are inferior to those given by Moses, particularly on slavery and relations between the sexes (pp. 70-1). In addition, the mediator must be sinless, though Muslims acknowledge that, while all prophets are supposedly 'innocent', some at least did commit sins, including Muḥammad, a problem they try to resolve by saying that God forgave them (p. 79). Lastly, the mediator must be divine, though Muslims find this completely objectionable (p. 82). Biblical proofs support the uniquely Christian belief that the mediator was both human and divine, and also the doctrine of the atonement itself. This is a true mystery, though it can be understood in part. However, Muslims have completely misunderstood it, because Muḥammad 'seems to have got hold of some heretical view [. …] There is nothing which better illustrates the haphazard, slipshod, patch-work way in which Muhammad composed his religion, than his endorsement in the Quran of this obscure fancy' (p. 100).

In the second chapter of this part, 'The means of salvation', Hooper first identifies the 'means' used by Christ as the Holy Spirit. Muslims know this term but they identify it as the angel Gabriel (p. 104). Since the Bible proves that the Holy Spirit is God, the discussion moves to the Trinity as the One who effects salvation, which again is proved by the Bible. Salvation is wholly an action of God and its human counterpart is faith, which is the individual's opening out to God. On this, Muslims agree with Christians, though Muslims differ in placing more stress on acceptance of the principles of belief: 'soundness of intellectual belief weighs, with them, far more than moral rectitude' (p. 108). Further, they are not interested in any exploration of their religion, which is 'blindly learned from others, and as blindly maintained' (p. 109). True Muslims will not argue about their faith or listen to arguments against it, which causes major difficulties for missionaries in India (p. 109).

Concerning other means of salvation, Muslims do not read the Qur'an 'for edification' or in order to understand it, and they recite passages without understanding the meaning (p. 111); there are no equivalents to the sacraments in Islam (pp. 112-13); concerning prayer, Muslims cannot be called praying people because they merely repeat formulas without acknowledging their need of God or their unworthiness to pronounce His name, and actually utter His praises in order to induce Him to fulfil their desires (pp. 115-16).

In this second part, Hooper makes no pretence that Islam (or Hinduism) is an equivalent to Christianity as the context of salvation. His remarks about Islam agreeing in many ways with Christianity but failing to match up to it fully imply that it is a derivative version of the true faith.

In Part 3, 'What salvation consists of' (pp. 119-34), Hooper presents salvation as justification and sanctification, deliverance from damnation and eternal life, and speaks about the first two and fourth of these. The great difference between Christianity and the other religions, he emphasises, is that it promises salvation in this life: 'the missionary should insist on this difference, and show the superiority of a religion that brings a present salvation as an earnest of the complete one to come' (p. 120). For him, this is a cardinal point because it means that the believer can be free from sin now as well as after death. It also promises that the Christian life, both now and later, can be one of increasing fulfilment as the Kingdom of God is extended. The other faiths do not contain this, lacking the dynamic that Christianity alone contains.

This presentation of the Christian doctrine of salvation from a Christian perspective incorporates elements of Islam (and Hinduism) as

examples of inadequate or mistaken perceptions of the correct version, which is Christian. The book does not contain a true comparison between Christianity and Islam because it does not present the Islamic teachings that correspond to the Christian doctrine of salvation as they are held by Muslims. Thus, Hooper's accounts of Islamic teachings from a Christian perspective must inevitably distort them.

SIGNIFICANCE

If it is at all typical of advice to missionaries about how to present Christian faith, *Christian doctrine in contrast with Hinduism and Islam* shows that the intention in speaking about Christianity to Muslims and Hindus in India was to demonstrate its superiority at the cost of treating rival faiths and their followers with proper respect. It is noticeable that, while Hooper quotes extensively from the Bible, he nowhere defends its authority, as though the numerous arguments against its integrity put forward by Indian Muslims are irrelevant and nonsense. It is also suggestive that he repeatedly refers to the Qur'an as Muḥammad's own work without any consideration of Muḥammad's status as a sincere religious leader or otherwise.

Hooper is, of course, writing to advise young missionaries rather than to convince Muslims, and he clearly feels at liberty to express his view that Christianity is the one true faith and that the supreme imperative before missionaries, who 'have come to the country for an unselfish object' (p. 22), is to convert people to it. *Christian doctrine* provides an instructive insight into the missionary's motivation and strategy.

PUBLICATIONS

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William Hooper, *Christian doctrine in contrast with Hinduism and Islam. Intended for young missionaries in north India*, London, 1896[2], repr. Madras, 1992

William Hooper, *The doctrine of salvation as set forth in Christianity, Hinduism, and Islam*, London, 1906 (the Preface states that it is substantially the same as the first edition)

Ruth J. Nicholls

Works about British Ceylon

BIOGRAPHIES

Several British Christians who lived in Ceylon (Sri Lanka) in the 19th century wrote about Islam and the Muslims there.

Alexander Johnston (1775-1849) spent his childhood in India, where his teachers included the German missionary Christian Friedrich Schwartz (1726-98) and the British soldier and administrator Thomas Munro (1761-1827). He moved with his family to Europe in 1792 and qualified as a barrister in 1800, going on to become Advocate General, Advocate Fiscal and Puisne Justice of the Supreme Court of Ceylon. He was knighted and elected as a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1810 during a trip to England to advise on matters relating to Ceylon. He returned in 1811 and served as the third Chief Justice of Ceylon, ushering in such reforms as universal education, religious freedom, the emancipation of slaves and trial by jury. In 1819, he moved for the last time to Britain, where he played a part in the formation of the Royal Asiatic Society and was made a privy councillor. He helped to establish the Privy Council's judicial committee, to which he was appointed in 1833, and used this position to continue his advocacy for the rights of the indigenous people of Ceylon. He died in London in 1849.

Alastair Mackenzie Ferguson (1816-92) was born in Wester Ross in the Scottish Highlands in 1816. He went to British Ceylon in 1837, worked in various roles for the governor and joined the *Colombo Observer* (later the *Ceylon Observer*) as assistant editor at the invitation of its editor and owner, Christopher Elliot (1809-59), in 1846. He purchased the paper from Elliot in 1859.

His nephew, **John Ferguson** (1842-1913), who was born and educated in Tain, north of Inverness, trained as a journalist in Inverness and London. He moved to Ceylon in 1861 to work as assistant editor of the *Colombo Observer*, later taking it over from his uncle. Both men were active in Ceylon's political and economic life, as well as in the Cinnamon Gardens Baptist Church. John was appointed as a member of the Legislative Council of Ceylon in 1903. The same year, he was made a Companion of the Order of Saint Michael and Saint George. Alastair, who had died in 1892, had

become a Companion of the Order in the early 1880s. John returned to the UK in 1912 and died there the following year.

James Emerson (1804-69) was born in Belfast on 7 April 1804. He went to Greece in 1824 to fight in the War of Independence and, during the 1830s, he wrote several works on Greece. In 1831 he qualified as a barrister, though he never practised, and, in the same year, married Letitia Tennent, whose family name he took after the death of his father-in-law, thus becoming James Emerson Tennent. He was elected to Parliament in 1832 and served as an MP until 1845, when he was appointed Colonial Secretary of Ceylon and knighted. He served in this post until 1850, overseeing the suppression of the Kandyan uprising in 1848. He also served as the president of the Ceylon branch of the Royal Asiatic Society between 1846 and 1857. Following his return to the United Kingdom, he again successfully stood for Parliament. He was elected as a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1862 and was made Baronet of Tempo Manor on his retirement in 1867. He died on 6 March 1869 in London.

Harry Charles Purvis Bell (1851-1937) was born in India and was sent to the United Kingdom in 1864 for his education. He joined the Ceylon Civil Service in 1873 and was appointed as the first Archaeological Commissioner and head of the Archaeological Survey of Ceylon in 1890, serving in that position until 1912.

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Works about Islam in British Ceylon

DATE 19th century
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

The earliest work on Muslims and Islam in Ceylon by the authors discussed here is Alexander Johnston's 'A letter to the secretary relating to the preceding inscription', published in vol. 1 of *Transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* (1826). This refers to the sketch of an Arabic inscription in Kufic characters reproduced at the end of a short paper that precedes Johnston's letter. The paper, by Samuel Lee (1784-1871), Regius Professor of Hebrew at Cambridge University, which is entitled 'A Cufic inscription found in Ceylon', gives a translation, together with a commentary, of an inscription that Johnston had found in Colombo, on the west of Ceylon. In his letter, Johnston states that he had learnt about the history of Muslim commerce in India and Ceylon from Muslim 'priests' and merchants in connection with a plan of his to free all children born of slaves (p. 537). He goes on to recount this history and the circumstances leading to the discovery of the inscription (p. 538), giving his positive impressions of the intellect and moral character of the Muslims he met and their cooperative spirit, and saying that, when they agreed to adopt his proposal he 'had every reason to applaud the humanity and liberality of the sentiments and views, which they not only expressed but acted upon' (p. 542).

Among the writings of these authors, the most extensive references to Islam and Muslims in Ceylon appear in James Emerson Tennent's *Christianity in Ceylon* (1850), which is a history of Christian missions to

Ceylon and includes chapters on Hinduism and Buddhism. It does not contain any study of Islam or Muslims, but Tennent does mention them at various points. In ch. 1, he outlines the history of Ceylon and refers to the presence of Syrian Christians there, but concludes that since they are not mentioned in earlier travel writings their presence must have been short-lived, maybe because of the arrival of early Muslims (pp. 4-7). Whilst the main text of the chapter includes only sparse allusions such as these to Muslims, the notes contain more extensive references.

In a section of the work entitled 'The Moormen of Ceylon' (pp. 34-6), Emerson Tennent explains the origins of the Moormen (a term commonly used by Christians for Muslims from earlier times) and says that the 'peculiarities in the habits of the Singhalese Moors [indicate that] they are of Persian rather than Arabic origin' (p. 35). Referring to their religion, he writes that they 'exhibit less devotion and earnestness than I have observed amongst the followers of the Prophet in any other country' (p. 36), noting as examples that they do not interfere with secular affairs or stop working to engage in their daily prayers, and that their mosques, although numerous, do not have minarets or muezzins to call people to prayer. Religious festivals, weddings and funerals are more important to them than regular daily practice. He gives brief descriptions of these, focusing particularly on the peculiarity of funerary practices.

In the rest of the work, references to Islam and Muslims are sparse. Emerson Tennent does include some notes on interactions between Christians and Muslims, such as the detail that there are no records of any conversion to Christianity having occurred amongst the Muslim population during the Dutch period (p. 64). Later he gives a brief account of the Baptist Mission to Ceylon, recording that a certain Mr. Daniel (presumably Ebenezer Daniel, 1784-1844) had wanted to convert the Moormen in Colombo and prepared an instructional work to this end (p. 287).

Emerson Tennent's later *Ceylon. An account of the island* (1859) also includes references to Islam and its followers. Over the whole of its two massive volumes, these references are relatively sparse but, when they are combined together, they become fairly substantial, focusing primarily on the history of Islam in Ceylon and its contemporary situation. One footnote mentions that the detail given in *Christianity in Ceylon*, that the Moormen were of Persian origin since they were Shīʿīs and used the Persian language (pp. 35-6), was incorrect and that they are in fact Sunnīs and use Arabic (1860 edition, vol. 1, pp. 607-8 n. 6).

Vol. 2 begins with a chapter on the history of the Portuguese in Ceylon (1859 edition, pp. 3-31). This includes brief discussions of the trade

conducted by the 'Moors' during the early 16th century, their diplomatic and military attempts to protect their commercial interests against the Portuguese, and a description of conflict between the Portuguese and Muslims (pp. 6-14). In ch. 2 (pp. 32-62), which is on the Dutch, Emerson Tennent gives some examples of their hostile attitudes and policies towards the Muslims in the notes, where he also records that, because of the Muslims' tenacity and enterprise, Dutch tyranny against them was unsuccessful (p. 53 n. 1). He also records the unequal treatment of Christians and Muslims under Dutch rule: Muslims were taxed at five percent for items that Christians were able to import for free, and the taxation on Muslim cloth was double that for Christian cloth (p. 54). Later, he notes that the Dutch built churches in order to counteract the influence of both Catholicism and Islam (pp. 57-8).

Further references to Christian-Muslim relations appear later in vol. 2. Emerson Tennent writes that Muslims believe the footprint at the top of Adam's Peak is actually Adam's, and he traces this belief to the influence of Gnostic Christianity (pp. 134-5); he briefly notes that the Portuguese desecrated a Muslim tomb in Colombo by building their factory nearby, angering the Muslim population (p. 152); and he notes that a miracle-working statue of St Ann at Calpentyn had grown popular even among Muslims and Hindus (p. 629).

Although H.C.P. Bell's *The Maldive Islands* (1883) is not about Ceylon, it is of interest because it contains a few references to Muslims and Islam. In his account of the history of the Maldives, Bell mentions the spread of Islam there and relations between Muslims and the Portuguese (pp. 23-30). Later, among further details, he notes that the inhabitants are Sunnī Muslims and that, although they observe Muslim fasts and ceremonies, they are frivolous and lax in their practice and limited in their knowledge of Islam and Arabic (p. 58). In further sections, he refers to Muslim marriage and divorce, funerary practices, governance and administration, and the legal system (pp. 59-66).

Alistair Ferguson's 'The pearl fisheries', an address he gave to the Royal Asiatic Society on 26 November 1887, briefly records the activities of Muslim and Tamil pearl divers (Ferguson and Ferguson, *All about gold*, pp. 396-7). More extensive references to Muslims appear in his nephew John Ferguson's *Ceylon in the 'Jubilee year'* (1887), earlier published as *Ceylon in 1883* (1883) and republished as *Ceylon in 1893* (1893). He records twice that the island is believed to be 'the elysium provided for Adam and Eve to console them for the loss of Paradise' (p. 2), particularly by Aḥmad

ʿUrābī (1841-1911) and other Egyptian exiles (p. 114). In his account of the celebrations to mark Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee, Ferguson also describes ʿUrābī and three fellow exiles heading the Muslim procession and imparting 'an element of romance to the proceedings, reminding one of those "Arabian Nights Tales"' (p. 172), and he notes how unthinkable it would have been a few years earlier for Egyptian officers who had been defeated by the Queen's army to participate voluntarily in celebrations of her Jubilee (pp. 172-3). Ferguson also includes a translation of the address offered to the queen's household by three other Egyptian exiles (pp. 173-4).

SIGNIFICANCE

With the exception of Alexander Johnston's letter, most references to Islam and Muslims in these works appear in sidenotes to other narratives or as part of historical descriptions of relations between the Ceylonese and Arab traders. The works all suggest that Muslims in Ceylon are different from Muslims elsewhere: they tell of their liberality towards non-Muslims, the laxity of their religious beliefs and their potentially unorthodox practices. In this way, they exemplify preformed opinions about Muslims in general alongside positive and sympathetic, but sometimes exoticised, assessments of Muslims in Ceylon; in some of the works, they are even portrayed as victims of Portuguese and Dutch policies. These assessments may have informed later Christian visitors' impressions of Muslims on the island and approaches to them. Alongside critical references to contemporary scholarship, such as Bell's disagreement with common assumptions that Islam spread through violence by focusing on trade and intermarriage (*Ceylon in 1883*, p. 23) and Emerson Tennent's rejection of the term 'Moor' as meaningless and inhibiting to the exploration of race (*Ceylon, an account of the island*, vol. 1, pp. 605-6), the works offer nuanced and multi-layered approaches to Islam and Muslims in Ceylon.

Another important aspect of these works is that their authors use European and Muslim sources together and sometimes praise Muslim authors, suggesting that they found value in Muslim sources, perhaps reflecting trends established by the translators of these works. Emerson Tennent found Muslim geographies particularly praiseworthy, especially in comparison with those by European authors.

Among these works, only Johnston's 'Letter' and John Ferguson's *Ceylon in the 'Jubilee year'* give evidence of direct interactions with Muslims. Most of the references in the other texts are historical, providing only limited usefulness for readers who may have been interested in actual meetings between Christians and Muslims.

Although references to Muslims and Islam are generally sparse within the works, they have been foundational in the study of the history and people of British Ceylon. The information in them has helped to shape scholarship on Muslims and Islam in British Ceylon and continues to do so. Thomas W. Arnold's article on Islam in Ceylon in *E.J. Brill's first encyclopaedia of Islam, 1913-1936* (vol. 2, 838-9), which refers to Emerson Tennent's *Ceylon. An account of the island*, and M.N.M. Kamil Asad's *The Muslims of Sri Lanka under the British rule* (New Delhi, 1993) and M.F. Laffan's *Under Empire. Muslim lives and loyalties across the Indian Ocean world, 1775-1945* (New York, 2022), which both draw on John Ferguson's books, are instances of this. These 19th-century works have also shaped Christian missions to Ceylon's Muslim population, particularly during the 19th and early 20th centuries. They have been and continue to be useful for understanding the history of Islam in Sri Lanka and for Christian missions there.

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James Harry Morris

Aloys Sprenger

DATE OF BIRTH 3 September 1813
PLACE OF BIRTH Nassereith, Tyrol, Austria
DATE OF DEATH 19 December 1893
PLACE OF DEATH Heidelberg

BIOGRAPHY

Aloys Sprenger was born on 3 September 1813 at Nassereith in the Ober-Innthal, Tyrol. In 1832, he began studies in medicine and Oriental languages at the University of Vienna and, in 1836, he moved to London, where he participated in the Earl of Munster's project on 'Military Science among the Mussulmans', becoming a British subject in 1838. He graduated with an MD degree at Leiden University in 1841 with a dissertation entitled 'De originibus medicinæ Arabicæ sub Khalifatu' and, in the same year, he made an English translation of Abū l-Ḥasan ʿAlī l-Masʿūdī's (896-956) *Murūj al-dhahab* ('Meadows of gold') from the Arabic original.

Sprenger was appointed to the medical service of the East India Company and embarked for Calcutta early in 1843. In the same year, he married Catharine Müller, with whom he had three sons. In India, he was appointed principal of the Mahommedan College in Delhi, where he stayed until 1848, writing a succession of works that included *Technical terms of the Sufees* (1844) and *Selections from Arabic authors* (1845), and jointly editing Abū Naṣr al-ʿUtbī's Arabic history of Sultan Maḥmūd of Ghazna (1847). In early 1848, he took up an assignment in Lucknow, working on a catalogue of manuscripts in the libraries of the king of Oudh. For this, he claimed he examined 10,000 volumes (A. Sprenger, *A Catalogue of the Arabic, Persian and Hindústány Manuscripts, of the Libraries of the King of Oudh*, vol. 1, Calcutta, 1854, p. iii).

In the Lucknow libraries, Sprenger discovered a copy of the fourth volume of Abū Jaʿfar al-Ṭabarī's *Taʾrīkh al-rusul wa-l-mulūk*, which he estimated to be the only copy extant (A. Sprenger, 'Notice of a copy of the fourth volume of the original text of Tabary', *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* 19 [1850] 108-35, p. 108). In a library in Cawnpore, he also found a copy of Ibn Saʿd's *Ṭabaqāt* (A. Sprenger, 'Ueber eine Handschrift des ersten Bandes des Kitáb Ṭabaqát al-kabyr vom Sekretär des Wáqidy',

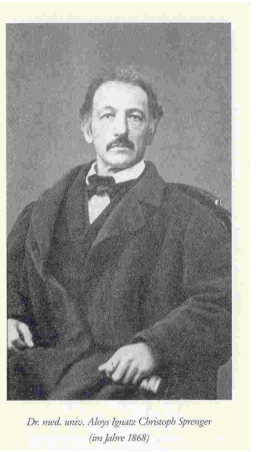


Illustration 13. Aloys Sprenger

Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft 3/4 (1849) 450-6, p. 450; cf. A. von Kremer [ed.], *History of Muhammad's campaigns, by Aboo 'Abd Ollah Mohammad 'bin Omar al-Wáqidy,* Calcutta, 1856, p. 2. Together with Ibn Hishām's edition of Ibn Isḥāq's *Al-sīra l-nabawiyya,* these works formed the basis of *The life of Mohammad, from original sources*, which he published in 1851.

In 1850, Sprenger moved to Calcutta, where he worked from 1851 to 1854 as Persian translator to the government and principal of both the Mahommedan College at Hoogli and the Calcutta Madrasa. In 1854, he took two years' leave for health reasons (*Catalogue*, p. vii) and used the opportunity to visit Egypt, Syria and Mesopotamia in search of manuscripts. He returned to India in February 1856, confident that he possessed the earliest known Muslim sources for the life of Muḥammad and the origins of Islam. However, due to continuing ill health, he left India in 1857 and settled at Weinheim in Baden-Württemberg, later moving to Heidelberg. A year later, he moved to become Professor of Oriental Languages at the University of Berne, where he published *Das Leben und die Lehre des Moḥammad* (3 vols, 1861-5) and *Die alte Geographie Arabiens* (1875). When he retired in 1881, he returned to Heidelberg, where he completed one more book of note, *Mohammed und der Koran. Eine psychologische Studie* (1889). He died on 19 December 1893.

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

The life of Moḥammad, from original sources

DATE 1851
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

The life of Moḥammad, from original sources is a work of 210 pages published by the Presbyterian Mission Press in Allahabad in 1851. In gives an account of Muḥammad (the name appears as Moḥammad) based on a range of Arabic Muslim works, favouring several early sources that Sprenger had recently discovered in India. But it is not complete. Although he projected an explanation of the spread of Islam (p. 2), the work ends at the *hijra*, the flight of Muḥammad and his followers from Mecca to Medina. An account of Muḥammad's later years would need to wait until the third volume of his *Das Leben und die Lehre des Moḥammad* (1865).

The life of Moḥammad is organised in two books. The first has three chapters, covering the history of Mecca and the ancestors of Muḥammad (pp. 3-46), the legendary history of the Kaʿba and early Muslim traditions about predictions of Muḥammad's coming (pp. 46-62), and the Arabic sources for the life of Muḥammad (pp. 63-74). In this third chapter, Sprenger expresses a high opinion of Ibn Isḥāq the 8th-century biographer of Muḥammad, but a low estimate of the reliability of his *Sīra* in the form in which it has come down edited in the 9th century by Ibn Hishām (p. 69). He has almost unqualified praise for the newly discovered manuscript of the *Kitāb ṭabaqāt al-kabīr* by Muḥammad ibn Saʿd (p. 71, cf. 'Ueber eine Handschrift des ersten Bandes des Kitáb Tabaqát al-kabyr vom Sekretär des Wáqidy', *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 3 (1849) 450-6; Sprenger refers to this work as *Tabaqát Wáqidy* because Ibn Saʿd was the secretary of al-Wāqidī, though this is not al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb al-maghāzī*, which Sprenger had not yet seen), which he describes as 'by far the best biography of the Arabian prophet' and writes that '[t]he veracity and knowledge of the author have never been impugned by his contemporaries'. He also cites Muslim commentaries on the Qur'an as sources for the life of Muḥammad (pp. 72-3), though he knows of no commentary earlier than the *Kashshāf* of al-Zamakhsharī (1074-1143), explaining the absence of earlier commentaries with the curious comment, '[they] were

probably too true to be preserved'. At the end of this discussion, Sprenger explains that his approach in the biography (p. 73) is to refer to the 'original traditions' and the sources in which they are contained rather than to works from the classical period of Islam, because 'To consider late historians, like Abúlfedá [d. 1331], as *authorities*, and to suppose that an account gains in certainty because it is mentioned by several of them, is highly uncritical' (p. 73).

The second book contains three chapters, the first covering Muḥammad's life from his birth to the beginning of his mission (pp. 75-118), the second presenting Muslim tradition on his miraculous powers and the ways he received his message (pp. 118-154), and the third (also titled 'Second chapter') continuing his years in Mecca up to the flight to Medina (pp. 155-210). Striking in this account, though perhaps understandable given that Sprenger was trained and employed as a physician, is his extended discussion of Muslim accounts of the way in which Muḥammad 'suffered of hallucinations of his senses' (pp. 105-14). He also gives a Muslim view of the nature of prophethood and revelation, relying heavily on al-Ghazālī's *Al-munqidh min al-ḍalāl* (pp. 114-17; see also p. 154 – Sprenger refers to it as *Risálah al-monqidz*) and, after sketching the development of the Muslim belief that Muḥammad performed miracles (pp. 118-21), he gives a long account of stories of Muḥammad's Night Journey (pp. 123-36), which he dismisses as 'unblushing forgery' (p. 124).

Sprenger outlines references to Christians and Jews in his sources (pp. 145-9), and also responds, with a rare expression of distaste, to the Muslim comparison between Muḥammad's sexual relationships and the celibacy of Jesus (p. 153), one of the few places where his Catholic faith is evident in his writings.

Sprenger's discussion of the episode of the Satanic Verses (pp. 184-5) reveals something of the idiosyncrasy of his approach. He considers the account of Muḥammad receiving a revelation that permitted worship of the goddesses of the pagan Meccan cult as authentic, disagreeing with Ibn Hishām, who edited it out of Ibn Isḥāq's *Sīra*, and he acknowledges that the 'true [Muslim] believer' may be disturbed by Muḥammad's 'inconsistencies' in insisting that only the one God should be worshipped but then permitting worship of the three goddesses. Sprenger interprets this as Muḥammad resisting the temptation to sacrifice his conviction that there was only one God by declaring that the devil had prompted these verses, thereby providing the 'strongest proof' of his sincerity. Here Sprenger inserts a mid-sentence quip (upon which he does not enlarge)

that 'several truly pious Christian missionaries did not scruple' to give in to a comparable temptation (p. 185).

Sprenger questions the truth of the Muslim reports about Muḥammad at times, especially reports of his miracles, and sometimes questions the reliability of the various early authors. But he does not radically question what he calls the 'stereotype' story of Muḥammad or the reliability of much later Muslim biographical works about the early writers he is presenting. At times he exhibits a freedom to comment in a common-sense way about the story of Muḥammad, for example on accounts of the start of Medina violence in al-Wāqidī and other sources, but in general he seems to have kept personal comments to a minimum.

SIGNIFICANCE

The life of Moḫammad was one of the earliest non-Muslim presentations of the story of Muḥammad based on multiple early Arabic Muslim narratives, and the first in English. Gustav Weil's *Mohammed der Prophet, sein Leben und seine Lehre* of 1843 preceded it, though Weil did not have access to the early Muslim sources that Sprenger discovered (*Life of Moḫammad*, p. 71).

The life of Moḫammad was followed by William Muir's four-volume *Life of Mahomet* in 1858-61. In this, Muir made use of Sprenger's manuscript discoveries and additional early sources and, one year after the publication of Sprenger's volume, he declared that 'The facilities for the study [of the rise of Islam] are, probably, greater in India than in any other part of the world', in particular celebrating Sprenger's discovery of the *Ṭabaqāt* manuscript and remarking that 'if the exertions of Sprenger had resulted in bringing Wâqidy alone to the light, he had deserved, even for that task, the gratitude of all the lovers of Mohammed's biography' (W. Muir, 'Biographies of Mohammad for India', *Calcutta Review* 17 (1852) 387-411, p. 387).

Muir indicated that he valued Sprenger's *Das Leben und die Lehre* more highly than *The life of Moḫammad* ('Value of early Mahometan historical sources', *Calcutta Review* 46 [1868] 349-90, p. 349), but it was *The Life of Moḫammad* that garnered more attention from Muslim readers and was read in India because it was in English (Ali, *Lives of Muhammad*, p. 46). Two Indian writers who reacted to the book were Syed Ameer Ali and Sayyid Aḥmad Khān. Almost two decades after the publication of *The life of Moḫammad*, Khān responded to Sprenger in his *Series of essays on the life of Mohammed and subjects subsidiary thereto* (Delhi, 1870), where he

expressed disagreement with both Sprenger's portrayal of events in the traditional story of Muḥammad and Sprenger's assessment of the sources he used. On Sprenger's narrative he commented,

> The author falls into a great number of mistakes as to the subject matter, but besides this, what is still worse is, he has adopted so exaggerated a style, and his mind is so much preoccupied and warped by prejudice and bigotry as ill becomes any writer, but more especially a historian (Khān, *Series of essays*, p. xvi)

and on Sprenger's sources he observed that he overrated 'Wackedee' (meaning the *Ṭabaqāt* of Ibn Sa'd), calling him 'the worst author of all, and of the least credit, and all Mohammedan doctors and divines have declared him not to be, in the least degree, of any authority, and being the least entitled to credit'; he thought Abū l-Fidā' much more reliable (Khān, *Series of essays*, p. xiv). This disagreement over sources goes beyond Sprenger to involve the approach of European historians in general at this time. In his *Life of Mahomet*, Muir refers to Sprenger in a discussion of the necessity of using the earliest available sources for the biography of Muḥammad, and quotes Sprenger's statement about this in *Moḥammad* (p. 73; there Sprenger also wrote about using Abū l-Fidā', '[I]f such a mistake is committed by an orientalist, we must accuse him of culpable ignorance in the history of Arabic literature'). Muir writes that Sprenger's verdict is 'just, and of the deepest importance' (*Mahomet*, vol. 1, p. civ).

Alfred von Kremer also mentions Sprenger in relation to using 'original sources' rather than relying on 'oriental works of a very modern date' in his preface to the Calcutta edition of his *History of Muhammad's campaigns*: 'With the exception of Dr. Sprenger in his "Life of Mohammad", no other orientalist has consulted the writings of the earliest Arabic historians which were composed shortly after the events which they relate'. Von Kremer praises Sprenger's discovery of a volume of the *Ṭabaqāt* containing the biography of Muhammad – a source, however, to which Aḥmad Khān attached no value (*History*, p. 2).

PUBLICATIONS

A. Sprenger, *The life of Moḥammad, from original sources*, Allahabad, 1851, repr. London, 2018; 6682411 (digitised version available through Hathi Trust)

STUDIES

K. Ali, *The lives of Muhammad*, Cambridge MA, 2014

Das Leben und die Lehre des Moḥammad
'The life and teachings of Muḥammad'

DATE 1861-5
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE German

DESCRIPTION

Das Leben und die Lehre des Moḥammad nach bisher grösstentheils unbenutzten Quellen ('The life and teachings of Muḥammad according to largely unused sources') is Aloys Sprenger's major work on the founder of Islam. Comprising three volumes of 582 pages, 547 pages and 554 pages published in 1861, 1863 and 1865 respectively, it covers the story of Muḥammad according to the early Islamic narratives that Sprenger consulted and in some cases discovered in India. Vols 1 and 2 cover Muḥammad's life in Mecca up to the *hijra*, including religious movements before his birth (first edition, vol. 1, pp. 13-92), and vol. 3 continues the story through his years in Medina. The majority of its 24 chapters are followed by appendices in which Sprenger reflects on aspects of the narrative he is presenting (there are fewer in vol. 3 than in the others). For example, in an appendix after ch. 1, he discusses traditional lore about pre-Islamic figures mentioned in the chapter (pp. 93-137). He includes in his introduction a note on the sources he is citing, expressing his intention to eventually provide a monograph on the subject (pp. 9-12). Instead of this, however, in vol. 3 he offers an extensive 'popular' account of his use of the 'hitherto largely unused sources' (pp. xviii-clxxx), an important state-of-the-discipline essay that derives mainly from his work in India, particularly during the period 1849-56.

Vol. 1 tells the story of Muḥammad from his early years (pp. 138-54) up to his preaching about divine punishments to be inflicted on the people of Mecca (pp. 529-78). In ch. 3, Sprenger includes a substantial section on what he understood to be Muḥammad's illness, *Hysteria muscularis* (pp. 207-40), adding in an appendix documents and explanations to support this and even an 11-page article on Emanuel Swedenborg (pp. 275-86). He also includes Muslim traditions about Muḥammad's physical appearance (pp. 293-329) and the first converts to Islam (pp. 355-94). One detail of the appendices that recalls Sprenger's earlier writings from India is his listing and discussion of traditions about the Syrian monk Baḥīrā (pp. 178-90), an excellent example of the variety of Muslim sources Sprenger had collected from narratives, Hadith collections, and Qur'an commentaries.

Vol. 2 starts with an account of the first migration to Abyssinia (pp. 1-40), the extended persecution of Muḥammad's followers in Mecca and the second flight to Abyssinia (pp. 68-109, 119-55). In chs 11-13 Sprenger discusses various influences on Muḥammad, including Christianity (pp. 180-212), foreign teachings (pp. 237-334) and Muḥammad's 'teacher' (pp. 348-78), whose identity he passes on from Muslim commentaries on Q 28 (pp. 379-90). This leads into 'theological controversies', including the accusation that Muḥammad was possessed (pp. 410-13), his miracles (pp. 413-33) and the identity of Jesus (pp. 447-51). Regarding the last, Sprenger merely quotes passages from Q 21 and 43 along with some traditions about the first occasion of their recitation, and shows no particular interest (though he does seem fascinated with Islamic lore about Alexander the Great, pp. 464-75).

At the beginning of vol. 3, Sprenger discusses the Islamic sources he is using for *Das Leben* (see below). He goes on to describe the religious and political institutions that developed in Medina in the years after the *hijra* (pp. 1-60), followed by the traditional Muslim accounts of the first raids carried out by the Muslim community and the Battle of Badr and the expulsion and execution of the three Jewish tribes from Medina, ending with Muḥammad's final pilgrimage to Mecca. In the preface to this volume, he makes the point that it was the military raids carried out by the Muslims from Medina that form 'the kernel of the chronological history of Muḥammad' (p. lxiv, cf. p. lxi). He includes an appendix on the wives of Muḥammad (pp. 61-87) and also substantial summaries of the massacre of the Jewish tribe of Banū Qurayẓa (pp. 217-26) and the conquest of the Jews of Khaybar (pp. 269-84), commenting: 'It was Muḥammad's intention to impose Islam on the Jews and punish their resistance with death' (p. 219).

For this Islamic account of Muḥammad, Sprenger consulted five different kinds of sources, as he describes and details in the 180-page preface to vol. 3. These were: the Qur'an, early Muslim biographies of Muḥammad, reports of his *sunna* in the Hadith collections, commentaries on the Qur'an, and genealogies. Sprenger curiously shows himself decidedly sceptical about the historical reliability of most of the traditional accounts of Muḥammad's years in Mecca, observing towards the end of the preface, 'According to my judgement, the sunna contains more truth than falsehood, the biographies more falsehood than truth' (p. civ).

SIGNIFICANCE

Sprenger's extensive survey of Muslim sources for the life and teachings of Muḥammad at the beginning of vol. 3 of this biography marks a considerable advance over the nine-page introduction he included in his 1851 *Life of Moḫammad* (pp. 63-74). Part of the reason, of course, is that, in the ten years between the two works, he had become familiar with many more early sources. Relatively soon after the publication of vol. 3, William Muir (*CMR* 24, 666-96), writing from India, suggested that it was 'the most valuable portion of the whole work' ('Value of early Mahometan historical sources', *Calcutta Review* 46 [1868] 349-90, p. 350).

Muir's interest was not so much in the Muslim works themselves as in Sprenger's estimation of their historical value. He admired Sprenger's research (*Das Leben*, vol. 3, pp. lxxi-lxxvi) into al-Wāqidī (d. 823) and Ibn Sa'd (d. 845) and quoted *Das Leben* at length on these two early authors ('Value', pp. 367-9). But he took issue with what he considered to be Sprenger's scepticism about the historical reliability of the accounts in them ('Value', pp. 365-6, 374). He himself was ready to accept much in the narratives as fact and, when something seemed too fanciful for an historical event to lie behind it, he argued that it is possible when reading Muslim stories of Islamic origins 'to separate the grain of fact from the husk of overlying fiction' ('Value', p. 367). He had worked through many of these issues in the introduction to his own *The life of Mahomet and history of Islam*, titled 'Sources for the biography of Mahomet' (vol. 1, pp. i-cv), where he cited Sprenger on the necessity of using the earliest available sources (p. civ).

Also from India, Sayyid Aḥmad Khān, though regretting he was not able to read *Das Leben* in German, acknowledged that Sprenger had consulted the works of Ibn Sa'd, Ibn Isḥāq and al-Wāqidī. However, he suggested that Sprenger's biography was 'wanting in dispassionate research and candid investigation' because he had taken his source material from 'an ill-adjusted and confused mass of puerile traditions' (*A series of essays on the life of Mohammed and subjects subsidiary thereto*, Delhi, 1870, 'Preface', p. xvii) rather than the 14th-century historian Abū l-Fidā' ('Preface', p. xiv), the very author whom both Sprenger (*The life of Moḫammad*, p. 73) and Muir (*Life of Mahomet*, vol. 1, p. civ) rejected.

Beyond his disagreements with Sprenger about the historicity of the early Islamic narratives, Muir wrote that *Das Leben* 'displays incredible research, and is a perfect treasure-house of materials for the study, not only of the lives of Mahomet and his contemporaries, but of the religious, social, and literary development of the early Moslem empire' ('Value', p. 349).

Present-day scholars continue to refer to *Das Leben*. Among them, John Wansbrough (*The sectarian milieu. Content and composition of Islamic salvation history*, Oxford, 1978, p. 51, n. 2) engages with Sprenger's comments on the various sects in and around Mecca in the years before Islam and in particular with what Sprenger wrote about the Ebionites (*Das Leben*, vol. 1, pp. 18-42), Claude Gilliot ('Les "informateurs"') subjects Sprenger's *Lehrer* ('teachers') of Muḥammad (*Das Leben*, vol. 2, pp. 349-90) to fresh historical scrutiny, and recently on the internet Sprenger's diagnosis of Muḥammad's disease as *hysteria muscularis* (*Das Leben*, vol. 1, pp. 207-37, 265-75) has received a detailed, and somewhat sarcastic, examination ('ghurabalbayn').

Nicolai Sinai includes *Das Leben* in a group of publications that he says marked the birth of historical-critical Qur'an scholarship ('Orientalism', p. 145). He states that this set of scholarly works, by authors such as Abraham Geiger, Gustav Weil and Theodor Nöldeke, 'represents a momentous break with previous approaches' in which, he says, the Qur'an and Muḥammad were evaluated according to Christian criteria, and quoting favourably a mid-19th-century opinion that 'religious writings, especially non-Christian ones, must be judged not in terms of their truth value [...], but rather as documents of human religiosity, as chronicles of the "varieties of religious experience"' (p. 146). This approach to Islam was actually dominant in the Western academy through much of the 20th century and brings its own load of trenchant questions (S.J. Shoemaker, *Creating the Qur'an. A historical-critical study*, Oakland CA, 2022, pp. 1-12; cf. Rippin, 'Literary analysis', p. 110). In terms of Christian-Muslim relations, however, one might wonder which approach brings more meaningful engagement. At the end of his review of Sprenger's preface on sources at the beginning of *Das Leben* vol. 3, Muir rejoices in the wealth of early Islamic sources that the book has brought to light, but seems disappointed not to find more interest among 'educated and thoughtful Mahometans' in India. He is ready for authentic encounter based on documentary evidence and asserts:

> [T]he right of private judgment and of discussion is here in India as free as the air we breathe ... [t]he honest and enlightened Moslem ought not to shrink from a domain of inquiry, opening up a long vista of history and literature, which he naturally looks up to with veneration, and portions of which he may justly regard with pride. ('Value', pp. 389-90)

PUBLICATIONS

Aloys Sprenger, *Das Leben und die Lehre des Moḥammad nach bisher grösstentheils unbenutzten Quellen*, 3 vols, Berlin, 1861-5, repr. Hildesheim, 2003; 2692310 (digitised version available through Hathi Trust)

Aloys Sprenger, *Das Leben und die Lehre des Moḥammad nach bisher grösstentheils unbenutzten Quellen*, 3 vols, Berlin, 1869², repr. Norderstedt, 2016, London, 2022; 6682441 (digitised version available through Hathi Trust)

A. Sprenger, 'On Umayya b. Abī al-Ṣalt', trans. H.-J. Döhla, in Ibn Warraq (ed.), *Koranic allusions. The biblical, Qumranian, and pre-Islamic background to the Koran*, Amherst NY, 2013, 33-47 (English trans. of two passages from *Das Leben*, vol. 1, pp. 76-81, 110-19)

STUDIES

'Ghurabalbayn', 'Muhammad's alleged illness – 2. hysteria', East by East West website, 2020; https://eastbyeastwest.wordpress.com/2020/01/22/mohammeds-alleged-illness-2-hysteria/

N. Sinai, 'Orientalism, authorship, and the onset of revelation. Abraham Geiger and Theodor Nöldeke on Muḥammad and the Qurʾān', in D. Hartwig et al. (eds), *'Im vollen Licht der Geschichte'. Die Wissenschaft des Judentums und die Anfänge der kritischen Koranforschung*, Würzburg, 2008, 145-54

C. Gilliot, 'Les "informateurs" juifs et chrétiens de Muḥammad. Reprise d'un problème traité par Aloys Sprenger et Theodor Nöldeke', *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 22 (1998) 84-126

A. Rippin, 'Literary analysis of Qurʾān, *tafsīr*, and *sīra*. The methodologies of John Wansbrough', in R.C. Martin (ed.), *Approaches to Islam in Religious Studies*, Tucson AZ, 1985, 151-63

W. Muir, *The Mohammedan controversy, biographies of Mohammed, Sprenger on tradition, the Indian liturgy, and the psalter*, Edinburgh, 1897

Gordon Nickel

Mohammed und der Koran. Eine psychologische Studie
'Muḥammad and the Qur'an. A psychological study'

DATE 1889
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE German

DESCRIPTION

Sprenger's *Mohammed und der Koran. Eine psychologische Studie* ('Muḥammad and the Qur'an, a psychological study') is a short biographical account of the Prophet's life, mainly the years up to his flight to Medina, together with a discussion of the relationship between his life and the origin of the Qur'an. Sprenger contextualises the Qur'an in early 7th-century Arab religious and political discourses and endeavours to analyse aspects of the Prophet's psychology as well as the socio-psychological situation in Mecca and Medina at the time of his early mission. His overall approach can be described as scholarly rather than hagiographical or guided by polemical or missionary agendas.

The title of the book is slightly misleading as it contains no explicit reference to or systematic application of psychological theories. Instead, the psychological ideas Sprenger employs have to be deduced from his arguments. In fact, *Mohammed und der Koran* can in many respects be read as a condensed and simplified version of his earlier detailed scholarly study, *Das Leben und die Lehre des Moḥammad, nach bisher grösstentheils unbenutzten Quellen* (1861-5), and the preceding but shorter study in English, *The life of Mohammad, from original sources* (1851).

Sprenger's most important academic predecessors in German-speaking countries were Gustav Weil (1808-89) and Theodor Nöldeke (1836-1930). In his seminal work *Das Leben Mohammeds* (Berlin, 1863), Nöldeke had suggested that '[i]t is hardly possible to even begin to grasp psychologically the inner processes in Muḥammad's mind that made him a prophet' (p. 20). In fact, Sprenger's study may well be an attempt to respond to this challenge. His treatise is only 74 pages long with no introduction, chapter divisions, index or footnotes, resembling a long essay more than a detailed academic study. Its target audience is *Bildungsbürger*, a general educated audience in German-speaking Central Europe, as can be inferred by its publication within the book series *Sammlung gemeinverständlicher wissenschaftlicher Vorträge* ('Collection of scholarly lectures for a general audience') and the broad interests of its editor, Rudolf Virchow, who was a well-known

19th-century physician, anthropologist, pathologist, prehistorian, biologist and liberal politician. Sprenger had an academic background in science and had obtained his doctorate in medicine before he fully dedicated his life to the study of Oriental languages and cultures.

Mohammed und der Koran, a popular study of the life, psychology and major religious achievements of the Prophet Muḥammad, was written to meet the growing cultural and political interest in the 'Orient' and Islam among German-speaking aristocratic and bourgeois elites in the second half of the 19th century. In the cultural sphere of the time, well-known German intellectuals had developed an interest in and established a dialogue with leading intellectual Muslims of the past (often referred to as *Mohammedaner*). Founded in 1845, the Deutsche Morgenländische Gesellschaft ('German Oriental Society'), which was the oldest scientific association of German-speaking Orientalists, published some of Sprenger's works and he had close ties with it. Through the poetic and linguistic work of Friedrich Rückert (1788-1866; *CMR* 22, 271-80), whose polite translation of Arabic poetry was a first in Central European literature and was taken up by composers such as Robert Schumann (*Lieder aus dem Osten*, 'Songs from the East'), and particularly through Johann Wolfgang Goethe's (*CMR* 22, 106-16) *West-Östlicher Diwan* ('West-east divan'), in which the poet and scientist Goethe professed a fascination for the Qur'an and 'Mahomet', the German-speaking public had become increasingly interested in the history of Islam and its founder. In 1814, Goethe had studied the work of the Persian poet Ḥāfiẓ in the translation made by Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall (1774-1856), who later became one of Sprenger's teachers in Vienna. The newly acquired taste for Islamic literature and its foundational figures among the Central European bourgeoisie is also reflected in works of 19th-century Orientalist painters such as G. Bauernfeind, A. v. Mechel, L.P. Müller, C. Wuttke and E. Brandt.

In addition to the cultural reception of Muslim religion and poetry, the public imagination about the *Morgenland* (Orient) was stimulated by the Second German Empire and the Austrian Hungarian Empire establishing or intensifying political and economic links with the Ottoman Empire. In 1882, Sultan Abdulhamid II (r. 1876-1909) invited Prussian military advisers to reform the Ottoman army. Plans to extend the railway connection of the Orient Express to Baghdad with German financial and technological resources ('Bagdad-Bahn') as well as colonial activities in Muslim parts of East Africa placed aspects of Islamic culture and history securely on the mental map of the Central European political elites. Before the great power and colonial rivalry between Britain and Germany began in

earnest with the accession of Wilhelm II (r. 1888-1918), the grandson of Queen Victoria, to the Prussian and German imperial throne in 1888, the 19th century saw an extended period of Anglo-German collaboration in the areas of science and geographical exploration, and also in ecumenical and missionary activities. Based in Jerusalem between 1841 and 1886, the Anglo-Prussian bishopric in Jerusalem, a Protestant episcopal see with a mission to convert Jews and Muslims to Protestant Christianity, is perhaps the strongest expression of the united religious enterprises of the time.

As a reading knowledge of major European languages was customary among the educated European elites in the 19th century, Sprenger's works, including *Mohammed und der Koran*, were of great value not only to native speakers of German but also to other Europeans, particularly political and economic leaders, Christian clergy and artists who needed a short introduction to the main themes of the Qur'an and the biography and personality of Muḥammad. As review articles demonstrate, Sprenger's books were regarded as well-informed, even authoritative on contemporary Islamic studies, as the author could not only read and speak Arabic (together with approximately 15 other languages) but had lived and worked in Muslim cultures for several decades.

With the establishment of psychology as an academic discipline in Germany, particularly in the wake of Wilhelm Wundt's (1832-1920) seminal works, such as *Beiträge zur Theorie der Sinneswahrnehmung* ('Contributions to the theory of sensory perception', 1862), *Grundzüge der physiologischen Psychologie* ('Principles of physiological psychology', 1874) and *Über psychologische Methoden* ('On psychological methods', 1883), the late 19th century also saw growing interest in biographies of important historical and religious figures in light of new psychological theories. An early review of *Mohammed und der Koran* by C. Pelman in the psychological journal *Zeitschrift für Psychologie und Physiologie der Sinnesorgane* draws attention to the fact that it seems to be short on the psychology of Muḥammad as an individual, although this and other similar reviews overlook the use he makes of Moritz Lazarus's (1824-1903) *Völkerpsychologie* ('Psychology of nations'), which formed the foundation of later social psychology.

Mohammed und der Koran begins with a short description of the main geographical features of the Arabian Peninsula, its major trading routes and the distribution of power and wealth of its population from Antiquity to the time of Muḥammad. Following Alexander von Humboldt's theories of an interconnectedness between geography, climate and human socio-economic and cultural pursuits, Sprenger reconstructs and contextualises Muḥammad's declarations of monotheism and early Islam in

the early 7th-century political and ideological power struggles between the leading tribes in Mecca and other parts of the Arabian Peninsula. He is particularly interested in Muḥammad's interactions with traders and the priests of local cults. As he sees it, for Muḥammad the intellectual education of the Meccans was significant and helped to sharpen his religious thinking through their disagreements with him, while for the city's ruling elite, 'war die Erhaltung ihrer hergebrachten Institutionen eine Lebensfrage' ('the preservation of their traditional institutions was a crucial issue', pp. 4-5). It was primarily Muḥammad's attacks on traditional idol worship and his outspoken opposition to forms of polytheistic religion that led to his first conflicts with the establishment in Mecca.

Employing his detailed knowledge of Hadith and *sīra*, Sprenger goes on to outline Muḥammad's early life and the first revelations that led to the formation of the Qur'an. His excellent command of Arabic enables him to provide his own German translations of the suras he quotes, and to read in the original Arabic seminal biographies of the Prophet, such as the early parts of Abū Ja'far al-Ṭabari's *Ta'rīkh* and accounts by Ibn Isḥāq, Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhrī and Ibn Hishām. He suggests that the encounter between Muḥammad and the Christian hermit Baḥīrā (usually regarded as legendary), which later found expression in Q 24:35-8 (the 'verse of light'), was the inauguration of Muḥammad's mission, and he takes issue with some scholars' accounts of Muslim biographies that confuse the chronology of the Prophet's journey(s) to Syria. Sprenger praises the mystical poetry of the verse and sees Muḥammad's poetic theology of the divine eternal light as being in contrast to the utilitarian religious cults and ideas of his opponents (pp. 7-8).

Following qur'anic tradition and *sīra*, Sprenger then describes how the Prophet experienced his early revelations on Mount Ḥirā', and gives a detailed account of the psychological challenges he faced and the symptoms of mental disturbance he exhibited in the process: 'Auf seinen einsamen Wanderungen hörte er sich bisweilen rufen […] und hielt es für die Stimme eines Dämon ('In his lonely wanderings he sometimes heard himself calling […] and thought it was the voice of a demon') so that 'Dieser Zustand ihm unerträglich [wurde], und er gedachte, sich von einem Felsen hinabzustürzen' ('This situation became unbearable to him and he thought of throwing himself off a rock'); such phenomena from a modern psychological perspective point to schizophrenic, manic-depressive and suicidal tendencies (p. 8). Sprenger also carefully lists physical manifestations of the Prophet's troubled mental state:

> He suffered from nervous attacks characterised by convulsive oscillations between contraction and expansion of the muscles [...], the lips and tongue trembled. [...] It also happened that the paroxysms increased to the point of catalepsy: he fell to the ground as if drunk, his face turned red and his breathing became difficult. (p. 9)

As in his earlier monographs about Muḥammad, Sprenger here gives detailed descriptions of his psycho-somatic travails and frames them within the medical and psychiatric vocabulary of late 19th-century European scientific discourses. He also calls Muḥammad's mental state at the beginning of his prophetic career in 610 a *Krankheit* ('illness'), which, in the course of subsequent revelations, turned into *Exaltation*. Sprenger also talks about *Schwärmerei*, denoting 'enthusiasm' and 'passion' but also 'fanaticism'. He briefly observes: 'Theologen heißen sie [derartige Schwärmerei] Prophetentum, Psychiater religiösen Wahnsinn' ('Theologians call [such enthusiasm] prophetism, psychiatrists call it religious madness', p. 8); it should, by the way, be noted that, in the 19th century, the German term '*Wahn*' referred not only to madness or delirium but also to frenzy and extreme passion. Sprenger clearly avoids polemical Christian rhetoric that describes Muḥammad as 'being obsessed by the devil' or 'a sign of the Anti-Christ', and instead tries to understand his psychosomatic problems in relation to the significance of the career he was just starting and the breakthrough of a new religious insight.

In his attitude towards Muḥammad's psychological disposition, Sprenger leans less towards *Prophetentum* ('prophetism') than *Wahnsinn* ('madness', 'frenzy'), favouring the more academic and objective position. In consequence, his approach is often less 'psychological' in a 21st-century sense, tending towards a pathological and psychiatric interpretation, as understood in 19th-century medicine. *Mohammed und der Koran* is, therefore, less about the psychology of the religious individual (the book precedes the groundbreaking works of William James, Edwin D. Starbuck and Sigmund Freud by some decades) than an attempt to assess from a psychiatric point of view the behaviour of the foremost religious figure of Islam, akin to similar attempts in the post-Enlightenment Christian *Leben Jesu Forschung* ('research on the life of Jesus').

With its presupposition that all prophetic figures (*Prophetentum*) suffered from potential pathological problems, the treatise can be situated in the tradition of 'Wissenschaftliche Religionskritik' ('the scientific criticism of religion') represented by such scholars as David Friedrich Strauss, Friedrich Nietzsche, William Hirsch and also Albert Schweitzer, who in

his monograph *Die psychiatrische Beurteilung Jesu. Darstellung und Kritik* ('The psychiatric study of Jesus. Exposition and criticism', 1913) rejected the assumption that passionate religious sentiments were necessarily of a psychotic nature. Interestingly, when he is discussing Muḥammad's frequent spells of insomnia, a symptom that present-day psychology often attributes to forms of severe depression, Sprenger employs the pre-scientific term *Gemüt* (*Gemüthskrankheit*). This is often rendered as 'mind', 'psyche' or 'feeling', though it can also have the much wider meaning of 'soul', which opens the way to think of the Prophet's troubled *soul* (not just psyche) being severely challenged, and perhaps purified, by the tremendous scope of his task in receiving the Qur'an and spreading the divine word.

Sprenger suggests that Muḥammad's psychological and physical travails at the beginning of his mission can be interpreted as a divine distinction, in support of which he quotes Q 93:1-11 in which Allāh refers directly to the Prophet's psychological burdens and reassures him: 'Ich schwöre bei des Tages Pracht und bei der stillen Nacht, daß dich dein Herr nicht im Stiche lasset, und dich nicht hasset' ('I swear by the glory of the day and by the quiet of the night that your Lord will not abandon you and does not hate you', p. 12). Sprenger also quotes passages that explain Muḥammad looking on his behaviour and his scriptural utterances as being authorised by God and explicitly rejecting the accusations made by his enemies that he was possessed by demons or Satan (e.g. Q 81:15-25, p. 9). He does not say whether he himself endorses those claims, but he takes great pains to present them in detail.

Sprenger does not follow the traditional Muslim view that the Prophet was illiterate and was suddenly able to convey his inspired utterings in elaborate poetic language. Rather, he interprets the command *iqrā'* in Q 96:1-5 (traditionally accepted as the first revealed passage of the Qur'an) according to the possibilities yielded by the Semitic verb *kara* (the present-day transliteration of the Arabic verb is *qara'a*, 'to read', giving *qur'ān*, 'reading'), which can mean not only 'to read' ('to comprehend') but also 'to proclaim'. This makes it possible for him to suggest collaboration between Allāh and the Prophet: 'Den Vorgang in seinem Inneren stellte sich Mohammed so vor: Gott versetzte ihn in eine gehobene Stimmung, die nebelhaften Empfindungen werden von Gott gesammelt und zu bestimmten Vorstellungen verdichtet, dann findet Gott den passenden Ausdruck dafür' ('Muḥammad imagined the internal [or psychological] process in this way: God put him into a mood of euphoria, the misty feelings were collected by God and condensed [the verb '*verdichten*'

can mean 'to compose' or 'to write poems'] into specific ideas, and God then found the appropriate expression for them', p. 10). Thus, Muḥammad was not merely a vessel or mouthpiece of the divine word, but created the physical Qur'an in collaboration with God. Importantly, it was his humble reception of the divine word that led to his prophetic proclamations and so his life in itself became a symbol of Islam. It consisted of recognising ('reading') the greatness of Allāh throughout creation (p. 38) as well as in the pronouncements he made, and also in trusting His ultimate authority. It did not lead to self-abasement but rather to praise and devout religious observance.

Despite opening up these readings of Muḥammad's biography, as a critical scholar, Sprenger frequently displays a tendency to regard his revelations as little more than a religious individual's delusions ('*Hallicunationen*', p. 9), prompted by medical problems and a construction and projection of his own political and spiritual imaginings. However, he takes great care with his scholarly language, distinguishing a 'rational' and even forensic view about Muḥammad's visions from a religious one. Thus, the suggestion that Muḥammad suffered from hallucinations is rendered in the subjunctive: 'Wenn die Diagnose über seinen Gemüthszustand nach den Gesetzen gerichtlicher Evidenz gestellt werden müßte …' ('If the diagnosis of his state of mind had to be made according to the laws of judicial evidence …'). Elsewhere, in connection with the question of the divine inspiration of the Qur'an, Sprenger uses a reflexive form that makes Muḥammad both the instigator and the recipient of the messages: 'Er ließ sich offenbaren' ('He let himself be revealed', p. 46 and elsewhere). The awareness and implementation of different scientific and linguistic perspectives in analysing the psychology of the Prophet constitutes a major strength of Sprenger's text.

In addition, other socio-psychological and cross-cultural dimensions that feature prominently in Sprenger's writing deserve mention. In a somewhat sweeping statement, he describes 'das Jahrtausend des Mohammed [als] das Zeitalter des Weltschmerzes' ('the millennium of Muḥammad as the age of world-weariness', p. 16) and asserts that, partly in response to this decadence, the Prophet championed a vigorous new creed that opened the way for the Arab tribes to unite and reshape their religious teachings, cults, law and political activities. He incorporated into his teachings older Judeo-Christian ideas of millennialism, the Day of Judgement and the resurrection of the dead in an attempt to infuse his proselytising efforts with awe and fear, and to underpin his ethical

teachings with stern eschatological warnings and incentives, not least in his *Bußpredigten* ('sermons calling for repentance', pp. 17, 18).

A particular focus of Sprenger's *Mohammed und der Koran* is the psychology of groups and the interaction between tribes in and around Mecca. Here, he appears to have applied the socio-psychological insights and theories of his colleague, Moritz Lazarus. In his pioneering of theories of what today is known as social psychology, Lazarus discussed the formation of collective worldviews and the interaction of collective and individual values and feelings, together with the encounter between and intersecting of different collective (religious) psychologies. The first Jewish professor at the University of Berne and the first ever chair of psychology, he shared with Sprenger an intense interest in Semitic languages and cultures. He refers to their collaboration together in his autobiography, *Moritz Lazarus' Lebenserinnerungen* (Berlin, 1906, p. 496).

As Sprenger sees it, in his attempts to convert the Quraysh tribe of Mecca to Islam and to spread the messages he had received, Muḥammad employed a series of teaching and prophetic strategies that responded to the socio-psychological situation, the current state of knowledge and the objections of his main interlocutors. The principal reason why his opponents did not follow him was a mixture of their own material interests and the fear that Mecca might lose its cultic and economic significance. One of Muḥammad's main strategies was to explain his own role as prophet as being in line with earlier Jewish and Christian prophets about whom his Arab contemporaries would know. Sprenger explains his revelations and his collection of the Qur'an as *Wiederoffenbarungen* ('renewed or continued revelation') in order to fend off attacks against himself, to claim the charisma of his forerunners and also to link his teaching about a final divine judgement to equivalents proclaimed by earlier messengers. In many passages of the Qur'an, he indirectly addresses his opponents, for example in Q 16:113-14, in which a natural catastrophe occurs as a judgement from God because of the people's contempt for His prophet.

Sprenger also explains how Muḥammad integrated current Arab cultic practices (particularly those centred on the Kaʿba) and religious seasons and exercises (*dhikr*), as well as gestures during prayer and religion-juridical traditions (*sharīʿa*) into his new religion and saw in this the potential of older ideas and practices to underpin the prophetically renewed religion of Allāh. Sprenger goes on to demonstrate the way in which Muḥammad's messages in the Qur'an were intended to address the needs and concerns not only of those who accepted it but also of sceptics and critics. Many

of the revelations can therefore be understood as flexible responses to socio-psychological needs rather than apodictic pronouncements. The immediate socio-psychological circumstances of the religious situation in early 7th-century Mecca, and Muḥammad's involvement in it, actually inform the revelation. In terms of the Muslim debate about the Qur'an having been created or being eternal, Sprenger thus comes down on the side of 'createdness', at least in the many passages concerning the life of Muḥammad, though he does once refer to the notion of a 'heavenly' or eternal Qur'an (p. 19).

Together with his detailed three-volume monograph on the Prophet, Sprenger's *Mohammed und der Koran* was one of the first German-language academic attempts to present and discuss the qur'anic issue of the Satanic Verses, in which Satan is supposed to have revealed to Muḥammad verses that identified three pagan goddesses of the Meccan cult as intercessors before Allāh. Sprenger does not discuss the problems of demons or questions of Islamic orthodoxy but endeavours to view the incident in light of Muḥammad's character and zeal for his faith as well as the socio-psychological and cultic environment in which he lived. He interprets these verses (which were later revoked) as a testimony to the Prophet's passion to convert the Meccans, to his noble character and to his lack of fanaticism (p. 33). Muḥammad's arguably main psychological drive, his honest zeal to convert the Quraysh to monotheism and to become their religious leader, led him to make unacceptable compromises by seeking to accommodate the psychological and liturgical needs of the idol worshippers of the town. For Sprenger, this was an instance of the Prophet's overzealousness in his role as co-creator with Allāh of the qur'anic message that turned into self-delusion and led to a degree of hubris. It was psychological rather than demonological forces that caused this lapse, and it was soon rectified by the psychological and doctrinal intervention of his true followers who berated him, as well as by subsequent corrective revelations.

Another aspect of the origin of the Qur'an that Sprenger describes in psychological terms concerns the passages that Muḥammad is supposed to have produced in consultation with a Jewish Christian whom Sprenger calls the 'Presbyter'. He believes that this figure was one of the new Muslims who sought refuge in Abyssinia when they were persecuted in Mecca, and later returned in 616. The Presbyter had learnt a great deal while he was in the Christian country and possessed intimate knowledge of the Torah and New Testament, which helped Muḥammad to rework and refine his retellings of the stories of Moses and Pharaoh and other

figures from early history (p. 58). According to Sprenger, the Presbyter also introduced Muḥammad to the concept of *Raḥmān* (which appears in the Qur'an and is usually understood as an epithet for Allāh) and the *Heiliger Geist* (holy spirit or divine force, also identified with *waḥy*, the power of revelation) which became a prominent feature in his teachings (p. 66). Rather inappropriately, Sprenger refers to the Presbyter's involvements in the creation of the Qur'an as *Nachhilfe* ('tutoring classes') for Muḥammad, whose *Schnitzer* ('blunders') were supposedly his attempts to 'play act' (*spielen*) at receiving inspiration in order to impress his teacher. Sprenger also calls the collaboration of the two a *Gründerkomplott* ('conspiracy of founders'). In comments such as these, he reveals the strong prejudices of a Christian European academic.

However, it is also in the context of Muḥammad's engagement with Judeo-Christian religious traditions that Sprenger sings his highest praises of the *Genius des arabischen Propheten* ('the genius of the Arab prophet'). He thought that one of Muḥammad's greatest achievements was the *Vergeistigung* ('spiritualisation', 'transferral into the sublime', p. 65) of older Judeo-Christian narratives, such as the story of Joseph and Potiphar's wife in Q 12:24, in which Joseph acts with delicacy in accordance with Muḥammad's idea of a divine inner light that enabled Joseph to follow his own mission and to obey heavenly rather than earthly laws. Sprenger's work clearly shows the extent to which Muḥammad's religious thinking developed through involvement and debate with contemporary Judeo-Christian sources and individuals. A result was that he himself appeared in a line of prophets from the Jewish and Christian traditions.

Sprenger often presents Muslim religious problems, including questions of grace, providence and divine intervention in human destiny, and also free will, by comparing them with equivalents in Judaism and Christianity, without divulging his own views or preferences. The same applies to questions concerning the diversity within the created order, the role of demonic forces and angelic helpers and how they can be reconciled with strict monotheism. In terms of Muḥammad's psychology, Sprenger's argument oscillates between medical and wider socio-political explanations. In what he writes and in his selection of suras to quote, he often displays a nuanced and dialectical understanding of divine-human relations. For a 19th-century European academic, first in British colonial service and then as a Central European academic, Sprenger presents an open-minded and balanced view of the Prophet.

SIGNIFICANCE

Sprenger's *Mohammed und der Koran* was one of the first concise and accessible efforts to familiarise a German-speaking audience in Central Europe and beyond with the historical origins of the Qur'an and important information regarding Muḥammad's psychology. Although in the time since it appeared Islamic studies has made great progress regarding the chronology of Muḥammad's early biography and the cross fertilisation between Jewish, Christian and early Islamic religious discourses, Sprenger's book, despite its few errors and misinterpretations, remains a useful text for an initial overview of the topic as well as a document on the history of science and interfaith dialogue.

By applying late 19th-century psychiatric knowledge as well as elements of the fledgling academic discipline of *Völkerpsychologie*, Sprenger's approach marks a departure both from works about Muḥammad that serve hagiographical, polemical or missionary agendas, and from works of purely descriptive historiography. Although his 'scientific' qualifications often come down on the side of pathological diagnosis, his careful choice of language and references often allows readings that show Muḥammad as both a psychologically and politically challenged religious individual *and* as a prophet and holy man inspired by divine wisdom and in dialogue with it. In Sprenger's account of the creation of the Qur'an, Muḥammad does not merely receive divine knowledge passively but actively contributes to the form and content of it through his responses to socio-historical and socio-psychological developments in Mecca and Medina. According to Sprenger, his character traits – he is described as noble, empathetic and charitable – and his passionate devotion to his mission and the spiritual well-being of his fellow citizens make him a venerable figure, despite some weaknesses such as occasional hubris and sexual exploits that were at odds with traditional Arabic mores. Thus, Sprenger's approach is not just 'rational' and Eurocentric, as is sometimes (over-)stated, but creates room for an appreciation of and dialogue with the teachings of the Qur'an and the fascinating inner life of Muḥammad.

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Norman P. Franke

Gottlieb Wilhelm Leitner

Gottlieb William Leitner

DATE OF BIRTH 1840
PLACE OF BIRTH Pest [Budapest]
DATE OF DEATH 1899
PLACE OF DEATH Bonn

BIOGRAPHY

Gottlieb William (Wilhelm) Leitner was by all accounts an exceptionally gifted linguist and an outstanding scholar in Islamic studies. He was born into a Jewish family surnamed Sapier (Saphir) in Pest late in 1840. His father died in 1845, whereupon Dr Johann Moritz Leitner (1800-61), a convert from Judaism to Christianity who worked in Istanbul, took him with him to be educated in Turkey. His mother and sister joined them in 1848 and, when his mother and Leitner married in 1849, he and his sister were adopted by Leitner and brought up as Christians. In Istanbul, he learnt Turkish and Arabic as well as 'considerable portions of the Koran by heart' at a mosque school (*Muhammadanism. Being the report of an extempore address delivered at South Place Chapel, Finsbury*, p. 3). At the age of 15, he was enlisted into the British army as an interpreter in the Crimean War (1854-6) with the rank of colonel. He went to England with the intention of preparing for the Anglican priesthood at King's College, London, though he never progressed to ordination. In 1859, he was appointed lecturer in Arabic, Turkish and Modern Greek at King's, and two years later, when he was only 21, he was appointed Professor of Arabic and Mohammedan Law there.

Leitner went to South Asia in 1864 to become principal of Lahore Government College and, in 1866, travelled on behalf of the Punjab government through tribal territories in what is now eastern Afghanistan and north-western Pakistan, making pioneering studies of local dialects and art. In 1882, he was instrumental in establishing the University of the Punjab in Lahore, where he insisted, against the majority opinion, that the language of tuition should be Urdu rather than English. In his years in South Asia, he appropriately adopted the Muslim name Abdur Rasheed Sayyah ('wanderer').

Leitner regularly returned to England all through his years in Lahore. In 1884, he established the Oriental Institute and Oriental Museum in Woking (called by one Muslim dignitary the 'Mecca of the West'; see Ahmed, *Contemporary British mosque*, p. 11) and, when he retired from working in India in 1886, he became its first principal. On this site, he commissioned and raised funds for the building of the Shah Jahan Mosque (now known as Woking Mosque) in 1889 as a provision for Muslims coming to England. This was the first purpose-built mosque in Britain (a makeshift mosque had been opened slightly earlier in Liverpool), and was one of the first mosques to be built in Western Europe.

Over the course of his lifetime, Leitner studied or taught in Istanbul, Bursa, Heidelberg and London, and worked for the British, Prussian and Austrian governments. He acquired as many as 50 languages, and wrote studies in Arabic, Turkish, Greek, Hindi, Sanskrit and Urdu, as well as English. Although he was sometimes thought to have become a Muslim, he referred to himself as a Christian, regarding himself as one who tried to 'create a better feeling between Christians and Muhammadans, based on a more correct knowledge than prevails of their religion' ('The first English mosque', *St. James's Gazette*, 22 January 1890, p. 5).

Leitner died of pneumonia at the age of 58, having suffered from ill health for some time. His funeral service, held at Brookwood cemetery, Woking, was conducted according to the rites of the Church of England. He was survived by his wife and a son.

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Katherine Laura Jennings with the Editors

WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Sinīn-i Islām
'The years of Islam'

DATE 1876
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Urdu

DESCRIPTION
Sinīn-i Islām: being a sketch of the history and literature of Muhammadanism, and their place in universal history, for the use of maulvis is a book in two parts that Leitner wrote in Urdu to be used at the Panjab University College in Lahore, where he was principal. In the four-page English introduction to part 1, he explains that he has written the book out of concern that even *maulvī*s who are candidates for scholarships in the college lack a general knowledge of Islamic history and literature, and he is 'anxious to point out how Arabian history had grown into that of Muhammadanism, and how its literature had influenced the various populations professing that creed. [He] also endeavoured to show what place the history of Muhammadanism has in the universal history of civilization' (p. 2). It is an

attempt to broaden the knowledge of students who had come through the narrow intellectual channels of the traditional Indian Muslim educational system by demonstrating to them that the literature of the Islamic world is 'not confined to commentaries on the Qurán, to a few law treatises, erotic poems, or to grammars, but that it also embraced numerous and admirable works on mathematics, history, medicine, &c' (p. 2). He was helped in writing it by Karīmuddīn, district inspector of schools in nearby Amritsar, and Maulānā Muḥammad Ḥusain Āzād (d. 1910), assistant professor of Arabic at Government College and a celebrated Urdu poet who wrote works on Arabic and Persian literary history. As Leitner left it, the history consists of two parts, though from a reference in the contents pages of vol. 2, a third was evidently envisaged, covering the Mughal Empire and Islam in India.

The first part, published in 1871 and 128 pages long, covers the centuries from the pre-Islamic period in Arabia to the fall of the ʿAbbāsid dynasty. Leitner admonishes his Muslim readers for their lack of intellectual engagement and awareness of the sources of their tradition and informs them that European scholars have surpassed them in knowledge of Arabic literature and history, and now Orientalists are the foremost experts, led by such luminaries as Baron Silvestre de Sacy (1758-1838), the Syrian Maronite Buṭrus al-Bustānī (1819-83) and Edward Lane (1801-76). In order to prepare future scholars who can remedy this situation, this work is meant as a resource to help Indian Muslims to have a better understanding of the history of their faith.

The topics covered in the volume are listed chronologically in the table of contents but it is not divided into chapters. Leitner starts with an account of Arabia before the birth of Muḥammad, outlining historical events and describing Arabian tribal society. He gives a brief history of Mecca and then an account of the life of Muḥammad, providing illustrations of the town and the Grand Mosque. He goes on to describe the rule of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, followed by accounts of the Umayyad and ʿAbbāsid dynasties down to the conquest of Baghdad by the Mongols.

The second part, published in 1876 and 320 pages long, methodically chronicles the successive Islamic dynasties in Spain, the ʿAbbāsid dynasty in Cairo after the fall of Baghdad, the Fāṭimids, Ayyūbids and Mamlūks, the Ottomans and Qajars down to Leitner's own time, and finally the rulers of India down to the mid-18th century. There are occasional brief sections on such topics as literature, science and art under the Spanish Umayyads (pp. 37-42) and trade within the early Islamic world (pp. 77-9).

SIGNIFICANCE

An anonymous reviewer in *The Calcutta Review* in 1871 welcomed part 1 of *Sinīn-i Islām* as 'a very useful little book' (p. xlii), and agreed with Leitner's remarks about the indifference of Indian Muslims towards scholarly study of their tradition: 'Muhammadans too often live on the past', he observes, 'and allow themselves to drift from self-satisfaction to inactivity' (p. xliii; part 2 does not appear to have been reviewed). This sums up the purpose and value of the whole book. Leitner must have intended it as an inducement to help Muslims shake off the belief that new learning was un-Islamic (as the reviewer says, '[Leitner] refutes the idea [...] that all progress [...] is hostile to Islám, and points to [the ʿAbbāsid caliphs] Rashíd and Mámún, whose courts were filled with Greeks and visited by Hindús, though [...] no Moslem has ever charged them with having corrupted the faith') so that they could explore and learn from their heritage.

It was apparently a disinterested gesture towards followers of a faith that Leitner never adopted himself but clearly knew all about and respected deeply. It is emblematic of the same line of thinking that led on a much grander scale to the establishment of the University of the Punjab in 1882.

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Charles M. Ramsey

Muhammadanism

DATE 1889
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

Muhammadanism. Being the report of an extempore address delivered at South Place Chapel, Finsbury, on Sunday afternoon, January 6th, 1889 is an account of a lecture which Leitner gave in a well-known London centre of radical thinking. South Place Chapel had long been known for its non-conformist ministers and, in 1888, just one year before this lecture, its name was changed to South Place Ethical Society, a possible indication of the expectations of Leitner's audience on this occasion. The text was first published in the July 1889 issue of *Time*, a monthly magazine that was published between 1879 and 1891, and shortly after by the Oriental Institute, Woking, as a pamphlet of 10 pages (the version used here). The relationship between the printed version and the original 'extempore address' is unclear, though it is not unlikely that Leitner's actual delivery was more detailed than the published version because some of the points he addresses, such as the assumption that Islam was incapable of change (p. 11), which was accepted as more or less received truth by most 19th-century European commentators on Islam, is dealt with so briefly on the page that it would probably have been incomprehensible to a non-specialist audience in that form. The need to explain the main points made in the address maybe explains why, when the account of it was published as a pamphlet, more of Leitner's short writings about Islam were appended.

The printed text, whatever its relationship to Leitner's oral delivery, contains an account of the lived faith of Muslims without conveying any notion that Islam is inferior to Christianity, but rather suggesting that in many ways it matches or even surpasses it. Leitner emphasises that Islam can only be understood through sympathy and criticises those who do not show this, vigorously observing that 'There are instances of eminent scholars who, for want of sympathy, have greatly misjudged Muhammadanism. Sir William Muir, e.g., [*CMR* 24, 666-96] has been led into very serious mistakes in dealing with this religion' (p. 1).

Leitner begins by distinguishing between 'Islam' as the 'creed of "resignation to the divine will"' and 'Muhammadanism' as 'the creed as now professed by Muhammadans' (p. 1), indicating that he will not deal with Islam in its revealed form but focus on the lived faith he encountered in his years in India and other parts of the Islamic world. Unusually, he

makes clear that the belief preached by Muḥammad was not 'merely imitative' of Judaism and Christianity – a charge brought against Islam in many missionary sources – but the result of 'inspiration from the Source of all goodness' (p. 4). He credits the Prophet with clarity of purpose and 'marvellous insight' into ethics, as well as skill in removing errancy (p. 4). By the turn of the 20th century, there were British scholars who were prepared to express liberal opinions about Islam but Leitner outstrips most in his insistence on the sincerity of Muḥammad, going as far as to say that the Prophet wished to return Christianity to the 'preaching of Christ, as distinguished on the one part from the mystic creed of St. Paul, and the outrageous errors of certain Christian sects known to the Arabs' (p. 4). Leitner proposes that Islam can best be understood as Christianity minus St Paul and Judaism plus proselytism (p. 4), portraying Muḥammad as one who sought to return to the faith of Abraham and to spread this to the whole world, thus converting to a 'high form of culture and of civilization' millions who would have 'remained sunk in barbarism' without the 'brotherhood' enjoyed by believers bound by a common ancestor (p. 4).

With Roman Catholicism clearly in his sights, Leitner stresses that there is no clerical hierarchy in Islam and that Muslims are not 'slaves to priests' or limited in their worship to consecrated spaces: they are each a church to themselves and can pray at the appointed hour wherever they are (p. 5). Just a few decades after the First Vatican Council and its proclamation of papal infallibility, he underlines that Islam has no pope and that Muḥammad never claimed to be infallible. He illustrates this with an apt example:

> On one occasion he had a revelation censuring himself severely for having turned away from a beggar in order to speak to an illustrious man of the commonwealth, and he published this revelation, the very last thing which he would have done had he been an impostor, as ignorant Christians call the great Arab prophet. (p. 5)

Without naming the 'ignorant Christians' he has in mind, in dismissing the application of the term 'impostor' to Muḥammad he leaves little doubt that this is Humphrey Prideaux, Anglican Dean of Norwich (1628-1744; *CMR* 13, 87-95), and his influential diatribe against Muḥammad, *The true nature of imposture fully display'd in the life of Mahomet* (1698). Leitner appears to be taking every opportunity to criticise institutionalised Christianity as well as to commend Islam.

He goes on to argue that the Five Pillars of Islam demonstrate an unimpeachable form of individual and communal discipline. Each of them

enshrines virtues that at least match Christianity and in some cases go beyond it, as in the case of the Hajj, which is 'a bond of union, and creates a real visible Muhammadan Church, such as the Christian world, with its innumerable subdivisions, does not yet possess for the assembly of an entire Christianity' (p. 7). He takes the same approach in showing how equality is a characteristic of Muslim society, evidenced in the way that the needy are helped – 'food is given to any one who needs it, and charity is administered direct, and not by the circuitous means of a Poor Law system' (as in Britain) – and that, in the absence of pews, the worshippers in the mosque observe no difference in status (p. 7).

Moving further along this course, Leitner goes on to defend Muslim marriage as a religious but not sacramental act and as allowing the wife greater privileges than Christians usually allow. Furthermore, 'Divorce is not such an easy matter, [...] for it cannot be obtained without the judgment of arbitrators' (p. 8). Regarding polygamy, it was first instituted as a provision to safeguard women in a pagan society where 'a daughter was considered to be a misfortune, and where female children were sometimes buried alive' (p. 9), and it is governed by the ability of the husband to treat his wives equally: 'Unless he could do that he was only permitted to marry one wife. Now as, practically, no one can be, as a rule, equally fair and loving to two or more wives, the spirit of Muhammad's legislation is clearly in favour of monogamy' (p. 9).

In connection with this, Leitner goes on to address directly the accusation that Muḥammad was profligate in his relations with women. He points out that, in the years before he married, Muḥammad was entirely chaste and kept to his first wife without taking any others until she died. When he did take a number of wives, 'I believe that the real cause of his many marriages at an old age was charity, and in order to protect the widows of his persecuted followers' (p. 10). Pursuing this point further, Leitner addresses a criticism that Christians had made against Muḥammad for centuries: his supposed command to his adopted son Zayd to divorce his wife Zaynab, whom Muḥammad lusted after, so that he could marry her himself. Leitner's response is that, in this matter, Christians should exercise the sympathy he has called for and try to understand what happened from the Muslim point of view. Muḥammad established 'that an adopted child was not a real child; and this being so, it could not be supposed to be within the prohibited degrees' that would prevent a man marrying his former wife, and he received a revelation to confirm this (p. 11). To support his point, Leitner adds a series of brief comparisons between Islamic and European societies to show which is superior: thus, 'The Muhammadans

have no taverns, gaming-houses, or brothels, nor have they any idea of legalizing prostitution; and as regards their general conversation it is infinitely more decent, as a rule, than that of most Europeans' (p. 11).

He ends by dismissing the widespread criticism that Islam is incapable of change (pp. 11-12) and stressing in detail that Muslim toleration of Christianity and other faiths is far greater than the reverse: 'I know many Muhammadans who have subscribed to churches; how many Christians subscribe to mosques? Yet in them "the name of God" is, indeed, commemorated' (p. 12). His closing words constitute a challenge to Christians: 'There is a common ground between Muhammadanism and Christianity, and he is a better Christian who reveres the truths enunciated by the Prophet Muhammad' (p. 12).

Although he gives no explicit indications of his intention in speaking about Islam so appreciatively, it is not difficult to imagine that Leitner used this opportunity before this particular audience to criticise the European Christian consensus. He challenges the main accusations found in missionary and similar works with arguments that are forceful if not always entirely cogent, and he seems confident that he will be applauded by listeners who would appreciate how he turns the tables on a faith that many of them had abandoned in its institutionalised forms by showing that its assumed superiority over another faith should not be presumed.

SIGNIFICANCE

Muhammadanism is a remarkably original defence of Islam as a faith with the potential to instil virtues that match if not excel those of Christianity. Its doctrines aside, the social principles it inculcates lead to strong communal cohesion and virtuous individual conduct. It cannot, therefore, be discounted by Christians, who should not accept as proven the inferiority of another faith when placed alongside the supposed perfection of their own.

While it is not quite clear whether Leitner was doing any more than adopting an apologetic stance in order to encourage his listeners to look on Islam with new sympathy, this relatively short delivery demonstrates that many of the assumptions about the faith that were accepted in British society were not unanimously held. To individuals who could resist the pressure to conform to prevailing religious norms, the address offered proofs that Christianity was not the only repository of divine truth.

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Katherine Laura Jennings with the Editors

ʿImāduddīn Lāhiz

DATE OF BIRTH 1830
PLACE OF BIRTH Panipat, India
DATE OF DEATH 9 August 1900
PLACE OF DEATH Amritsar, India

BIOGRAPHY

ʿImāduddīn Lāhiz was one of the most prolific writers on Christian-Muslim relations in South Asia in the 19th century. His writing career began through his friendship with the two best-known Muslim polemicists of the mid-century, Raḥmatullāh Kairānavī (1818-92; *CMR* 24, 253-60) and Muḥammad Wazīr Khān (d. 1873; *CMR* 24, 237-45), though his life after 1866 had more to do with the best-known target of Muslim polemic in South Asia, Karl Gottlieb Pfander (1801-65; *CMR* 24, 188-236).

ʿImāduddīn began his formal Islamic education in Agra when he was 16. In the year before the well-known public debate took place in Agra in April 1854, he was commissioned by Wazīr Khān, Maulvī Muḥammad Maẓhar (1821-85) and other leading Muslims to preach at the royal Jāmaʿ mosque in Agra against Pfander's evangelistic activities (*Wāqiʿāt*, p. 7; Becht, *The book and the prophet*, pp. 202-3). At the debate itself, he was one of Kairānavī's assistants against Pfander and Thomas Valpy French (1825-91; *CMR* 24, 338-44). Although he showed himself to be a staunch opponent of Christianity, he later experienced a crisis of faith and set out to find answers for himself. He became a Sufi fakir, living a life of austerity and spiritual discipline, but he found that he was disappointed by this: 'When all this toil was over, and I went thence, I had no strength left in my body; my face was wan and pale, and I could not even hold myself up against the wind' (*A Mohammedan brought to Christ*, 1885 edition, p. 14). He found himself in turmoil again in 1864, when his Muslim colleague, ʿAbdulḥalīm Ṣafdar ʿAlī (*CMR* 24, 765-80), converted to Christianity. In a bid to win Ṣafdar ʿAlī back to Islam, he carried out two years of intensive research into Christianity and Islam during which he read the Bible for the first time. In the end, instead of winning Ṣafdar ʿAlī back, ʿImāduddīn himself was won over and was baptised by Robert Clark in Amritsar in 1866.

Following his conversion, ʿImāduddīn Lāhiz played an important role in the nascent Punjabi Church. He was confirmed on 3 December 1868, appointed deacon a few days later, and ordained a priest of the Anglican

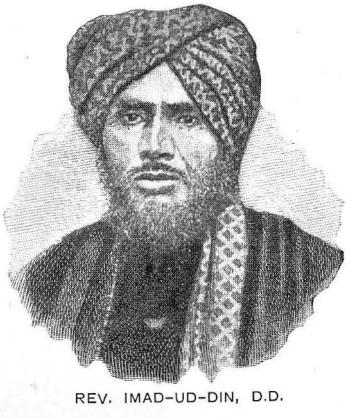


Illustration 14. ʿImāduddīn Lāhiz

Church in December 1872. He also quickly became a Christian apologist, dedicating nearly half of the estimated 53 books he wrote to the defence of Christianity. *Wāqiʿāt-i ʿImādiyya* is his autobiographical account of his struggle to find the truth, written immediately after his conversion. Two other important sources for his life are his *Kitāb intisāb al-ʿImād* ('The ancestry of 'Imād', 1887), in which he sketches his genealogy back to the royal house of Persia and Abū Ḥanīfa, after whom the Ḥanafī legal school is named, and his *Khaṭṭ-i Shakāgo* (trans. Clark, 'Dr. Imad-ud-din's paper for Chicago'), in which he describes the effects of the preaching of the Gospel on the Muslims of India and lists the names of 117 prominent Muslim converts to Christianity (ʿImāduddīn, *Mohammedan converts*, pp. 6-16).

ʿImāduddīn's writings during the last four decades of the 19th century take into account a number of Muslim authors in north India, including al-Ḥasan Mohanī (*Taḥqīq al-īmān*, 1866; *Hidāyat al-Muslimīn*, 1868), Chirāgh ʿAlī (*Taqlīʿāt-i taʿlīqāt*, 1877), Sayyid Aḥmad Khān (*Tanqīd al-khayālāt*, 1882-3), Mīrzā Ghulām Aḥmad (*Tawzīn al-aqwāl*, 1893) and, of course, Raḥmatullāh Kairānavī. During this time, he served the Church in north India from Amritsar, preaching regularly and writing a number of works on Christian themes and, together with Robert Clark, Bible commentaries ('Report of the Rev. Imad-ud-din', 1878, p. 494; 'Report', 1880; cf. Ṣafdar ʿAlī, 'Urdu review', pp. 598-600). His sermons were greatly admired by British colleagues ('In memoriam', pp. 914-15). He also produced an Urdu translation of the Qur'an. In 1884, he was awarded an honorary Lambeth DD (Gracey, 'Imad-ud-Din', p. 4). ʿImāduddīn passed away in Amritsar in August 1900 as one of the best-known and most loved of Indian pastors, authors, preachers and debaters of 19th-century India.

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Taḥqīq al-īmān
'Investigation of the faith'

DATE 1866
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Urdu

DESCRIPTION

ʿImāduddīn wrote *Taḥqīq al-īmān* in the year of his conversion to explain why he had embraced Christianity and to start to begin to respond to some of the anti-Christian polemic he had favoured as a Muslim. The first

thing he wrote after becoming a Christian, it runs to 140 pages and was published by the Punjab Religious Society in Lahore in 1866. The page numbers below refer to the 1878 third edition.

The book is divided into a brief introduction (*muqaddima*), two chapters, and a conclusion. ʿImāduddīn states that he intends it for *ṭālibān-i ḥaqq* ('seekers after truth'), especially those *maulvī*s (Muslim religious leaders) who – as he a little later expressed it at the end of his short autobiography – ignorantly and thoughtlessly put their trust in the religion of Muḥammad (*Wāqiʿāt-i ʿImādiyya*, p. 13). *Taḥqīq al-īmān* is a reasoned defence of his conversion, but it also falls into a particular category of *manāẓaratī adab* ('debate literature') because it endeavours to establish the superiority of ʿImāduddīn's case for Christianity.

ʿImāduddīn begins by praising the one almighty, merciful, just God who is without any associate and who created humans with free will and commanded them to follow the *ṣirāṭ-i mustaqīm* ('the straight path', a quotation of Q 1:6). By his grace, God gave sufficient intellect to those who search to distinguish between good and evil. God also sent the good news through the former and later messengers so that, when sinners read God's Word with carefulness and deep thought, or listen with an attentive ear, they will know the straight path that leads to salvation (p. 1).

Having set out that human beings are by nature designed to seek after God, ʿImāduddīn tells his own story of how he had been in search of his Creator for the previous 20 years. He briefly outlines the stages in his search for God, beginning when he left home at the age of 15 and went to the Government College in Agra, where he studied Arabic, Persian and the Islamic sciences, and also learned from the Sufis. He preached at the royal Jāmaʿ Mosque in Agra for three years and then, leaving everything, went to the city of Qaroli, where he followed extreme Sufi practices in an effort to meet God. In short, having travelled to many places he eventually came to Lahore, where he was appointed a lecturer in the teachers' training school.

In Lahore, ʿImāduddīn had discussions with Christians and *maulvī*s. After much reflection, deliberation and debating, doubt about Islam took a firm hold on him. His fellow Muslims did not have any strong proof for the prophethood of Muḥammad, and this appears to be the initial reason why he abandoned Islam and embraced Christianity (p. 2).

At this point, ʿImāduddīn makes it very clear that he is challenging his former brothers in faith and also the *maulvī*s to reply to his objections and prove the truth of Islam, or otherwise to join him by accepting Christianity. The book stands as an important link between his autobiography, *Wāqiʿāt-i ʿImādiyya*, with its short account of his conversion, and his

detailed refutation of three popular works of Muslim polemic in *Hidāyat al-Muslimīn* (1868).

In the introduction, ʿImāduddīn begins a response to the Muslim accusation of *taḥrīf* ('corruption', 'alteration') in the Bible. He names as prime sources of this accusation Āl-i Ḥasan's *Kitāb-i istifsār* ('The book of questions', 1845), Raḥmatullāh Kairānavī's *Izālat al-awhām* ('Removal of delusions', 1852-3), and Kairānavī and Wazīr Khān's *Iʿjāz-i ʿĪsavī* ('Christian inimitability', 1854-5), the three Muslim polemical works that ʿImāduddīn had studied along with the Bible during the intense year-long investigation that preceded his baptism (*Wāqiʿāt*, p. 13). He promises to provide a full response to Muslim polemic in a later work (eventually, *Hidāya*) (p. 5).

Ch. 1 deals with the life and teachings of Muḥammad, to question whether he was a prophet of God. ʿImāduddīn assesses the claims of Muslims that Muḥammad was the Seal of the prophets (Q 33:40), the greatest of all prophets and the chief of all earlier prophets, as well as the intercessor for sinners, and that, with the appearance of the Qur'an, all the books of pre-Islamic prophets have been abrogated and now only the Qur'an should be obeyed. He sets out four criteria for prophethood and challenges Muslims to prove that Muḥammad meets them (p. 21). They are: did he perform miracles; were his coming and character foretold by earlier prophets; did his prophecies prove to be true; and did he present excellent teachings? ʿImāduddīn thus questions the 'proofs' for the prophethood of Muḥammad that are advanced by Muslim polemicists and concludes from what he has read that Muḥammad lacked the characteristics of a true prophet.

Ch. 2 then deals with the life and teachings of Jesus as a way of determining whether Christianity is from God, and by what proofs its truth is established. ʿImāduddīn uses the same four criteria to demonstrate that Christianity is the true religion of God and that salvation is to be found in Christianity alone. This, he writes, was his reason for abandoning Islam and embracing Christianity, along with the absence of any convincing proof that Muḥammad was a true prophet of God.

In his conclusion, ʿImāduddīn presents features found only in the Gospels and not in the scriptures of any other religion, which he argues are proof of their divine origin. He first argues that the truth and divine knowledge that can be acquired from the Vedas and *taṣawwuf* (Sufism) even with great effort do not produce broadness of heart and peace in the human individual, while a true seeker after God finds them in the Bible without any difficulty or labour. The testimonies of the pre-Islamic

prophets inspire trust to the extent that they transport a believer from the point of *ʿayn al-yaqīn* to *ḥaqq al-yaqīn* (from observational certainty to certainty itself). By consulting the Bible, readers can know their own condition and the glory of God and, provided they seek truthfully, can find the way to salvation. This cannot be found in any other book and not at all in the Qur'an.

The one who caused the Bible to be written is necessarily *ʿālim al-ghayb* ('prescient, knower of the hidden or unseen') because the Bible reveals the secrets of every human heart and, by its teachings, brings satisfaction and hope to the anxious spirit and grants real cleanliness by purifying the heart from its pollution. From the text of the Bible, the reader knows that the one who gave this word is the absolutely holy, true and merciful God and that not a hint of deception or subterfuge is found in Him. ʿImāduddīn contrasts this with the text of the Qur'an, which he claims reveals the deception and hypocrisy of its author. The Bible changes the hearts of men, transforming the proud and wicked into pure, humble and holy characters; and this good work goes on continually. The Qur'an, however, not only fails to accomplish this holy end, but on the contrary continues to keep followers in their natural sinful condition. He writes that, for 20 years, he read the Qur'an with great love and deep understanding but did not experience a similar change, nor did he see this change of heart in any Muslim. Rather, he claims, the same carnality, anger and prejudice remain in the heart, no matter how perfect a Muslim might be. Anyone who objectively compares the Bible and the Qur'an as a true seeker of the truth will at once reject the Qur'an and accept the Gospel. No one accepts the Qur'an after such a comparison, he insists.

ʿImāduddīn ends with a solemn statement to his Muslim friends that he has written this book out of friendship and good will, so he urges them to read it without any bias and to accept the Gospel of Christ.

SIGNIFICANCE

ʿImāduddīn mentions on the first page of *Taḥqīq al-īmān* that its publication faced some opposition, which would not be surprising for the book of an ex-Muslim that compares Muḥammad with Jesus. It proved popular: the first edition had a print run of 1,500 copies, the second 5,000 copies, and the third an additional 1,000. It was the first significant *manāẓaratī* book written by a learned Muslim convert to Christianity in defence of Christian truth and to refute long-held Muslim doctrines. ʿImāduddīn was an 'insider' – not only a former Muslim who knew Islam extremely well,

but also one from the inner circle of the north Indian *ʿulamāʾ* who had challenged Karl Gottlieb Pfander and his *Mīzān ul-ḥaqq*. The books by the Muslim polemicists Kairānavī and others whom he mentions had become the most popular weapons used by Muslims against the missionaries and Christianity. ʿImāduddīn's book caused a great stir among Muslims and many challenged him to debate publicly, and in the following years tried to refute *Taḥqīq al-īmān*. He wrote in 1878 that, before releasing a third edition of the book that year, he read carefully through *Ṣiyānat ul-insān* ('Protection of humanity'), a large work that 'the Lahore Mahommedans' had written against *Taḥqīq* ('Christian moulvie', p. 494). Farman Ali and Humaira Ahmad attribute a second refutation titled *Tiryāq-i masmūm* ('Antidote of the poisoned') to Mawlāna Alṭāf Ḥusain Ḥālī ('Early Christian *sīrah* writings', p. 136).

Avril Powell discusses *Taḥqīq* against the background of the faith, writings and methods of missionaries in India during the 1850s and 1860s, especially Karl Gottlieb Pfander and his *Mīzān ul-ḥaqq* ('"Pillar"', pp. 239-44). Dieter Becht also traces the similarities and differences between it and Pfander's *Mīzān* (*The book and the prophet*, pp. 220-2). E.M. Wherry in 1905 found the 'spirit' of *Taḥqīq* to be 'kindly' and judged it 'very satisfactory' as a popular presentation of the Christian faith (*Muslim controversy*, London, 1905, p. 23).

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Wāqiʿāt-i ʿImādiyya
'Events related to 'Imād'

DATE 1866
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Urdu

DESCRIPTION

Wāqiʿāt-i ʿImādiyya is a short autobiography of 14 pages, written in Urdu. ʿImāduddīn wrote it in 1866, the year of his conversion to Christianity. Published by the Punjab Religious Book Society in Lahore, it was immediately translated by the Revd Robert Clark under the title *A Mohammedan brought to Christ* in 1866, and in 1978 by Ernest Hahn under the title *The life of the Rev. Mawlwi Dr. Imad-u-din Lahiz*. Although testimonial in nature, it is a highly important autobiography as it reveals ʿImāduddīn's inner, physical, emotional, psychological and spiritual struggles before leaving Islam. It is confessional as well as apologetic, because he gives reasons for abandoning the religion that his forefathers had practised for 34 generations and also for embracing the faith he had vehemently opposed.

This is an atypical account which does not begin with customary praise and prayer. It goes straight to the heart of the matter. In the very first line, ʿImāduddīn gives the exact date and year of his conversion as well as the reason for it, which was 'only to gain salvation', and he says that he seeks to address the confusion and divergent opinions concerning his conversion. He gives a brief genealogy in which he informs his readers that his family is directly descended from the renowned Sufi of Hansi, Shaykh Quṭb Jamāluddīn, and he informs his readers that he has three brothers of whom one, Maulvī Karīmuddīn, is a renowned scholar and deputy inspector in the British Raj's education department, and another, Munshi Khairuddīn, also works in the education department. The third died in 1865.

He tells of his journey to becoming a well-known Muslim scholar and a Sufi, beginning at the age of 15, when he left his family and moved to Agra (Akbarābād), there entering the Government College where his brother Karīmuddīn was head of the department of Urdu studies. The sole purpose of his education was to find Allāh and his search was not just through formal study at the college or formal studies of Islamic sciences.

He studied *fiqh* (jurisprudence), *tafsīr* (qur'anic exegesis), Hadith, *adab* (literature), *manṭiq* (logic) and *falsafa* (philosophy). He went to mosques, into the homes of *maulvī*s, to the tombs of Sufis, to gatherings of Sufi communities, and even to wandering and intoxicated fakirs seeking help to find Allāh. He began to have doubts about Islam as a result of conversations

with Christians and, when he turned to Maulvī ʿAbdulḥalīm, who had been recommended to him by his fellow student Ṣafdar ʿAlī, he was not given answers to his questions. He then experimented with Sufism under the direction of Muḥammad Wazīr Khān and he was also appointed to preach at the royal mosque in Agra in order to oppose Karl Pfander. Finally, he 'abandoned the world' and became a fakir, practising extreme asceticism and performing ritual exercises in an effort to meet Allāh. In 1856, feeling totally disappointed with Islam, he returned to his home town, Panipat, and stopped following the *sharīʿa* altogether.

A new period began when he arrived at the teachers' training school in Lahore in 1864. He mentions a conversation with the Principal, Mr Mackintosh, about the true religion. The same year, he heard about the conversion of his college friend Ṣafdar ʿAlī to Christianity. He set himself to dispute with Ṣafdar in the hope of bringing him back to Islam. To prepare for this encounter, he re-read the Muslim apologetic literature he considered most powerful and asked Mr Mackintosh to read the New Testament with him, with the result that, 'When I arrived at the seventh chapter of the Gospel of Matthew, I began to have doubts about the Muhammadan religion' (ʿImāduddīn, *Mohammedan brought to Christ*, p. 17). After a year of intensive research, he came to the conclusion that Islam is not a religion from God and that salvation is to be found in Christianity alone.

ʿImāduddīn was baptised on 29 April 1866 in Amritsar. He mentions benefiting from the fellowship of missionaries and pastors such as Charles Forman, Guru Das and John Newton. In contrast, all his friends and relatives turned against him, apart from one or two who kept in touch with him. He closes the book with a prayer for his relatives and friends.

SIGNIFICANCE

Although this is only a short booklet, it is significant as the autobiography of one of the best-known and most important Muslim converts to Christianity in South Asia in the 19th century. It stands out as a compelling first-person, vulnerable and confessional account in the midst of the many polemical and apologetic books written on both sides during the middle decades of the 19th century. It stands as an example of the process of dialogue leading to a change of faith.

A second edition of *Wāqiʿāt-i ʿImādiyya* was published in Ludhiana in 1874 with an appendix, and a third edition was published by the Punjab Religious Book Society in 1951. There are two English translations, which are probably better known than the original Urdu, particularly the translation by Robert Clark, which has gone through many editions. *Wāqiʿāt-i*

ʿImādiyya has also been translated into languages such as Arabic (F.A. Klein reports seeing the distribution of an Arabic translation in Cairo in 1882; see Stock, *History*, vol. 3, p. 515) and Mandarin (G. Harris, 'Literature for Chinese Muslims', *The Moslem World* 17/2 [1927] 190-3, p. 190).

PUBLICATIONS

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Hidāyat al-Muslimīn
'Guidance for Muslims'

DATE 1868
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Urdu

DESCRIPTION

ʿImāduddīn wrote *Hidāyat al-Muslimīn*, which is 450 pages long in its first edition, to answer allegations against the Bible and Christianity from South Asian Muslim polemicists. It went through several editions, the third, published in 1899, comprising 390 pages. Copies of all editions are extremely rare (copies can be found in the British Library and the library of the Henry Martyn Institute, Hyderabad, India). The book links in two intriguing ways to the well-known public debate held in Agra in 1854 in which Raḥmatullāh Kairānavī and Muḥammad Wazīr Khān challenged Karl Gottlieb Pfander and Thomas Valpy French.

In its first edition, *Hidāya* is divided into an introduction and nine chapters, though in its third edition, which is used here, the last chapter is omitted. In the introduction (pp. 1-6), ʿImāduddīn begins with praise to God for not withholding the blessing of salvation from him, for removing all hurdles from his way, and for pulling him out of deception and misunderstanding. He expresses the wish that others will follow suit. Having earnestly sought God's help, he turns to the accusation of *taḥrīf* ('alteration', 'corruption') in the Bible. He acknowledges that the Qur'an accuses the Jews of corrupting the meaning of biblical verses, but asserts that there is a fundamental difference between the charge of *taḥrīf* levelled by the Qur'an and the accusations made by Indian *maulvī*s because Muḥammad and early Muslims never charged the People of the Book with deliberate falsification of the actual text of the Bible (*taḥrīf-i lafẓī ʿamdī*) but rather with distorting the meaning (*taḥrīf-i maʿnawī*). Now, however, Indian Muslims are claiming that the Bible has been subject to *taḥrīf-i lafẓī ʿamdī*. The reason behind such an accusation, he claims, is that the teachings of Muḥammad can only be sustained if the Bible is made to appear unreliable. In more detail, Muḥammad's teachings are contrary to the Bible and his prophethood cannot be proved: he performed no miracle, earlier prophets did not foretell his coming, his teachings are not excellent and his conduct was not good. The accusation of deliberate textual falsification of the Bible has not been proven, nor can it be.

In ch. 1 (pp. 6-28), ʿImāduddīn explains the need for revelation, the conditions and character of a bearer of true revelation, and the forms and functions of true revelation. He concludes that Judaism and Christianity are revealed religions, while Muḥammad lacked the character necessary to be the bearer of true revelation. In saying this, ʿImāduddīn appears to be laying the foundation for a later detailed discussion in which he would argue that Muḥammad was not a true prophet in line with the biblical prophets, and that the Qur'an is not the revealed word of God (chs 7-8).

He then turns to the book that South Asian Muslims believed destroyed trust in the Bible, *Iʿjāz-i ʿĪsavī*, written in 1854-5 by Kairānavī and Wazīr Khān, and in chs 2-6 he responds to the allegations about the Bible made there. Ch. 2 begins with a detailed refutation of the accusation of *taḥrīf* in the Bible. ʿImāduddīn argues that the Qur'an's charge of *taḥrīf* in Q 2:75 is about deliberate distortion of the meaning and not of the text and excludes unintentional scribal errors (*sahw-i-kātib*). He characterises Kairānavī's accusations of deliberate textual falsification and scribal errors as novel ideas that contradict not only the Qur'an but also the earliest Muslim *ʿulamāʾ*. He further argues that certain charges set out in *Iʿjāz*, such as

the exclusion by early Christians of some books from the Old and New Testament canons, and its suggestions that corruption of the Bible could have occurred in circumstances such as persecutions by Roman emperors, the destruction of Jerusalem and the readiness of some popes to insert interpolations into the biblical text, have nothing to do with *taḥrīf* and are false and untenable. ʿImāduddīn also states that the kind of *taḥrīf* by interpretation that Muslims attribute to the Bible is also found in Muslim interpretation of the Qur'an (pp. 26-7).

Chs 3-6 continue the point-by-point answers to the *Iʿjāz* objections, some of them serious and genuinely challenging but many of them petty and fastidious (Wherry, *Muslim controversy*, p. 20, calls them 'cavilling'). In chs 4 and 5, ʿImāduddīn presents a defence of the Bible in response to further accusations, as well as positive arguments for its integrity and reliability. For example, he defends the Mosaic authorship of the Torah, citing the Jewish historian Josephus as a witness (pp. 72-8). Along with this, he makes the case that the text of the Qur'an has also suffered corruption, perhaps even more so than the Bible. Islamic tradition reports that the third caliph, ʿUthmān, burned copies that disagreed with the exemplar he was promoting, including Qur'ans collected by the first caliph, Abū Bakr. He argues in addition that the Qur'an has suffered from deliberate textual corruption as well as from *taḥrīf-i qārī'* ('corruption due to differences between reciters') and *taḥrīf-i kātib* ('corruption by scribes') and interpolation. To back his claim, he quotes from Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī's *Al-itqān fī ʿulūm al-Qur'ān* ('Perfection, on the sciences of the Qur'an') as follows:

> ʿAlī told Abū Bakr that he saw additions being made in the book of Allāh and he determined not to do anything until he had collected the Qur'an. This shows that ʿAlī had also collected a [separate] Qur'an. When ʿUthmān collected all the Qur'ans and compiled one copy from them, he burned the rest of the variants. (p. 86)

In short, ʿImāduddīn attempts to demonstrate, through compelling arguments and by using the methodology of his opponents, that the Qur'an proves to be far more corrupt and unreliable than the Bible.

In ch. 6, ʿImāduddīn attempts to answer some 170 objections to biblical statements that Kairānavī had registered in *Iʿjāz* (Wherry, *Muslim controversy*, p. 20). Kairānavī's objections ranged from variant readings in biblical manuscripts and copyists' errors to differences in chronology or genealogy in parallel versions and include his own disagreements with the Bible's portrayal of the character of God.

Chs 7-8 (pp. 199-380) attack the veracity of Muḥammad, the Qur'an and Islam. Ch. 7, on Muḥammad and his teachings, seems to be a short rehearsal for ʿImāduddīn's *Tavārīkh-i Muḥammadī* and *Taʿlīm-i Muḥammadī* (1880). In ch. 8, he denies Muslim doctrines about the Qur'an, including its miraculous style and eloquence, and the absence of contradictions in it, presenting examples of absurdities and interpolation in the qur'anic text. And finally, he discusses the doctrine of the Trinity and asserts that the Qur'an and its author did not understand it and that arguments against the Trinity in the Qur'an arose from this ignorance.

The first edition of *Hidāya* also includes a ninth chapter about Jesus and his teachings, but this was omitted in the third edition. The third edition ends instead with a brief mention of four Muslim refutations of *Hidāya* written before 1899 (pp. 386-90).

SIGNIFICANCE

The flurry of apologetic and polemical writings published in north India from 1839 to 1880 constitutes one of the most significant sets of encounters in the whole of Christian-Muslim history. ʿImāduddīn's *Hidāyat al-Muslimīn* is probably the most important indigenous Christian written expression in this set of exchanges. It is certainly the most detailed reply to Muslim polemic directed against Christianity and the Bible written in South Asia in the 19th century. It was the fulfilment of a promise ʿImāduddīn made in his *Taḥqīq al-īmān* (1866) to write a response to Raḥmatullāh Kairānavī and Muḥammad Wazīr Khān's *Iʿjāz-i ʿĪsavī*. According to ʿImāduddīn, *Hidāya* was taken to Kairānavī and Wazīr Khān in Mecca but they never responded to it ('Christian moulvie', p. 494). Two refutations of *Hidāya* written in India were *ʿUqūbat ul-ḍāllīn fī radd ʿalā Hidāyat al-Muslimīn li-ʿImāduddīn* ('The punishment for those who stray concerning the refutation of the *Hidāya* of ʿImāduddīn') by Sayyid Nāṣiruddīn Muḥammad Abūlmanṣūr (known as the Imam of Delhi) (Ali, 'Christian-Muslim relations', p. 155), and *Tanziyah al-Furqān* ('Sanctity of the Qur'an') by Sayyid Muḥammad of Agra. ʿImāduddīn wrote in 1878 that, before producing a second edition of *Hidāya* he carefully read these two Muslim refutations and 'inserted answers to all their serious objections' ('Christian moulvie', p. 494). He also offered brief responses to these refutations and two others in the appendix to the third edition (*Hidāya*, 1899, pp. 380-6).

Although E.M. Wherry considered *Hidāya* 'practically out of date' in 1905 (*Muslim controversy*, p. 21), the book contains some unique arguments that continue to be relevant to the debate on the integrity of the

biblical text, the transmission of the Qur'an, and the validity of the Muslim claim that Muḥammad was a prophet. *Iʿjāz-i Īsavī* largely passed out of circulation in the 19th century, but its main contents saw a revival in South Asia when Kairānavī's Arabic *Iẓhār al-ḥaqq* (Istanbul, 1864) was translated into Urdu and published with a long introduction by Muḥammad Taqī ʿUthmānī in Karachi in 1966 (Powell, *Muslims and missionaries*, p. 297, cf. p. 295). Since then, the Urdu translation, known as *Bā'ibal se Qur'ān tak*, has been widely distributed throughout India and Pakistan by the Deobandi network and other Islamic outlets and an English version was published in London in 1989.

ʿImāduddīn himself considered the religious 'controversy' between Christians and Muslims in north India virtually over by 1875, and declared a 'complete victory' for the Christian side (*Anjām-i mubāḥasah* [1875]; English trans. 'Imāduddīn 'The results of the controversy in north India with Muhammadans', p. 276). In addition to *Hidāya* and *Taḥqīq al-īmān*, he also cites his *Tavārīkh-i Muḥammadī* (1870, see below) as instrumental in the victory. He expresses great confidence that, in these books, he has answered the objections of Muslims against Christianity, and asserts that the books written in India between 1850 and 1875 provide all the information that a reasonable person could require to help them choose between the two faiths (p. 277), leaving little need to write additional books for the controversy with Islam (p. 280).

The written exchange in India actually began, however, in 1839 with the publication of *Mīzān ul-ḥaqq* by Karl Gottlieb Pfander, who invited Muslim scholars to respond. Among the refutations he received were Āl-i Ḥasan's Urdu *Kitāb-i istifsār* (Lucknow, 1845) and Kairānavī's Persian *Izālat al-awhām* (Delhi, 1852-3). But the materials that Wazīr Khān brought together for Kairānavī in preparation for the 1854 debate were of a different order (*Hidāya*, p. 4; Becht, *The book and the prophet*, p. 419).

ʿImāduddīn was involved in the group of Muslim scholars in Agra who initiated and conducted the debate against Pfander and Thomas Valpy French in 1854, and he personally witnessed the composition of the *Iʿjāz-i ʿĪsavī* by Kairānavī and Wazīr Khān in 1853 (*Hidāya*, p. 3, Becht, *The book and the prophet*, p. 201 n. 4, cf. p. 419). Pfander left Agra for Peshawar in 1855, departed India for Istanbul in 1858, and passed away in 1865. Kairānavī and Wazīr Khān both left India for Arabia during the 1857 Uprising, never to return.

ʿImāduddīn signalled the need for a reply to *Iʿjāz-i ʿĪsavī* in his 1866 *Taḥqīq al-īmān* (see above), and his fellow convert Ṣafdar ʿAlī affirmed that need with a strong start towards a reply in his *Niyāz nāmah* (1867, see

CMR 24, pp. 768-76). Now, 10 years after Pfander's departure from India, and two years after his conversion to Christianity, ʿImāduddīn wrote his full response to *Iʿjāz-i ʿĪsavī*. Among Muslims at the time, a friend of ʿImāduddīn remarked in the latter's obituary that the *Iʿjāz* 'was supposed to have demolished Christianity for ever' ('In memoriam', p. 915).

Avril Powell states that the writings of ʿImāduddīn (and Ṣafdar ʿAlī) 'made little impact on the rest of the *ʿulamā*, who continued to affirm that the *taḥrīf* issue was central to their objections to Christianity' ('Muslim-Christian confrontation', p. 89). This, of course, makes ʿImāduddīn's 1875 declaration of Christian victory in the 'controversy' premature, though it also suggests that the argument against Muslim accusations of *taḥrīf* in *Hidāya* was relevant in its time and also arguably into the 20th century. Kate Zebiri wrote in 1997 that, in her survey of Muslim popular literature, all the authors who write on the subject of scripture claim that the text of the Bible is corrupt (*Muslims and Christians*, p. 50).

"Imāduddīn realised that Muslims would only be open to the claims of the Bible', writes Dieter Becht, 'once the validity of the Bible had been convincingly demonstrated' (*The book and the prophet*, p. 224). If ʿImāduddīn wanted an open exchange with Muslims in South Asia that admitted the Qur'an and the Bible into the discussion on a level playing field, he would need to provide an answer to *Iʿjāz-i ʿĪsavī*, the polemical work that many South Asian Muslims believed forbade the reading of the Bible altogether. His attempt to do so was *Hidāyat al-Muslimīn*.

PUBLICATIONS

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STUDIES

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K. Zebiri, *Muslims and Christians face to face*, Oxford, 1997
Powell, *Muslims and missionaries*
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Weitbrecht, *Descriptive catalogue*, p. 52

Tavārīkh-i Muḥammadī
'Chronicles of Muḥammad'

DATE 1870
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Urdu

DESCRIPTION

'Imāduddīn wrote *Tavārīkh-i Muḥammadī* with the stated purpose of setting before Urdu-speaking Muslims a narrative about Muḥammad along traditional Muslim lines so that they could compare his life with the life of Jesus. First published in 1870, it runs to 273 pages and is divided into 14 parts, the first 11 covering periods in Muḥammad's life in Mecca (pp. 1-95), part 12 the *hijra* and his life in Medina (pp. 95-212), part 13 his wives and family (pp. 213-61), and part 14 his particular qualities (pp. 261-73).

'Imāduddīn begins with a reminder of his promise in *Hidāyat al-Muslimīn*, written a few years earlier in 1868, that he would write a complete account of Muḥammad, provided he could find the time. He spells out three main objectives for writing this narrative. First, he points out that Christian writers have aptly refuted the best-known Islamic works of polemic against the Bible, namely *Istifsār*, *Izālat al-awhām*, and *I'jāz-i 'Īsavī*, through Karl Gottlieb Pfander's *Mīzān ul-ḥaqq*, Ṣafdar 'Alī's *Niyāz nāmah* and his own *Taḥqīq al-īmān* and *Hidāyat al-Muslimīn*. But now, some Muslims are saying that, even though they have been defeated in certain specific areas, the whole *sharī'a* of Muḥammad and the excellencies of his character remain, so 'how could this be considered a refutation of Islam?' 'Imāduddīn understands that refutation of the root is also refutation of the branches, but he will nevertheless give his full attention to the law and behaviour of Muḥammad, and will present the whole truth in this book (pp. 4-6).

Second, he explains that, through meetings with Muslims in the markets, he has come to know that the majority are unaware of the full history and activities of Muḥammad, for if they were they would not be so rebellious against the true word of God or raise the absurd objections they do. Instead, they would be ashamed of themselves. But they are helpless because they do not know Arabic or Persian, the languages in which histories of Muḥammad have been written, while only some of them can read Urdu, and there is no history of Muḥammad in the Urdu language. Even the majority of *maulvī*s have not examined historical accounts about him, so how can lay people know this history? And without knowing the history of both Jesus and Muḥammad, it is extremely difficult to know which is the true religion. Therefore, he considers it appropriate to extract the full life history of Muḥammad from Arabic and Persian books and present it in Urdu so that people may become aware of it and know what kind of man they are following – and whether following him is right or not.

Third, ʿImāduddīn explains that *Tavārīkh-i Muḥammadī* is the first part of a two-volume work entitled *Talkhīṣ al-ahādīth* ('Summary of the Hadiths'), which will cover both Muḥammad's life story and his teachings. The second volume, entitled *Taʿlīm-i Muḥammadī* ('The teaching of Muḥammad'), was published ten years later. He also informs his readers that his work is largely based on *Rawḍat al-aḥbāb fī siyar al-nabī wa-l-āl wa-l-aṣḥāb* ('The garden of those who are beloved, on the biographies of the Prophet, his family and the Companions') by Jamāl al-Ḥusaynī (Jamāl al-Dīn ʿAṭāʾullāh ibn Faḍlullāh al-Ḥusaynī l-Dashtakī, d. 1520) and *Madārij al-nubuwwa* ('Ways of prophethood') by ʿAbdulḥaqq Dihlavī (1551-1642) (see Becht, *The book and the prophet*, p. 236 n. 2). Since these sources are regarded as trustworthy by Raḥmatullāh Kairānavī, ʿImāduddīn has chosen them so that readers will not object to the portrayal of Muḥammad he draws from them. He adds that they are written in a simple style and are readily available so that anyone who doubts his presentation can consult them for themselves. He invites those who would like to compare the history of Muḥammad with the history of Jesus to read what he calls Henry Martyn's *History of Christ*, perhaps meaning Martyn's Urdu translation of the New Testament, *Injīl yaʿne vasīqah jadīd Ḥazrat ʿĪsā Masīḥ ʿalaihi s-salām kā* (*CMR* 20, pp. 102, 104).

ʿImāduddīn begins with an introduction to and an assessment of the books of Hadith, the kinds of Hadith, and the collectors of Hadith or *muḥaddithūn*. Muslims consider six collections to be authentic or *ṣaḥīḥ*, though ʿImāduddīn lists 15 *muḥaddithūn* in chronological order. He rejects the authenticity of traditions on various grounds, primarily that none of

the *muḥaddithūn* had personally seen or heard Muḥammad, they were not inspired like the disciples of Christ, and the traditions they compiled contradict the Qur'an. As an example of the latter, he adduces six arguments against the miracles of Muḥammad that are reported in the books of Hadith and cites Q 17:59 to assert that Muḥammad did not have the ability to perform miracles. Since Muslims themselves reject Hadiths that contradict the Qur'an, he rejects all traditions that report Muḥammad's miracles. Moreover, he argues, Muḥammad's behaviour and teachings contradict the behaviour and teachings of the succession of biblical prophets. Therefore, even if he had performed miracles, according to Deuteronomy 13:1-5 and Mark 16:17 they would be considered fraudulent and deceptive. To support this, ʿImāduddīn points out that Muḥammad loved to be praised. He had 181 poets at his service and accounts of his miracles arose out of their exaggerated and excessive praises.

From this point in the *Tavārīkh*, ʿImāduddīn presents the details of the story of Muḥammad according to his two chosen sources, following them in dividing his life into three periods and discussing some of the details along the way. The story he recounts reflects not only the version given in *Rawḍat al-aḥbāb* but also early Muslim accounts.

In the first period, from pre-Islamic times up to Muḥammad when he reached the age of 41, ʿImāduddīn endeavours to refute the claims that the first creation of Allāh was the light of Muḥammad, that this light was passed from Adam through holy and pure men down to Muḥammad's father ʿAbdullāh, and that Muḥammad was descended from Abraham through Ishmael. He argues, first, that the Qur'an does not mention that the first creation was the light of Muḥammad and that this claim is only found in the Hadiths, although one Hadith states that the first creation of Allāh was the pen and another that the first creation was reason. Second, he argues that the parents of Muḥammad, ʿAbdullāh and Āmina were idol worshippers and that Muḥammad once said his grandfather was in hell because of idolatry, and third, neither the Qur'an nor the Hadiths set out Muḥammad's genealogy. Muḥammad himself, writes ʿImāduddīn, is reported to have said that anyone who traces his genealogy back beyond ʿAdnān is a liar (parts 1-3).

Connected with the belief that Muḥammad received divine revelation, ʿImāduddīn narrates the strange manner in which his wife Khadīja and her cousin Waraqa ibn Nawfal identified the being who appeared to him in the cave of Ḥirā' as an angel rather than as a demon (part 19). He then describes the eight forms of *nuzūl-i wāḥy* ('descent of revelation') accepted among Muslims and concludes that some of them go against reason and

tradition, and that none of the pre-Islamic messengers ever received revelation in these forms.

The third period of Muḥammad's life that ʿImāduddīn discusses is his leadership of the Muslim community for 11 years in Medina. He covers Muḥammad's battles, military campaigns, the assassinations of prominent Jews, the relationships between the Muslims and the Jewish tribes of Banū l-Naḍīr and Banū Qurayẓa, and the attack on the Jews of Khaybar. Focusing the episode of Muḥammad's ruling about the Jewish couple caught in adultery, he notes that the punishment was established as stoning according to the Torah. From this he infers that the Torah is thereby declared intact – which goes against the polemical claims of Indian *maulvī*s.

ʿImāduddīn describes from *Rawḍat al-aḥbāb* details of Muḥammad's wives and children, and the slaves and property he possessed, including his weapons, remarking that this story shows the opposite of the poverty and meekness that Muslims popularly attribute to Muḥammad. He lived like a king and at all times had 169 male and 12 female poets to praise him and condemn his opponents. ʿImāduddīn copies from *Rawḍat al-aḥbāb* 31 privileges that Muḥammad permitted to himself alone, though if other Muslims indulged in them they would be committing a sin.

ʿImāduddīn sums up his judgement about Muḥammad in seven points. He concludes that he was a carnal man, totally ignorant of divine knowledge, and could not be a prophet of God or an intercessor for sinners (pp. 186-7; Ali and Ahmad, 'Early Christian *sīrah* writings', p. 135). As E.M. Wherry later stated about the negative assessment of Muḥammad in *Tavārīkh*, ʿImāduddīn

> regards him as having been a fierce, passionate man, vain and fond of flattery, inexorable in his hatred towards his enemies, always putting them to death when he dared. During his whole career, he sought his own exaltation rather than the glory of God. [...] Although he at first assumed a humble *rôle*, yet, when he secured power, he soon gave way to pride and hardness of heart. (*Muslim controversy*, p. 29)

SIGNIFICANCE

At the time of its publication, *Tavārīkh-i Muḥammadī* was the only narrative account of Muḥammad in the Urdu language. William Muir had published his four-volume English *Life of Mahomet* in 1858-61 while in India, but few Muslims in India could read it at that time. He had wanted to publish his own *Life of Mahomet* in Urdu but did not do so. He appreciated ʿImāduddīn's *Tavārīkh* greatly. As late as 1905, *Tavārīkh* was 'the only

biography of Muhammad in the Urdu language, and for this reason is very important' (Wherry, *Muslim controversy*, p. 29).

Tavārīkh-i Muḥammadī , with a second edition in 1878 and a third in 1904 (Ali and Ahmad, 'Early Christian *sīrah* writings', p. 135), remained in circulation well into the 20th century. It understandably attracted several refutations from Muslims, among them the *Ta'rīkh-i Muḥammadī par munṣifāna rai* ('A just opinion on the history of Muḥammad') by Mawlāna Alṭāf Ḥusain Ḥālī. Maulvī Fīrōzuddīn Ḍaskavī wrote a refutation titled *Faḍā'il al-Islām fī zikar-i khayr al-inām al-maʿrūf bi-Ta'rīkh-i Muḥammadī* ('The excellences of Islam, on recalling the best of men, known as "The history of Muḥammad"') and Chirāgh ʿAlī wrote both 'Muhammad the true Prophet' in English and *Taʿliqāt* ('Annotations') in Urdu in response to the work (Ali and Ahmad, 'Early Christian *sīrah* writings', p. 136; Becht, *The book and the prophet*, p. 242; Wahidur-Rahman, 'Religious thought', p. 59).

Farman Ali and Humaira Ahmad recently proposed that *Tavārīkh* is best understood in the context of Aloys Sprenger's *Life of Muhammad from original sources* (1851) and Muir's *Life of Mahomet* ('Early Christian *sīrah* writings', pp. 131-6). But there are significant differences between 'Imāduddīn's work and theirs, which are presented as scholarly studies based on the earliest 'original' Muslim Arabic narratives of Muḥammad (manuscripts of some of which were discovered by Sprenger in India in the mid-19th century). Muir and Sprenger's preoccupation was the historical reliability of the Islamic narratives and traditions, and the overriding importance of the earliest possible sources. By contrast, 'Imāduddīn deliberately chose a popular, readily available medieval version of the narrative as the basis for his *Tavārīkh.* E.M. Wherry appeared to criticise it when he wrote that some of its episodes about Muḥammad 'cannot bear the light of historical criticism' (*Muslim controversy*, p. 29), but Dieter Becht has countered that most Indian Muslims at the time would have neither understood nor appreciated a historical-critical approach. Becht considers it a strength of the book that it relies on orthodox Muslim sources (*The book and the prophet*, pp. 237-8). Another important difference between *Tavārīkh* and the lives of Muir and Sprenger is that, in writing it, 'Imāduddīn was on home ground and knew the popular 'chronicles' of Muḥammad intimately from his Muslim upbringing and his extensive traditional Islamic education. This cannot be said of the two Europeans.

Wherry faults the book for its 'controversial spirit throughout which detracts from its usefulness' (*Muslim controversy*, p. 29), while Becht comments that '[T]his was necessarily a stumbling block for Muslim readers'

(*The book and the prophet*, p. 238), necessarily because of the veneration that Muslims offer to Muḥammad, not least in the Indian subcontinent (A. Schimmel, *And Muhammad is his messenger. The veneration of the Prophet in Islamic piety*, Chapel Hill NC, 1985). That ʿImāduddīn was well-known as a Muslim leader before 1866, and was now an outspoken and well-published convert to Christianity – an apostate in Muslim terms – only accentuated the offence that could be, and was, taken (see e.g. Ali and Ahmad, 'Early Christian *sīrah* writings', pp. 136-40). For Muir, however, writing from the midst of the remarkable Christian-Muslim written engagement in India in the mid-19th century, Sprenger's *Das Leben und die Lehre des Moḥammad* and his own *Life of Mahomet* signalled freedom of thought for 'educated and thoughtful' Muslims. 'The sword of Omar no longer checks freedom of enquiry', he wrote in 1868, two years before the publication of *Tavārīkh*. 'The right of private judgment and discussion is here in India as free as the air we breathe' (W. Muir, 'Value of early Mahometan historical sources', *Calcutta Review* 46 [1868] 349-90, p. 389). He continued,

> The honest and enlightened Mahometan ought not to shrink from a domain of enquiry, opening up to his view a long vista of history and literature, which he naturally looks up to with veneration, and portions of which he may justly regard with pride. (pp. 389-90)

Authentic Christian-Muslim written engagement is bound to consider the lives of the figures that Christians and Muslims revere as their founders. Muslims have denied Christian affirmations about the identity of Jesus since the time of the Qur'an itself (see e.g. Ali and Ahmad, 'Early Christian *sīrah* writings', p. 129). In his *Tavārīkh-i Muḥammadī*, ʿImāduddīn's stated intention was to tell the story of Muḥammad in Urdu according to two highly-regarded orthodox Muslim accounts. He raised some questions about the historical reliability of Muslim traditions and judged negatively some of the behaviour of Muḥammad as portrayed in the Muslim sources. He invited a comparison with the behaviour of Jesus as provided in a Christian Urdu source.

PUBLICATIONS

ʿImāduddīn, *Tavārīkh-i muḥammadī*, Lahore, 1870

ʿImāduddīn, *Tavārīkh-i muḥammadī*, Amritsar, 1877[2]

ʿImāduddīn, *Tavārīkh-i muḥammadī*, Lahore, 1904[3]; imad_lahiz/mohammed (digitised version available through muhammadanism.org)

STUDIES

Ali and Ahmad, 'Early Christian *sīrah* writings', pp. 136-9
Becht, *The book and the prophet*, pp. 235-8
A.N.M. Wahidur-Rahman, 'The religious thought of Moulvi Chirāgh Ali', Montreal, 1992 (PhD Diss. McGill University)
Wherry, *Muslim controversy*, pp. 23-9

Taʿlīm-i Muḥammadī
'The teaching of Muhammad'

DATE 1880
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Urdu

DESCRIPTION

Taʿlīm-i Muḥammadī is the second part of ʿImāduddīn's two-volume *Talkhīṣ al-aḥādīth*. The first part, *Tavārīkh-i Muḥammadī*, published ten years earlier, focused on the life of Muḥammad according to Muslim narratives that were well-known in north India. His second volume now traces the teachings that Muslims attribute to Muḥammad. *Taʿlīm-i Muḥammadī* consists of 371 pages and comprises an introduction, a prolegomenon, four main chapters, and a conclusion.

ʿImāduddīn begins by advancing the simple principle that every person is proved good or bad on the basis of his words and deeds; there is no other principle for discerning good and bad people. Whether Muḥammad was a prophet sent by Allāh can also be determined on the basis of this principle. ʿImāduddīn claims that he was able to show in his *Tavārīkh* that the deeds and conduct of Muḥammad were not worthy of the prophets. He now sets out to describe and critique Muḥammad's words.

The litmus test for anyone's claim to prophethood, ʿImāduddīn proposes, is his teachings. A person may even perform miracles, but if his teachings are not excellent it is impossible for him to be a prophet of God. Accordingly, ʿImād ud-dīn presents and assesses the teachings attributed to Muḥammad to see whether they measure up to the teachings of the true prophets sent by God. He then describes four different kinds of teaching: *jāhalī* (irrational), *aqlī* (rational), *nafsānī* (human or carnal) and *ruḥānī* (divine or spiritual). He explains that irrational teaching is entirely false, or that in it truth is so mixed with error that it cannot be accepted. Rational teaching may be true as far as intellect goes and yet remains insufficient

because of the limitations of the human intellect. Carnal teaching is given according to the desires of the flesh and appeals to human feelings; while it may seem to satisfy reason, in reality it results in working evil. It is only spiritual teaching that relates to the real abilities of the spirit and satisfies its highest longings.

In order to evaluate Muḥammad's teachings, ʿImāduddīn makes two separate comparisons: between Muḥammad's teachings and those of the prophets, and between Muḥammad's teachings and those of Muslim scholars. For example, he argues that the teachings about the oneness of God and against idolatry are not Muḥammad's original teachings; earlier prophets also taught this. Further, Muslim scholars have developed the teachings of Islam in such a way that their teachings and Muḥammad's appear the same. However, Muḥammad's teachings can be easily distinguished, as Muslims believe these are primarily found in the Qur'an and Hadith. To ʿImāduddīn, therefore, the teachings of Muḥammad are those that are either not taught by the prophets or those that contradict their teachings. He divides Muḥammad's teachings into four categories: *ʿaqā'id* (doctrines), *ʿibādāt* (worship), *muʿāmalāt* (affairs, dealings), and *qiṣaṣ* (stories).

In ch. 1, on the doctrines and creeds of Islam, he discusses four main points, the first being *īmān* (faith) (pp. 12-19). Faith is the foundation of all godliness but, since there are different faiths in the world, it is necessary to search for the true faith. According to Muḥammad, faith means believing in the heart and confessing by the mouth that there is no god except Allāh and that Muḥammad is His apostle. He contrasts Muslim faith with Christian faith and distinguishes the latter as a *saving* faith. The second point concerns prophets and their books (pp. 20-7). Muḥammad is believed to have taught that Muslims should have faith in the truth of all prophets and their books. But along with this comes the Islamic teaching against acting on those books or obeying their teaching because they have been abrogated. This is a very dangerous doctrine and no thoughtful person will accept it.

About the Qur'an (pp. 27-32), Muslims believe that Muḥammad taught that it is an inspired book brought down to him by the angel Jibrīl. However, ʿImāduddīn considers that it is not an inspired book but rather a collection of traditional stories and thoughts emanating from Muḥammad's imagination. Among other doctrines discussed here is the Islamic teaching about sin, its origin and nature, the different kinds of it, and the punishment for it (pp. 39-50). According to ʿImāduddīn, the Qur'an is silent on the matter of the transformation of the believer. Some Hadiths teach

that people who were bad before becoming Muslims will remain bad, and those who were good will continue to be good: their characters do not change through conversion. The Qur'an says that one should love one's friends and hate one's enemies. This indicates that there are two kinds of ethics, one innately human and the other from outside ourselves. ʿImāduddīn himself had been deeply moved by chs 1-7 of the Gospel according to Matthew (*Wāqiʿāt*, p. 12; cf. Becht, *The book and the prophet*, p. 206), so he knew of a second kind of ethics. Islam does not believe that human nature can be changed, he asserts, but by contrast the Bible explicitly wants to change the hearts of believers (pp. 56-8).

In chs 2 and 3, ʿImāduddīn offers a very detailed and comprehensive account of Islamic forms of ritual worship (*ʿibādāt*) and of daily customs and behaviour between people (*muʿāmalāt*). He sets himself to describe every form of Islamic worship and to compare it with Christian ways of worship, including *ṭahārat* ('ritual purity') and *namāz* ('ritual prayer'). In ch. 3, he provides a seemingly comprehensive survey of practical conduct, including customs related to women, marriage, dowry, divorce and *iddat* (the period between divorce and remarriage), all of it familiar to him from 44 years as a Muslim and his extensive Islamic education. Characteristic of these chapters is his statement that none of the aspects of Muslim ritual prayer attributed to the teaching of Muḥammad were enjoined by the prophets. For example, praying five times a day as a duty (*farḍ*) at precisely defined times, speaking a specific set of words in Arabic (with no other language permitted), and performing specific body movements in the direction of the Kaʿba, are all unique to Islam.

ʿImāduddīn offers a discussion in ch. 4 of the narratives about the prophets that Muslims attribute to Muḥammad. He begins by observing that the stories in the Qur'an mainly appear in brief passages and not in complete narratives. Muslims have tried to give them coherence in *tafsīr*, Hadith and other writings, but they have not succeeded. He relays the stories from *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'*, ʿAbdulwaḥīd bin Muḥammad al-Muftī's book in Persian on 46 prophets, in order to suggest that the best teachings of Muḥammad are related to these stories from the past, which mostly come from the Bible. Compared with these accounts of prophets, the story of Muḥammad himself shows a form of religion but it is a religion without life (see Wherry, *Muslim controversy*, p. 34). The story of Muḥammad shows that he made himself king of Arabia and that he secured this position by political guile, just as Ranjit Singh (1780-1839) secured supremacy in the Punjab. Muḥammad was successful in the story, but ʿImāduddīn insists that this success does not prove his prophethood.

ʿImāduddīn concludes *Taʿlīm-i Muḥammadī* by intimating that he has left out all of what he calls the gross and lewd teachings of Islam and has only presented the teachings taken from the Qur'an and Hadith that the *ʿulamā'* regard as good. Now, after they have read his *Tavārīkh-i Muḥammadī* and *Taʿlīm-i Muḥammadī*, he claims, Muslims can know that the religion of Muḥammad has a form but there is no life in it. He likens Islam to an idol created by a man who had great skill but could not make it come to life. Islam fails to satisfy the longings of the sincere seeker after truth. He ends with the statement that the teachings of Islam are not divine, but rather have their origin in Muḥammad himself.

> A portion of them came from his own genius, which was not greater than that of many other men. Another portion of these teachings had their origin in his own desires, which were those common to humanity. A still further portion he received from others. (Wherry, *Muslim controversy*, pp. 34-5)

Tavārīkh-i Muḥammadī and *Taʿlīm-i Muḥammadī*, together making up *Talkhīṣ al-ahādīth*, which is 615 pages in all, constitute the most thorough indigenous South Asian Christian contribution to the question of whether Muḥammad was a prophet. ʿImāduddīn was on solid ground for this investigation because of his native knowledge of everyday Islam, his traditional Islamic education in Agra, and his facility in Arabic, Persian and Urdu. In these two volumes he passes on foundational information from well-known and accepted Muslim sources. They are remarkable in their detail and nuance, and carry no echo of medieval polemic from Christendom, neither following a 'missionary' approach nor imitating Sprenger and Muir. The issue for ʿImāduddīn was not his knowledge of Muslim beliefs and practices in South Asia, but rather his judgements on these based on his knowledge of the life and teachings of Jesus that he had gained during 14 years as a Christian.

SIGNIFICANCE

E.M. Wherry wrote of *Taʿlīm-i Muhammadī* in 1905, 'There is nothing offensive in this book, excepting the truth which he elicits concerning the teachings of Muhammad' (*Muslim controversy*, p. 35). Nevertheless, it drew a number of refutations, among them *Hafwat-i ʿImādiyya* ('The error of 'Imād') by Ikram Ullah Gomovi sum Akbar Abadi (Lucknow, date unknown) and *Nafāʾis irtizāya fawāʾid saʿdiyya* ('Benefits of the precious and chosen jewels') by Zafar Ali of Madras (place and date of publication unknown). From the Christian side, Wherry recommended that the

book should be kept in print and 'be widely circulated among enquiring Muslims' (*Muslim controversy*, p. 35).

PUBLICATIONS

ʿImāduddīn, *Taʿlīm-i Muhammadī*, Amritsar, 1880; imad_lahiz/moham med_teaching (digitised version available through muhammadan ism.org)

STUDIES

Becht, *The book and the prophet*, pp. 238-40, 427-32
Wherry, *Muslim controversy*, pp. 23-9

Maqsood Kamil

Later works

DATE 1877-93
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Urdu

DESCRIPTION

Four works that ʿImāduddīn wrote in his later years, *Taqlīʿāt-i taʿlīqāt* (1877), *Tanqīd al-khayālāt* (1882-3), *Taftīsh al-awliyā'* (1889) and *Tawzīn al-aqwāl* (1893), show how he turned his attention away from what he knew as orthodox Sunnī Islam in north India to other expressions of the faith that he considered influential. The earliest of these was part of his engagement with a 'new Islam' that he saw emerging in the 1860s and 1870s, partly in response to his own publications. "Imad ud-din kept a watchful, if critical, eye on all movements within Sunni Islam in the Punjab and its neighboring provinces' (Powell, '"Pillar"', p. 249). As it turned out, he did not always need to look far.

Taqlīʿāt-i taʿlīqāt

ʿImāduddīn wrote *Taqlīʿāt-i taʿlīqāt* ('Annihilation of annotations', 1877) in response to a critique by Chirāgh ʿAlī (1844-95) of his *Tavārīkh-i Muḥammadī* (1870; 'Christian moulvie', p. 494). The Muslim's refutation, simply titled *Taʿlīqāt* ('Annotations', Lucknow, 1872), challenged ʿImāduddīn's presentation of the life of Muḥammad in *Tavārīkh* with an argument that the sources he used, including many Hadiths, were weak and unreliable

(Wahidur-Rahman, 'Religious thought', p. 62). In particular, Chirāgh ʿAlī criticised ʿImāduddīn for taking information about Muḥammad from two popular Muslim accounts of his life, *Rawḍat al-aḥbāb* and *Madārij al-nubuwwa*, particularly what they said about the doctrine of jihad (Wherry, 'Literature for Muslim readers', p. 139), a subject Chirāgh ʿAlī would develop extensively later in *A critical exposition of the popular 'Jihād' showing that all the wars of Mohammad were defensive* (1885). In *Taʿlīqāt*, he 'tries to discredit 'Imāduddīn's allegations by discrediting the underlying *ḥadīth* as untrustworthy' (Becht, *The book and the Prophet*, p. 242).

In *Taqlīʿāt*, 'Imāduddīn's 100-page response to this attack, he more or less repeats what he had stated earlier in his *Tavārīkh*. In sections 1-10 he explains that the Muslim sources he uses are recognised as trustworthy by orthodox Muslims, including Raḥmatullāh Kairānavī (p. 17). All other sources for the life of Muḥammad that Muslims consider trustworthy contain the same details (pp. 22-3), awkward and displeasing as they may seem, and anyway, even if the account were composed on the basis of the Qur'an alone, it would still contain many details that Muslims would find unpleasant (pp. 23-4).

In section 11 of *Taqlīʿāt*, 'Imāduddīn answers the objection that Jesus did not write down his message and therefore did not preserve it, responding to Chirāgh ʿAlī's charge that the four canonical Gospel accounts are unreliable (Wahidur-Rahman, 'Religious thought', p. 62) and in sections 12-16 he refutes the Muslim claim that Muḥammad was a true prophet.

Tanqīd al-khayālāt

'Imāduddīn felt 'compelled' to write *Tanqīd al-khayālāt* ('Criticism of thoughts', 1882-3) in order to refute 'the new religious views' of Sayyid Aḥmad Khān (1817-98; *CMR* 24, 424-47).

> For a long time, I had given up the idea of writing controversial books, but when I found that the Maulvi's efforts were directed very largely against Christianity, and were becoming a very great obstacle in the way of weaker Christians, it was deemed advisable that some effort be put forth in that direction. ('Amritsar' [report], in *Proceedings of the Church Missionary Society for Africa and the East, eighty-third year, 1881-82*, London, 1882, 95-100, p. 99)

In preparation for this work, 'Imāduddīn collected and carefully read all Aḥmad Khān's books and articles and then made a plan to respond to between 15 and 20 objections against Christianity he found in them. His

intention was to release his responses, which would total 12 parts in all, gradually ('Amritsar', p. 100), but in the end he completed and published only four 'tractates' of 48, 24, 30 and 56 pages respectively through the years 1882-3 (Wherry, *Muslim controversy*, pp. 36-57).

ʿImāduddīn explains at the beginning of the work that his goal is to examine statements made by Aḥmad Khān in his *Tafsīr al-Qurʾān* (published in a series of volumes from 1880 onwards) and *Tahzīb ul-akhlāq*, the magazine he had started in 1870. In the first tractate, he seizes on the statement that 'reason alone is a sufficient guide' (*Tahzīb ul-akhlāq* 1 [1870] pp. 13-14), and responds that, although reason has a large role in the lives of people, they also need revelation from God. For example, reason cannot teach people how, and especially for what purpose, the universe came into being. Similarly, reason cannot explain what humans are, where they came from, or where they go. Reason knows nothing about spiritual questions or the future life. Only revelation can provide answers to such questions and this revelation is found in the Bible.

In the second tractate, ʿImāduddīn deals with Aḥmad Khān's idea that the Islam that has developed through history is not the true Islam because the first Muslims rapidly departed from the original teachings. He asserts that in fact the 'Islam' Aḥmad Khān has advocated is a 'new Islam' that combines 'the rationalism of the Brahmo Samaj' with the teachings of secular scholarship that is opposed to religion (Wherry, *Muslim controversy*, pp. 40-1). He focuses on Aḥmad Khān's statement that 'Islam is nature and nature is Islam' and mounts a series of challenges to his claim that it is this that represents Islam. The reason that prophets were sent, he writes, is so that humankind could learn what the natural human mind cannot discover – including the depravity of human nature.

ʿImāduddīn extends this discussion about prophets and their purpose into the third tractate, again focusing on a particular statement by Aḥmad Khān in *Tahzīb ul-akhlāq*, that a prophet is 'a man specially endowed with a genius to investigate and discover moral and spiritual truth alone' (1881, p. 158). He challenges the adequacy of this from many angles, and finds it to be a naturalistic definition and mistaken. If one can speak of different kinds of prophets, he writes, they all depend on the prophets through whom God revealed His will in the Bible. These were characterised by miracles, prophecies and the 'marvellous influences' that have followed their teachings (Wherry, *Muslim controversy*, p. 46). Merely moral teachers may tell humans to stop their evil behaviour, but they can neither teach about the power needed to change nor give it.

In his fourth tractate ʿImāduddīn approaches directly what was probably his central theme all along, 'the need of a divine revelation under inspired authority' (Wherry, *Muslim controversy*, p. 49). He begins by tracing the traditional Islamic meanings of *waḥy* ('revelation') and *ilhām* ('inspiration'), and argues that the biblical revelation surpasses the teachings of merely natural religion, advancing both internal and external evidence. Inspiration is due to the power of God's Spirit operating upon the minds of the prophets to make known to them what God would reveal to humankind. He understands that Aḥmad Khān, by contrast, has accepted a form of inspiration that is given by nature as special genius or talent, which for ʿImāduddīn may be the kind of inspiration contained in the Qur'an, since for him it is merely a human composition. Aḥmad Khān had written that Muḥammad never worshipped idols and always held the true doctrine of divine unity by reason of his natural endowment of genius. ʿImāduddīn appears unwilling to concede even this much: he argues that, according to the Muslim account, Muḥammad interacted with Jews and Christians in Mecca and Medina, and with others as a traveller and trader, learning what he knew from them. Aḥmad Khān's concepts of revelation and inspiration, he concludes, leave humanity in the dark with regard to the great matters of God, the soul, salvation, and the future life (Wherry, *Muslim controversy*, p. 56).

Taftīsh al-awliyā'

ʿImāduddīn wrote *Taftīsh al-awliyā'* ('Investigation of the saints'), which is 167 pages long, about the Sufis of north India and their teachings. Sufism had been a part of ʿImāduddīn's personal experience before his conversion to Christianity in 1866 (*Wāqiʿāt-i ʿImādiyya*, pp. 6-7). Now, in 1889, he compares Sufism with Christianity in what he believes to be the 'age of light' (pp. 4-9). Sufism, he writes, is not even really part of Islam, but a heresy (pp. 9-13; cf. Powell, '"Pillar"', pp. 247-8).

ʿImāduddīn makes a distinction between some of the teachings of the first generations of Sufis in north India and later and the teachings of contemporary Sufi communities, focusing criticisms on saint worship at the tombs of *pirs* and the worldly lives of present-day *pirzada*s (curators of Sufi mausoleums and shrines; pp. 161-2). In answer to the question of whether miracles claimed for Sufis validate Sufi teaching, he replies that, in general, miracles underline and confirm the teachings of the performer of the miracle and, since Sufi teaching is pantheistic, the miracles

performed by Sufis underline and confirm that form of belief, and should therefore be rejected. Furthermore, the revelations and dreams claimed by Sufis are merely human thoughts and fantasies (pp. 29-33; cf. Becht, *The book and the Prophet*, p. 245). In line with what he has said in earlier writings, ʿImāduddīn insists that only true miracles and true prophetic words can attest true revelation.

Tawzīn al-aqwāl

ʿImāduddīn wrote *Tawzīn al-aqwāl* ('Weighing of words') to test the claims of Mīrzā Ghulām Aḥmad (1835-1908), the founder of the Aḥmadiyya, and to explain some points of Christian faith that Ghulām Aḥmad had misrepresented in order to support the claims he made about himself. ʿImāduddīn wrote it after witnessing a debate between Ghulām Aḥmad and ʿAbdullāh Āthām held in Amritsar in 1893 (Kamil, 'Unfinished agenda', p. 260). It is maybe not coincidental that Ghulām Aḥmad's village of Qādiān is only about 40 miles from Amritsar, where ʿImāduddīn was living at the time. The title page declares: 'Reverend *maulvī* ʿImāduddīn Lāhiẓ, D.D. wrote this treatise for this reason, that uninformed people may be aware of the career of Mīrzā Sāhib and thus, saving themselves from his deadly teaching, they may lift up their eyes towards the truth'.

The book is 56 pages long and divided into 12 chapters or 'rebuttals' (*dafʿāt*). Chs 1 (pp. 3-4) and 2 (pp. 4-6) give information about the life of Mīrzā Ghulām Aḥmad and the declarations of north Indian Sunnī *maulvī*s concerning the claims he made about himself. Here, ʿImāduddīn acknowledges that Ghulām Aḥmad has attracted a considerable number of followers, and he traces his family background in a kind of Sufism, which he believes accounts for many of his interpretations and claims. About Ghulām Aḥmad's most important book, the five-volume *Barāhīn-i Aḥmadiyya* (1800-1905), ʿImāduddīn writes that it is

> full of senseless statements, which no man can read with profit. It is written in a confused style, with long and exceedingly complex sentences. This style has been adopted by the Mīrzā on the general principle that such confused and interminable sentences are incapable of a reply. (Wherry, 'Summary', p. 186, referring to *Tawzīn*, p. 4)

ʿImāduddīn states that a formal declaration written by Maulvī Muḥammad Ḥusain of nearby Batala and signed by 200 orthodox mullahs holds Ghulām Aḥmad to be an atheist or an infidel (p. 4).

Chs 3 (pp. 6-9) and 4 (pages 9-17) describe Ghulām Aḥmad's claim to be the Messiah, a prophet and the 'Aḥmad' of the Qur'an (Q 61:6). He says he is possessed by the spirit of inspiration and revelation on the one hand, and is the coming Messiah of Muslim tradition on the other. Regarding the name 'Aḥmad', ʿImāduddīn describes three other men with this name who might also claim to be the fulfillment of ʿĪsā's prediction in Q 61:6 (pp. 11-16) and then he quips that 'The Mīrzā does not now seem to aspire so much to be Aḥmad the Fourth as to be Aḥmad the First' [meaning Muḥammad] (pp. 16-17).

Chs 5 (pp. 17-25) and 6 (pp. 25-9) describe the second coming of Christ according to the Bible and then present a refutation of Ghulām Aḥmad's claim to be the Messiah. ʿImāduddīn contrasts Christian teaching about Christ and also normative Islamic teaching about who he was with Ghulām Aḥmad's teaching about him. Ghulām Aḥmad bases his claim to be the Messiah, explains ʿImāduddīn, on two traditions, one Persian and one Syrian, making Qādiān the 'Damascus' where the Messiah will descend. ʿImāduddīn challenges Ghulām Aḥmad to show how he will establish the roles of 'prophet, priest, and king' that belong to the Messiah, then calls upon him to repent of his blasphemy (pp. 27-8).

In chs 7-10, ʿImāduddīn discusses what the Bible and the Qur'an teach about the Trinity and the Holy Spirit and contrasts this with the teaching of Ghulām Aḥmad (pp. 29-35). He also queries the identity of the qur'anic *Rūḥ al-amīn* (Q 26:193; pp. 35-39), the Gabriel of the Qur'an (pp. 39-42) and the mysterious *Shadīd ul-qua* (pp. 42-50). Interestingly, here ʿImāduddīn quotes from the famous Sufi work *Insān al-kāmil* by ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Jilānī (1365-1424) and explains that 'It is not lawful to call [the holy spirit] a creature. He is one of the "mouths" of Allāh, and by him all things were created. He breathed into Adam, and all human and finite spirits were created, thus he is the Spirit of all spirits' (pp. 32-3).

At the end of the book, ʿImāduddīn responds to Ghulām Aḥmad's objections to the divinity of Jesus (ch. 11, pp. 50-5) and concludes with the thought that there is no proof that Islam is the true religion (ch. 12, pp. 55-6). There are no miracles to vindicate Islamic claims, he asserts, nor is there even supremacy in the style and language of the Qur'an. He thus highlights Ghulām Aḥmad's claims that go against orthodox Islam and also counters the orthodox teachings of the Islam of which Ghulām Aḥmad had posed 'as the great defender [...] against all opposers' (Wherry, 'Summary', p. 192, referring to *Tawzīn*, p. 56).

SIGNIFICANCE

There are no indications of second editions or reprintings of any of these four works, though in the case of *Tanqīd al-khayālāt* the first two parts or 'tractates' are now accessible from a webpage of 'Imāduddīn's works. In 2003, Avril Powell noted the rarity of surviving copies of *Taftīsh al-awliyā'* ('"Pillar"', p. 247 n. 77). She also commented about *Tawzīn al-aqwāl* that 'no copy of his tract on Ahmadi beliefs has as yet been found' (p. 250 n. 86). However, by 2025, a full pdf of the original publication of *Tawzīn* could be readily accessed online.

It may be that *Tawzīn al-aqwāl* is the publication that has attracted the most attention of these four since 1893. The main object of 'Imāduddīn's 'weighing' in this work, Mīrzā Ghulām Aḥmad, wrote responses in 1894 titled *Ishtihār miʿyār al-akhyār wa-l-ashrār* and *Nūr ul-ḥaqq*. Ghulām Aḥmad followed this up in 1900 with an Urdu booklet titled *Government Angraizi aur jihād* ('The British government and jihad') in which he grouped 'Imāduddīn's writings together with the writings of Ṭhākur Dās and Ṣafdar 'Alī as damaging to Islam. *Tawzīn al-aqwāl* and Ghulām Aḥmad's responses have continued to be described and discussed to the present day on Aḥmadiyya websites (see the citations of these in Studies below).

Powell writes that *Tanqīd al-khayālāt* made 'little impact in Muslim circles' on the basis of there being no known written replies to the work from Sayyid Aḥmad Khān or others ('"Pillar"', p. 252). For perspective, however, one might note that there were sufficient criticisms of Aḥmad Khān's writings from orthodox Sunnīs in north India (see Powell, '"Pillar"', pp. 249-51) for him to disregard some short treatises from a Christian convert. In her analysis of *Tanqīd al-khayālāt*, Powell faults 'Imāduddīn for not picking up on Aḥmad Khān's argument in his *Tabyīn al-kalām fī tafsīr al-Tawrāt wa-l-Injīl ʿalā millat al-Islam* ('Elucidation of the word in commentary of the Torah and Gospel according to the religion of Islam', Meerut/Ghazipur, c. 1860) that, instead of corrupting the actual text of the Bible, Jews and Christians had merely altered some of the meanings of the verses ('Clearly the conciliatory tone of Sayyid Ahmad was inconvenient to 'Imād ud-din' [Powell, '"Pillar"', p. 252]). Instead, 'Imāduddīn emphasises that Aḥmad Khān no longer actually speaks for Islam. The latter's 'modernism', he argues, is a completely new religion based not on revelation but on no more than a pragmatic rationalism. From another perspective, E.M. Wherry wrote in 1905 that 'The style and kindly spirit of this booklet [*Tanqīd al-khayālāt*, vol. 4], like that of the series thus far

published, commend these able refutations of the specious teachings of Sir Sayud Ahmad Khan' (*Muslim controversy*, p. 56).

In another early Christian appreciation of ʿImāduddīn's writings, H.U. Weitbrecht characterised *Taftīsh al-awliyā'* as 'an interesting work, useful for those who have to deal with Sufis' (*A descriptive catalogue*, p. xiv). Powell also analyses this work, suggesting that ʿImāduddīn might be expected to have been favourable to Sufi forms and methods after his conversion ('"Pillar"', pp. 244-6) and contrasting his comments with the more favourable comments of a later convert, John Subhan, which she regards as a kind of indigenous expression, as opposed to attitudes expressed by Western Christian authors, and remarks that in *Taftīsh al-awliyā* ʿImāduddīn showed himself even more opposed to the Sufi masters than the missionaries. She casts him as 'extremely unsympathetic' to the Sufis ('"Pillar"', p. 247), though she does give him credit for using Sufi terminology and language and 'appropriate Urdu forms' to communicate the Gospel message in the book ('"Pillar"', pp. 248-9; cf. Kamil, 'Unfinished agenda', p. 261).

Perhaps the greatest point of significance of these four additional works is the way in which they show the conceptual range and versatility of ʿImāduddin himself. He lived as a Muslim for 44 years and then as a Christian for 34, was thoroughly educated in the traditional Sunnī educational system of north India, subsequently responded to that traditional system as a Christian and served the literary needs of a growing Urdu-speaking church. He then also interacted intelligently with the 'new Islam' of modernism and the sectarian 'Islam' of the Aḥmadiyya. His was a remarkable contribution to the literature on Christian-Muslim relations.

PUBLICATIONS

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ʿImāduddīn, *Taftīsh al-awliyā'*, Allahabad, 1882; Amritsar, 1889

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ʿImāduddīn, [title indecipherable], *Nūr Afshān* 22 (5 January 1894) 2-4 (an excerpt from ch. 2 of *Tawzīn*); EAP660-1-17 (digitised version, of which the title page is damaged, available through British Library)

STUDIES

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'Who is Reverend Imad-ud-Din?'; https://ahmadiyyafactcheckblog.com/2021/07/08/who-is-reverend-imad-ud-din

Kamil, 'Unfinished agenda' (short descriptions of 'Imāduddīn's additional works, pp. 260-1)

Becht, *The book and the prophet*, pp. 240-6

Powell, '"Pillar"', pp. 223-55

Wahidur-Rahman, 'Religious thought'

H.U. Weitbrecht, 'A guide to literature for workers among Muslims', pp. 119-31, in E.M. Wherry, C.G. Mylrea and S.M. Zwemer (eds), *Lucknow, 1911, being papers read and discussions on the training of missionaries, and literature for Muslims at the General Conference on missions to Muslims held at Lucknow, Jan. 23-28, 1911*, London, 1911, 119-31, pp. 125-7

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H.U. Weitbrecht, 'Literature for Moslems', *Church Missionary Review* 60 (1909) 465-470, p. 468

Wherry, *Muslim controversy*

E.M. Wherry, 'Summary of the contents of *Tawzīn al-aqwāl*', *Indian Evangelical Review* 29 (1902) 186-92

Gordon Nickel

ʿAlī Mūngerī

Sayyid Muḥammad ʿAlī Mūngerī; Muḥammad ʿAlī Kānpūrī

DATE OF BIRTH 28 July 1846
PLACE OF BIRTH Kanpur, India
DATE OF DEATH 13 September 1927
PLACE OF DEATH Munger, India

BIOGRAPHY

Sayyid Muḥammad ʿAlī Mūngerī (Muḥammad ʿAlī Kānpūrī in the titles of some of his works) was a leading Muslim scholar of colonial South Asia. He received his early education from Maulānā Luṭfullāh ʿAlīgaṛhī and Muftī ʿInāyat Aḥmad Kākorwī and then joined the first intake of Madrasa Fāʾiḍ-i ʿĀmm in Kanpur for formal religious education. He was forced to interrupt his studies for two years and, when he resumed, he went to Aligarh to continue at the Madrasa Jāmiʿ Masjid. He completed courses on the *maʿqūlāt* (rational sciences) as well as the *manqūlāt* (Hadith), expressing his dislike for the former and his intellectual fascination with the latter. In his pursuit of the study of Hadith, he spent almost a year under the supervision of the *muḥaddith* Maulānā Aḥmad ʿAlī Sahāranpūrī.

Mūngerī's career can be divided into three parts. First, as an Islamic religious scholar, he studied and then taught in various madrasas. Most importantly, he started Nadvat al-ʿUlamāʾ (the Council of ʿUlamāʾ) in 1898 and devised its curriculum with the goal of combining traditional Islamic learning and modern educational disciplines. The Dār al-ʿUlūm Nadvat al-ʿUlamāʾ was the third of the Deoband-Aligarh-Nadva triad of Muslim reformist institutions in South Asia and one that tried to strike a balance between the more traditional Deoband and more modernist Aligarh approaches. Mūngerī was its first principal and served in that capacity from 1898 until his retirement in 1903, after which he moved permanently to Munger in Bihar.

The second aspect of his intellectual career was his inclination to Sufism, which began at an early age. After spending some time with the sheikhs Ḥāfiẓ Muḥammad and Maulānā Karāmat ʿAlī Qādrī, he became an authorised disciple of Maulānā Faḍl Raḥmān Ganj Murādābādī. After his retirement from the Dār al-ʿUlūm Nadvat al-ʿUlamāʾ, he established a

Sufi shrine (*khānqah*) in Munger, where he spent the rest of his life giving spiritual training to his disciples. He died there in 1927.

The third main aspect of Mūngerī's career was his opposition to Christian missionaries and the Aḥmadiyya, against whom he wrote many works. Against the Aḥmadis alone he is said to have written more than 100 works. Concerning Christian missionaries, his writings were usually a response to the works produced by missionaries, who were permitted to preach in colonial India through the East India Company Act of 1813.

The best-known of Mūngerī's writings on this subject include articles in the newspaper *Manshūr-i Muḥammadī*, *Mirʾāt al-yaqīn* ('The mirror of certitude'), *Āʾīnah-i Islām* ('The mirror of Islam'), *Tarānah-i Ḥijāzī* ('The song of the Ḥijāz'), *Dafʿ al-talbīsāt* ('Rebuttal of misapprehensions'), *Sātiʿ al-burhān* ('Bright argument'), *Barāhīn-i qāṭiʿah* ('Conclusive arguments'), *Murāsalāt-i madhhabī* ('Religious correspondence') and *Paighām-i Muḥammadī* ('The message of Muḥammad'). All are out of print and the majority are difficult to locate. He wrote most as responses to Christian polemicists such as ʿAbdulḥalīm Ṣafdar ʿAlī (1830-99; *CMR* 24, 765-80) and ʿImāduddīn Lāhiz Pānīpatī (1830-1900; *CMR* 24, 506-41). In these works he demonstrates a first-hand familiarity with the Jewish and Christian scriptures as well as with writings by contemporary Indian Christian and Muslim scholars and polemicists engaged in interreligious debates. He also refers to the works of several European historians, at times favourably.

Methodologically, Mūngerī followed a rational mode of argumentation that was consistent with traditional *kalām* (Islamic speculative theology). His writings on Christianity are notable for their large number and the wide range of topics they address. He can be regarded as part of the continuing tradition of Muslim scholars who were involved in interreligious polemics and debates during the colonial era, such as Raḥmatullāh Kairānavī (1818-91; *CMR* 24, 253-60), ʿInāyat Rasūl ʿAbbāsī Chirāyākoṭī (1809-1905), and Sanāʾullāh Amritsarī (1868-1948). The relative obscurity of Mūngerī's works can be explained by the increasing irrelevance of interreligious controversies and their loss of popular appeal.

MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Sayyid Muḥammad ʿAlī Mūngerī, *Takmīl al-adyān bi-aḥkām al-Qurʾān/Āʾīnah-i Islām*, Munger, 1921, pp. 1-2, 68

Sayyid Muḥammad ʿAlī Mūngerī, 'Ganj Murādābād kī Ḥaḍirī aur Uske Taʾturāt: Nigāh-i Murshid', in Sayyid Abū ʾl-Ḥasan ʿAlī Nadvī (ed.), *Tadkirah-i Ḥaḍrat Maulānā Faḍl Raḥmān Ganj Murādābād*, Lucknow, 1958[?], 98-102

Sayyid Muḥammad al-Ḥasanī, *Sīrat Maulānā Sayyid Muḥammad ʿAlī Mūngerī. Bānī Nadvat ul-ʿUlamā'*, Lucknow, 1964

Arshad ʿAbd al-Rashīd, 'Haḍrat Maulānā Sayyid Muḥammad ʿAlī Mūngerī', in Navāz Diobandī (ed.), *Savāniḥ ʿulamā'-i Dioband*, 2000, vol. 2, 249-362 (this is an extensive summary of al-Ḥasanī's *Sīrat Maulānā Sayyid Muḥammad ʿAlī Mūngerī*)

G.A. Khan, 'Nadvat al-Ulama. A centre of Islamic learning', Aligarh, 2001 (PhD Diss. Aligarh Muslim University) pp. 70-81, 96-8, 111-14

Y. Sikand, *Bastions of the believers. Madrasas and Islamic education in India*, New Delhi, 2005, pp. 79-81

Muhammadullah Khalili Qasmi, 'Maulana Muhammad Ali Mungeri (1846-1927). His dynamic personality and multidimensional contributions', in *The international seminar on Maulana Muhammad Ali Mungeri. Life and achievements*, Rahmani Foundation, Munger, 8 December 2019, 1-12, pp. 6-7

WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Tarānah-i Ḥijāzī
'The song of the Ḥijāz'

DATE 1878
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Urdu

DESCRIPTION

Tarānah-i Ḥijāzī is a short treatise, 66 pages long, that Mūngerī wrote in response to *Naghmah-i Tambūrī* ('Tambur's song') by ʿImāduddīn Lāhiz, a Christian (*CMR* 24, 506-41). *Naghmah-i Tambūrī* was in turn a response to a debate held between ʿImāduddīn Lāhiz and Mujtahid Lakhnavī, a Muslim scholar from Lucknow, in 1871. In his work, ʿImāduddīn rejected Lakhnavī's arguments and introduced new questions.

Mūngerī's retort addresses the 14 questions posed by the Christian polemicist. Of these, eight relate to the issues of salvation and intercession that ʿImāduddīn had raised to establish that salvation is not attainable through Islam. Five of ʿImāduddīn's questions concern the sinlessness of the prophets, aiming to tackle Muslim objections to some statements about prophets found in the Bible, and one question focuses on the proof of Muḥammad's prophethood.

Mūngerī addresses key theological and doctrinal issues such as the defence of the Islamic doctrine of holy war and rebuttal of Christian objections to it, the Islamic doctrine of intercession, and the affirmation of the sinlessness of the prophets. In his answers, he attempts to establish

that the Qur'an is not derived from the Torah or the Gospels. He presents evidence for the prophethood of Muḥammad, which he discusses in some detail with rational arguments and references to miracles. Mūngerī quotes several European authors in favour of Muḥammad and Islam and poses six counter-questions to the Christian polemicist.

SIGNIFICANCE

Although no study of *Tarānah-i Ḥijāzī* is known, most of the accounts of Mūngerī's works on Christianity refer to it and mention its contents. This suggests that it played a reasonably substantial part in the dissemination of Muslim polemics and apologetics in late 19th-century colonial India. It certainly exemplifies the state of Christian-Muslim relations with regard to theological debate at the time.

PUBLICATIONS

ʿAlī Mūngerī, *Tarānah-i Ḥijāzī*, Munger, 1878, 1908, 1910, 1918; Lahore, 1978

STUDIES

Muhammadullah Khalili Qasmi, 'Maulana Muhammad Ali Mungeri', pp. 7-8

Mir'āt al-yaqīn
'The mirror of certitude'

DATE 1883
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Urdu

DESCRIPTION

Mir'āt al-yaqīn li-aghlāṭ Hidāyat al-Muslimīn ('The mirror of certitude for the mistakes in "Guidance for Muslims"'), which is 68 pages long, was one of Mūngerī's earliest works about Christianity. It comprises a rebuttal of the Christian ʿImāduddīn Lāhiz's (*CMR* 24, 506-41) *Hidāyat al-Muslimīn* ('Guidance for Muslims'), which ʿImāduddīn wrote as a refutation of Raḥmātullāh Kairānavī and Muḥammad Wazīr Khān's *Iʿjāz-i ʿĪsavī*.

Mūngerī's treatise comprises three chapters. In ch. 1, he aims to downplay ʿImāduddīn's objections regarding the sources used in *Iʿjāz-i ʿĪsavī*, arguing that ʿImāduddīn's objections show that he lacks solid scholarship even about his own religious tradition. In ch. 2, he delineates what he

terms ʿImāduddīn's deliberate deceptions and lies, 25 in all. In ch. 3, he aims to expose ʿImāduddīn's lack of knowledge about Islam, its primary sources and its scholarly tradition.

Mūngerī's approach is openly polemical, rejecting ʿImāduddīn's objections to Kairānavī and Muḥammad Wazīr Khān's *Iʿjāz-i ʿĪsavī* one by one. One of its main themes is the authenticity of the Bible, in which the hallmark of Mūngerī's method is to demonstrate that even Christian scholars acknowledge corruptions and alterations in their scriptures.

Mirʾāt al-yaqīn is a testament to Mūngerī's meticulous scholarship, indicating that his knowledge of the Bible, Christian theology and history was by no means inferior to that of European historians and Christian theologians. For instance, ʿImāduddīn mistakenly regarded Hugo Grotius (1583-1645) as an obscure figure, though Mūngerī cites several European scholars to prove Grotius's well-established legacy.

SIGNIFICANCE

Most studies of Mūngerī cite *Mirʾāt al-yaqīn* and mention its central themes. In short, it was one of the crucial works of Indian Muslim polemics in its time. However, as interest in polemics has waned, the book has become something of a rare work.

PUBLICATIONS

ʿAlī Mūngerī, *Mirʾāt al-yaqīn li-aghlāṭ Hidāyat al-Muslimīn*, Kanpur, 1883, Munger, 1921

STUDIES

Muhammadullah Khalili Qasmi, 'Maulana Muhammad Ali Mungeri', p. 8

Āʾīnah-i Islām
'The mirror of Islam'

DATE 1884
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Urdu

DESCRIPTION

Mūngerī wrote *Āʾīnah-i Islām* ('The mirror of Islam'), also known as *Takmīl al-adyān bi-aḥkām al-Qurʾān* ('The perfection of religions by the provisions of the Qur'an'), in response to *Niyāz nāmah* ('Humble petition'),

a polemical work by ʿAbdulḥalīm Ṣafdar ʿAlī (see *CMR* 24, pp. 768-76), a former deputy inspector in Madras who had converted from Islam to Christianity. Although Mūngerī intended to write a full refutation of this work, he was unable to find the time for it so he published instead a number of articles in *Manshūr-i Muḥammadī* addressing specific objections raised by Ṣafdar ʿAlī, and then composed a comprehensive rebuttal titled *Javāb Niyāz nāmah* ('A reply to "A humble petition"'). Later, he extracted from this the section concerning the merits of Islam in comparison with the Torah and the Gospel (*Injīl*) and published it separately under the title *Āʾīnah-i Islām*. It comprises 80 pages.

In his *Niyāz nāmah*, Ṣafdar ʿAlī posited that revealed religious laws can be divided into two categories: ritual and moral. As he saw it, when humanity was not yet capable of bearing full moral responsibility, God revealed ritual laws for the Jews. Later, when human beings had become morally mature, God instituted moral codes alone through Christianity but then reversed this when Islam appeared and reintroduced ritual laws and practices.

Mūngerī raises several rational objections to this. He challenges the plausibility of Ṣafdar ʿAlī's assumption that humanity lacked moral capacity during the time of the Jewish revelation but had attained it by the advent of Christianity, and that Islam subsequently reverted to a primarily ritual framework. He supports his criticism by citing numerous biblical verses to demonstrate that Jesus Christ did not abrogate the moral or ritual codes of Judaism. Furthermore, he cites qur'anic verses and Prophetic traditions to argue that Islamic teachings are not limited to ritual. Rather, he emphasises that the Prophet Muḥammad explicitly declared that his primary mission was the perfection of moral character. Mūngerī substantiates his argument with examples of several practical aspects of Islamic teachings and how they embody moral principles.

Although the treatise primarily addresses the practical issue of rituals and morality, towards the end in a supplement, *Takmīl adyān dar bayān ʿusūl al-īmān* ('The perfection of religions and exposition of the principles of faith'), Mūngerī shifts focus from practices to beliefs. In this section, he rebuts the doctrine of the Trinity and the Christian belief that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. He asserts that Islam alone upholds pure monotheism in its most unadulterated form and, for that matter, can withstand rational and critical inquiry. Similarly, he maintains that Islam alone upholds a morally and rationally sound belief in prophethood.

SIGNIFICANCE

Āʾīnah-i Islām claims an important place among Mūngerī's works as it covers practical, moral and doctrinal dimensions of interreligious debate. Some later Muslim scholars, such as Sanāʾullāh Amritsarī, appear to have followed his approach and method in their theological works. While there is no known study of this work, biographies of Mūngerī mention it in some detail, indicating its significance in its day. It contributes to an overall understanding of the state and nature of Christian-Muslim relations at the time.

PUBLICATIONS

ʿAlī Mūngerī, *Āʾīnah-i Islām*, Kanpur, 1884; Munger, 1917, 1921

STUDIES

Muhammadullah Khalili Qasmi, 'Maulana Muhammad Ali Mungeri', p. 8

Sayyid Muḥammad al-Ḥasanī, *Sīrat Maulānā Sayyid Muḥammad ʿAlī Mūngerī*, pp. 59-62

Dafʿ al-talbīsāt
'Rebuttal of misapprehensions'

DATE 1885

ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Urdu

DESCRIPTION

Mūngerī wrote *Dafʿ al-talbīsāt* ('Rebuttal of misapprehensions') in direct response to the polemical treatise titled *Taqlīʿāt-i taʿlīqāt* ('Annihilation of annotations') by ʿImāduddīn Lāhiz (*CMR* 24, pp. 533-4), who wrote in response to Chirāgh ʿAlī's (1844-95; see *CMR* 24, 625-36) *Taʿlīqāt* ('Annotations'), which itself was a response to ʿImāduddīn's *Taʾrīkh-i Muḥammadī* ('History of Muḥammad', called *Tavārīkh-i Muḥammadī* in some works; *CMR* 24, pp. 523-9). Thus, the chronological sequence of these works is ʿImāduddīn's *Taʾrīkh*, Chirāgh ʿAlī's *Taʿlīqāt*, ʿImāduddīn's *Taqlīʿāt* (1869) and Mūngerī's *Dafʿ al-talbīsāt* (1885). Indeed, it would be more accurate to say that *Dafʿ al-talbīsāt* was a response not only to ʿImāduddīn's *Taqlīʿāt*

but also to his *Ta'rīkh*, and at the same time a detailed defence of Chirāgh ʿAlī's *Taʿlīqāt*. It is when they are regarded as religious apologetics that all these works, including *Dafʿ al-talbīsāt*, make most sense.

The opening pages of *Dafʿ al-talbīsāt* declare it to be a shield against the attacks of Christian missionaries on the central tenets of prophethood in Islam. Specifically, the book revolves around two core issues: proving the veracity of the prophethood of Muḥammad, responding under the headings of 'circumstances', 'teachings' and 'miracles'; and proving the inauthenticity of the Gospels because of adulteration in their texts. The structure of the book follows the standard format of response literature. It quotes particular points raised by ʿImāduddīn one by one and responds to them in detail and, characteristically for this genre, its tone is polemical, albeit featuring rigorous disquisitions on matters related to historical contextualisation, textual integrity and philology.

The subject matter revolves around proving that Muḥammad was the last prophet. It does this by showing that his miracles are referred to in both the Qur'an and Hadith, and that these two foundational sources are not at odds with each other on this matter. Also included is a demonstration of the methodological rigour employed by Hadith scholars of earlier centuries. This last point allows Mūngerī to juxtapose two aspects of the work: the care with which Hadith compilers authenticated reports along with their chains of transmission; and the absence of such care in the initial compilation of the Gospels.

SIGNIFICANCE

It is reported by al-Ḥasanī (*Sīrat Maulānā Sayyid Muḥammad ʿAlī Mūngerī*, p. 63) that ʿImāduddīn never wrote a response to *Dafʿ al-talbīsāt*, despite the fact that Mūngerī had repeatedly asked for one and had even offered a reward for it. Nevertheless, this work is important as part of a chain of polemical interactions at the time, and also as an example of late 19th-century polemics.

PUBLICATIONS

ʿAlī Mūngerī, *Dafʿ al-talbīsāt*, Kanpur, 1885; Delhi, 1913

STUDIES

Muhammadullah Khalili Qasmi, 'Maulana Muhammad Ali Mungeri', p. 7

Paighām-i Muḥammadī
'The message of Muḥammad'

DATE 1891
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Urdu

DESCRIPTION

Paighām-i Muḥammadī is widely regarded as Mūngerī's most influential work. In his book *Niyāz-nāmah,* Ṣafdar ʿAlī had rebutted Raḥmatullāh Kairānavī's *Iẓhār al-ḥaqq* and *Iʿjāz-i ʿĪsavī* and challenged Muslims to respond to his arguments. Mūngerī took on the challenge and first produced *Āʾīnah-i Islām*. In fact, *Paighām-i Muḥammadī* is a continuation of the same debate and its final culmination. In addition, it is also a response to G.L. Ṭhākur Dās's (*CMR* 24, 704-9) objection to the Qur'an in his treatise *ʿAdam-ẓarūrat-i Qur'ān* ('The dispensability of the Qur'an') that appeared in 1886. The titles in some editions of *Paighām-i Muḥammadī* refer to it as the first volume (323 pages), although there is no indication that there was ever a second. Perhaps Mūngerī intended to write a second volume but was unable to do so.

Paighām-i Muḥammadī includes a comprehensive preface that explains the work's background and purpose, which is to refute the objections raised by the aforementioned Christian scholars against Islam and to establish the superiority of Islam over Judaism and Christianity. From the very outset, Mūngerī refers to Kairānavī's *Iẓhār al-ḥaqq* and enthusiastically endorses its arguments. Like *Iẓhār al-ḥaqq*, a key focus of *Paighām-i Muḥammadī* is the authenticity of the Bible. Mūngerī undertakes rigorous textual and historical criticism of the Torah, Gospels and other books of the New Testament to highlight textual inconsistencies in these scriptures and the lack of their historical authenticity. Mūngerī supports his arguments with extensive references to the views of Western Christian theologians and biblical scholars, such as Henry Scott Holland (1847-1918), Joseph Angus (1816-1902) and Adam Clarke (1762-1832). One of his arguments is that the scarcity of manuscripts in the original Hebrew or Greek languages undermines the authenticity of the books included in the Bible.

Mūngerī addresses Ṣafdar ʿAlī's claim that the Qur'an acknowledges the divine origin of Jewish and Christian scriptures but also contains teachings that are not congruent with the Bible. He maintains that, while the Qur'an affirms the original revelation of these scriptures, it does not require acceptance of the current versions of them. He provides an example of how the texts of the Torah include verses describing Moses's death

and legacy, which is clear evidence that they are post-Mosaic additions. Thus, he maintains that the text which the Qur'an refers to as the *Injīl* is not identical with the historical works found in the Bible.

After debating the authenticity of the Bible, *Paighām-i Muḥammadī* proceeds to criticise Christian doctrines, such as the Trinity and the Atonement, and compares the Islamic and Christian religious systems. Here, Mūngerī reiterates the arguments developed in his previous work, *Ā'īnah-i Islām*. In some places, he presents tables that show stark differences between the Qur'an and the Bible, supporting the qur'anic positions.

The critical methodology and polemical argument typify Mūngerī's approach throughout *Paighām-i Muḥammadī*, which is characterised by detailed textual analysis, logical argumentation, and engagement with both Islamic and Western sources.

SIGNIFICANCE

Paighām-i Muḥammadī played a significant role in the polemics and interreligious dialogue of its time, contributing to the intellectual defence of Islamic theology in colonial India. It is regarded as the last and most significant of Mūngerī's works, and, according to al-Ḥasanī (*Sīrat Maulānā Sayyid Muḥammad ʿAlī Mūngerī*, p. 68), the only one translated into other languages, specifically English and Bengali. Its importance has been likened to that of Kairānavī's *Iẓhār al-ḥaqq*, arguably the most renowned and celebrated Indian Muslim polemical work from the British era. However, Mūngerī's *Paighām-i Muḥammadī* is less well known today than *Iẓhār al-ḥaqq*, probably due in part to the absence of new editions since Partition.

PUBLICATIONS

ʿAlī Mūngerī, *Paighām-i Muḥammadī*, Kanpur, 1891; Delhi, 1913

STUDIES

Muhammadullah Khalili Qasmi, 'Maulana Muhammad Ali Mungeri', p. 7

Sayyid Muḥammad al-Ḥasanī, *Sīrat Maulānā Sayyid Muḥammad ʿAlī Mūngerī*, pp. 63-69

Muhammad Akram and Ateeb Gul

Maulvī Nūruddīn

DATE OF BIRTH 1841
PLACE OF BIRTH Bhera, India
DATE OF DEATH 1914
PLACE OF DEATH Qadian

BIOGRAPHY

Maulvī or Ḥakīm Nūruddīn was born in Bhera, in the Punjab, where he spent his early life. During his formative years, he travelled extensively in India, where he pursued studies in medicine, Arabic, Persian and the science of Hadith. He also spent several years in Mecca and Medina, continuing his study of Hadith under prominent scholars such as Raḥmatullāh Kairānavī (*CMR* 24, 253-60) and Shāh ʿAbd al-Ghanī Mujaddidī (d. 1878). It was during this time that he pledged allegiance to Shāh ʿAbd al-Ghanī, becoming a disciple in the Naqshbandiyya Mujaddidiyya Sufi order. Nūruddīn's travels throughout India allowed him to build strong connections with the scholarly networks of the region. He maintained close ties with admirers of the Ṭarīqah-i Muḥammadiyyah, including members of the Ahl-i Ḥadīth, and corresponded regularly with Sayyid Aḥmad Khān (*CMR* 24, 424-47), whose works and Qur'an exegesis he knew well. His medical expertise was widely recognised, and he served as a physician at the court of the Maharaja of Kashmir and Jammu for several years.

In 1889, Nūruddīn pledged allegiance to Mīrzā Ghulām Aḥmad, the founder of the Aḥmadiyya movement, which was increasingly active in debates with Christian scholars and missionaries. His close relationship with Ghulām Aḥmad drew him more deeply into interreligious discussions, eventually prompting him to write extensively on Christian doctrines, often with the aim of disproving them. As a key figure in the Aḥmadiyya movement, Nūruddīn served as Ghulām Aḥmad's right-hand man and played a central role in shaping the movement's intellectual and theological direction. One of his primary responsibilities was delivering lectures on the Qur'an at the mosque in Qadian, the movement's headquarters. These lectures, given in Urdu, were or influential on scholars such as Muḥammad ʿAlī and Shīr ʿAlī, who later produced significant English translations of the Qur'an. Following Ghulām Aḥmad's death in 1908, Nūruddīn was elected as his first successor (*khalīfa*), assuming the

role of the movement's spiritual and organisational leader. He held this position until his death in 1914. Under his leadership, the Aḥmadiyya expanded its activities beyond the Indian subcontinent, sending missionaries to spread Islam in the West, particularly targeting Christian populations. In addition to his lectures, Nūruddīn wrote an unpublished exegesis of the Qur'an in Arabic.

MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Akbar Shāh Khān Najībābādī, *Mirqāt al-yaqīn fī ḥayāt-i Nūruddīn* ['The stairway of certainty in the life of Nūruddīn'], Gurdaspur, 2002
ʿAbd al-Qādir, *Ḥayāt-i Nūr* ['The life of Nūr'], Qadian, 2003
Z. Khān, *Ḥaḍrat Maulavī Nūruddīn. Khalīfat ul-Masīḥ I*, Tilford, 2006

WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Faṣl al-khiṭāb li-muqaddimat ahl al-kitāb
'A decisive speech regarding the People of the Book'

DATE 1888
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Urdu

DESCRIPTION

Faṣl al-khiṭāb is one of Nūruddīn's early works on Christianity. Published in 1888 in two volumes totalling 428 pages, it covers a wide range of topics, including a detailed comparison between Islamic and Christian doctrines. Nūruddīn wrote the work in response to the growing influence of a Christian missionary on some of his friends, who had begun to be swayed by the missionary's arguments asserting the superiority of Christianity over Islam. This unnamed Christian missionary declined to engage in a public debate, choosing instead to present his criticisms in written form (Khān, *Ḥaḍrat Maulavī Nūruddīn*, pp. 76-7). This prompted Nūruddīn to respond with *Faṣl al-khiṭāb*.

One of the main issues Nūruddīn tackles in the work is the concept of miracles in Islam (vol. 1, pp. 5-10). The missionary cast doubt on whether Muḥammad performed any miracles that attested to his sincerity but, in Nūruddīn's understanding, miracles recorded in past times cannot serve as definitive proof in the modern era, as questions about the authenticity and reliability of sources often arise. Instead, he emphasises the importance of Muḥammad's teachings and character. Even so, he does argue

that Muḥammad did, in fact, perform miracles, such as transforming the Arabian population into devout Muslims and extending Islam throughout the Arabian Peninsula.

He also addresses the topic of jihad (vol. 1, pp. 106-22), which, in his view, Christian missionaries had misrepresented to depict Islam as an outdated or violent religion. He counters by asserting that Islam does not permit coercion in religious matters and argues that, in contrast, Christianity spread through force. Furthermore, he contends that jihad was sanctioned only as a defensive measure, whereas the Old Testament justifies fighting in a much more aggressive manner.

Other subjects touched upon include the role of women in Islam, Muḥammad's polygamy and the interpretation of particular verses of the Qur'an quoted by the Christian missionary. In addition are the prophecies in the Bible putatively related to the coming of Muḥammad, which take up a significant part of volume two (pp. 21-58), and the prophecies mentioned in the Qur'an, which Nūraddīn cites as evidence for the truthfulness of Muḥammad (vol. 2, pp. 99-114).

SIGNIFICANCE

The range of topics covered by Nūruddīn in *Faṣl al-khiṭāb* highlights his extensive erudition and familiarity with both Islamic and Christian doctrines. He includes extensive references to offer a comparison of Christian and Islamic sciptures and demonstrate Islam's superiority over Christianity. Notably, the work is not confined to addressing the statements of the unnamed missionary, but also engages with the writings of prominent European scholars such as William Muir (*CMR* 24, 666-96) and Aloys Sprenger (*CMR* 24, 472-95). This indicates the impact European scholars had on polemical discourses between Muslims and Christians in India. In addition, Nūruddīn demonstrates a keen understanding of the works of converts such as ʿAbdullāh Ātham (*CMR* 24, 392-6), who criticised Islam severely after they became Christians. Nūruddīn briefly addresses and refutes some of their points in the process of discussing the interpretation of certain verses of the Qur'an. In the second volume, where Nūruddīn discusses biblical prophecies concerning the advent of Muḥammad, he particularly draws upon the works of Sayyid Aḥmad Khān (*CMR* 24, 424-47) to strengthen his argumentation. This use of Khān's scholarship highlights the significant influence of this scholar on Muslim-Christian polemical discourse and underscores Nūruddīn's reliance on contemporary intellectual currents to bolster his defence of Islam's divine origin.

Furthermore, Nūruddīn's portrayal of early jihad as defensive warfare aligns with the writings of many scholars, including Charāgh ʿAlī, Sayyid Aḥmad Khān and Mīrzā Ghulām Aḥmad, all of whom advocated a similar view on the matter.

PUBLICATIONS

Nūruddīn, *Faṣl al-khiṭāb li-muqaddimat ahl al-kitāb*, [s.l.], 1888

Ibṭāl-i ulūhiyyat-i Masīḥ
'Refutation of the divinity of Christ'

DATE 1890
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Urdu

DESCRIPTION

As the title suggests, this concise treatise of 22 pages is concerned with the topic of the divinity of Jesus, presenting a series of arguments against the notion that he possessed divine attributes. Nūruddīn begins by citing verses from the Qur'an, such as Q 5:75, which states that Jesus and his mother ate food. He interprets it as evidence that Jesus had human needs, indicating that he was merely a human being. He also quotes Q 6:101, which argues that God cannot have a son because God has no wife. Nūruddīn explains that Christians themselves do not regard Mary as God's wife, further reinforcing the qur'anic argument that Jesus is not the son of God (pp. 1-3). A third argument concerns Jesus's lack of knowledge about the timing of the Hour, as stated in the New Testament (Matthew 24:36), which contrasts with God's omniscience and points to Jesus's humanity (p. 3).

Nūruddīn also addresses New Testament passages used by Christian scholars to support Jesus's divinity. For instance, he discusses John 14:9, where Jesus says, 'Whoever has seen me has seen the Father', arguing that it should be understood in the context of John 14:20, which clarifies that Jesus was speaking metaphorically (p. 14).

Nūruddīn goes on to examine qur'anic verses that Christian missionaries sometimes use to argue for Jesus's divinity. Two such verses describe Jesus as the 'spirit' (*rūḥ*) of God (Q 66:12; 4:171). In response, he points to the broad use of the term *rūḥ* in the Qur'an, noting that it is also applied to the angel Gabriel (Q 19:17), Adam (Q 15:29) and the children of Adam (Q 32:9). He concludes that *rūḥ* has various meanings in the Qur'an, such

as 'soul', 'word' or 'breath', and that its application to Jesus denotes his status and rank rather than implying divinity (pp. 15-20).

SIGNIFICANCE

The accessible language Nūruddīn employs here, which contrasts with the complex and scholarly style typical of his other writings, suggests that he intended the work for a general audience, to whom he sought to offer concise arguments refuting the belief in Jesus's divinity. His work, however, does not introduce any groundbreaking ideas or perspectives on Christianity. Instead, it builds on the criticism already present in the Qur'an, elaborating on the points made there by referencing biblical statements that agree with qur'anic criticisms. Even his examination of the term *rūḥ* draws on explanations that earlier Muslim scholars and exegetes had already explored extensively to clarify its meaning.

PUBLICATIONS

Nūruddīn, *Ibṭāl-i ulūhiyyat-i Masīḥ*, Lahore, 1890
Nūruddīn, *Ibṭāl-i ulūhiyyat-i Masīḥ*, Qadian, 1904

Aik 'Īsā'ī kē tīn savāl aur un kē javābāt
'Answers to three questions by a Christian'

DATE 1889
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Urdu

DESCRIPTION

Just before 1890, a Christian named 'Abdullāh James sent three critical questions concerning Islam and the Prophet Muḥammad to the Anjuman-i Himāyat-i Islām in Lahore. The Anjuman forwarded them to three scholars: Mīrzā Ghulām Aḥmad, Nūruddīn and Ghulām Nabī from Amritsar. Each composed his answers independently and the Anjuman published them in a booklet 73 pages long in 1892. This starts by quoting James's questions regarding Islam, followed by the scholars' responses. Ghulām Aḥmad's answers are placed first, taking 47 pages. Nūruddīn's are second, taking 19 pages, and Ghulām Nabī's are third, taking six pages. Nūruddīn's answers were reprinted in the August 1922 Urdu edition of *The Review of Religions* and were later translated into English and published by Jamaat-i Aḥmadiyya in 2021 under the title *A response to three questions of a Christian* (a Kindle edition appeared in 2022).

The first of the three questions is related to the qur'anic words 'Be not of those who doubt' (*fa-lā takūnanna min al-mumtarīn*), which appears twice in the Qur'an (Q 2:147, 6:114). James infers from this that the Qur'an implies that Muḥammad doubted his own mission, presenting it as proof that he neither performed miracles nor met the angel Gabriel. The second question concerns Muḥammad's knowledge. James contends that he lacked answers to certain questions, as seen in his statement, 'God knows'. Also, James argues that if Muḥammad were a true prophet, he would not have given incorrect numbers regarding the People of the Cave (*aṣḥāb al-kahf*) or stated that the sun sinks into a murky pool, given that the sun is much larger than the earth. The third critical question addresses Muḥammad's miracles. James quotes two qur'anic verses (Q 29:50, 17:59) to argue that Muḥammad never performed miracles, as suggested by statements of his enemies recorded in the Qur'an.

Nūruddīn gives extensive answers to all three questions. His response to the first is divided into two parts. The first of these quotes numerous qur'anic verses (e.g. Q 12:108, 6:57, 6:161) to affirm the Prophet's determination and conviction in his mission, negating the notion that he entertained any doubts, and the second deals specifically with the Qur'an phrase quoted by James, ('Be not of those who doubt'), which Nūruddīn explains could not indicate doubt as it uses the future tense, showing it means that the Prophet would never doubt his mission in the future because divine revelation had already made the truth evident to him. Nūruddīn adds alternative interpretations, suggesting the verse might address sceptics or the Muslim community through the Prophet. He compares this to various biblical passages (e.g. Jeremiah 30:7-10, Hosea 12:2, Matthew 11:21) to emphasise similar linguistic approaches in Christian scripture. He also cites passages from the Old Testament (e.g. Exodus 4:14) to argue that, according to Christian principles, hesitation does not disqualify a prophet, using Moses as an example of one who hesitated before God but retained his prophethood.

Nūruddīn's response to the second question addresses James's criticism that the Prophet answered certain questions with 'God knows'. He counters that the Qur'an mentions 13 instances where questions were brought to Muḥammad and he gave answers through divine revelation. For instance, in Q 8:1 Muḥammad answers a question about the division of spoils. The only unanswered questions pertain to the Hour and its timing, mentioned in Q 7:187, 51:12, 79:42 and 33:63. Nūruddīn argues that this is not objectionable, comparing it to Mark 13:32 and Matthew 24:36, where

Jesus similarly states that only God knows the timing of the Hour. The second part of the question concerns the number of the People of the Cave. Nūruddīn replies that the Qur'an does not provide a specific number, quoting Q 18:22, which explicitly states that only God knows their number. He assumes that James had taken this criticism from another source rather than the Qur'an itself. Regarding the sun sinking into a murky pool, Nūruddīn acknowledges that the sun is larger than the Earth and cannot physically sink into a pool. He explains that the Qur'an describes the scene from the perspective of Dhū l-Qarnayn, who, in the qur'anic account, observed the sun setting into what appeared to be a muddy pool (Q 18:86). Nūruddīn compares this to the common perception of the sun appearing to set behind a mountain or a tree.

The third question implicitly argues that Muḥammad never performed miracles, citing Q 29:50 and 17:59. Nūruddīn clarifies that these verses do not use the term *muʿjiza* ('miracle') but rather *āya* (sign). He argues that, if these terms are considered synonymous, the Qur'an testifies to numerous signs performed by Muḥammad, citing Q 2:99 and 29:49. He then gives a detailed analysis of Q 17:59, which James had translated as: 'We ceased to send signs because [*illā an*] people denied them before', and suggests that the word *illā* ('except') can also mean 'and', allowing the verse to be interpreted as: 'Nothing, and not even the rejection of the deniers, prevented us from sending signs.' Alternatively, he proposes that the verse refers only to specific signs and does not imply a general cessation of miracles. Nūruddīn further explains that certain miracles might not be performed for valid reasons, citing Matthew 4, where Jesus refuses to perform a miracle at Satan's behest, stating that one should not test the Lord. With this, Nūruddīn concludes that no difficulty is raised by Muḥammad not performing certain miracles.

James's questions here are not novel but reflect common themes in Christian polemics against Islam. For instance, the accusation that Muḥammad doubted his own mission appeared in an Urdu Qur'an translation published by the Presbyterian Mission Press in 1844. This criticism was later adopted by Wherry in his well-known four-volume English commentary on the Qur'an, published in the 1880s. Similarly, James's claim, based on Q 17:59, that the Prophet did not perform miracles also features prominently in Wherry's commentary on the same verse. These parallels indicate that his questions and criticisms were influenced by Christian commentaries on the Qur'an or missionary writings aimed at discrediting Islamic beliefs.

SIGNIFICANCE

Nūruddīn's answers, along with James's questions, provide intriguing insights into the interactions between Muslims and Christians regarding the scriptures of the other religion. His answers reveal his extensive knowledge of both the Qur'an and the Bible. However, the impact of his responses appears to have been limited as they were republished only once, in 1922.

PUBLICATIONS

Anjuman-i Himāyat-i Islām, *Aik ʿĪsāʾī kē tīn savāl aur un kē javābāt*, Lahore, 1889

'Islām par aik ʿĪsāʾī kē tīn iʿtirāḍūn kā javāb', repr. in *The Review of Religions* (August 1922) 283-300 (Urdu)

Anjuman-i Himāyat-i Islām, *Aik ʿĪsāʾī kē tīn savāl aur un kē javābāt*, [s.l], Maṭbaʿ Gulzār Muḥammadī, 1309 AH (1891/2)

Nūruddīn, *A response to three questions of a Christian*, Farnham, 2021 (English trans.); response-to-three-questions-of-christian (digitised version available through al-Islam.org)

Kamran Ahmad Khan

John Talbot Gracey

DATE OF BIRTH 16 September 1831
PLACE OF BIRTH Philadelphia
DATE OF DEATH 5 January 1912
PLACE OF DEATH Clifton Springs, New York

BIOGRAPHY

John Talbot Gracey was born into a family with Quaker ancestry in Philadelphia in 1831. As a young man, he turned his attention from the study of medicine to theology and trained for the ministry in the Methodist Episcopal Church. After he was ordained, he served first in a parish in the south of the United States for a short time, then in Pennsylvania for 10 years. In mid-1861, he decided to go to India, telling the parishioners at the Green Street Methodist Church in Kingston PA that, in his departing for India, 'We will be coworkers with God' (Pierson, 'John Talbot Gracey', p. 286), referring here to his wife, Annie Ryder Gracey, the daughter of a Methodist preacher and, by all accounts, a formidable and highly educated woman. They sailed in June, arriving in Calcutta five months later, and reportedly became the first European civilians to go to Sitapur in Uttar Pradesh after the 1857 Indian Uprising. Gracey had learned Hindustani before they arrived and preached in it as soon as he had the opportunity. He was esteemed by his fellow missionaries, and served as the first secretary for the Indian Missionary Conference and later, in 1867, as president.

Gracey only spent seven years in India before returning home on account of his poor health, falling short of his promise as a younger and fitter man to spend his life in 'perpetual missionary speech in India' (Pierson, 'John Talbot Gracey', p. 285). But back home his reputation as a scholar and preacher flourished. He served in several parishes and, in 1876, his health proved sturdy enough to allow him to oversee Methodist missions in West Africa for a time. He died in Clifton Springs in the south-west of New York State on 5 January 1912.

The obituaries on Gracey are uniformly generous. One states that he was 'peculiarly fitted by education and by temperament for the great work of winning the world to Christ' (Pierson, 'John Talbot Gracey', p. 290), and most refer to his public insistences on closer cooperation in mission amongst the Protestant Churches. A speaker at his funeral expressed the

view that, while Methodism could have 'no better defender', Gracey was 'far more' than a denominationalist: 'He was at one with every circle which was at home with Jesus Christ!' (Pierson, 'John Talbot Gracey', p. 291).

Since Gracey spent most of his time in India in the south, he was more active among Hindus than among Muslims. Even so, his substantial writings include many comments on Islam in India.

MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Art., 'John Talbot Gracey', in B.H. Badley, *Indian missionary directory and memorial volume*, Lucknow, 1881, 206

J.M. Reid, *Missions and Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, revised by J.T. Gracey, 3 vols, New York, 1895, vol. 1, pp. 215-20

Obit., 'Dr. J.T. Gracey among the departed', *Christian Advocate and Journal and Zion's Herald* 87 (1912) 5

D.L. Pierson, 'John Talbot Gracey. A missionary with an international mission', *Missionary Review of the World* 35 (1912) 284-91

W.V. Kelley, *A salute to the valiant*, New York, 1918, pp. 19-20

Archives Madison NJ, General Commission on Archives & History, New Jersey – 'John Gracey Collection', US NjMdUMCG 4574

WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Works concerning Islam

DATE 1884-91

ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

Here, three works in which Gracey writes in detail on Islam are discussed.

India. Country, people, missions (1884) is Gracey's best-known work. It is 207 pages long, divided into two parts, the first on the country as a whole and the second on mission. The first part contains a brief account of Islam (pp. 89-94) as part of a survey of the seven main faiths and ethnic groups in India.

Gracey begins this account by observing that Queen Victoria reigns over more Muslims than any other ruler of the time. In his short history of Islam, he describes it in military terms as a 'conquering faith' whose 'hosts' of 175 million Indians are always ready to be 'marshalled' under the 'green banner' (p. 89), and graphically describes how, only a century after the death of Muḥammad, 'the Moslem burnished his scimitar at the gates

of Hindustan', although the 'conquering hordes' took three more centuries to 'invade the packed population of the Punjab' and never fully captured it; 'the British took India from the Hindus, not the Moghuls' (p. 90). He observes that the astonishing geographical, linguistic and cultural diversity among Muslims throughout the world is 'compacted' by the Qur'an and the common sacred language of Arabic, which have created a single 'fellowship' south to north from equatorial Africa to Siberia and east to west from the South China Sea to the Gambia.

Gracey then focuses on Islam in north India, where, by 1850, a third of the population was Muslim. Rulers built 'splendid and unsurpassed architecture' across the north-west (p. 90) and an 1881 census conducted by the Indian Civil Service showed that Muslims outnumbered Hindus in Lower Bengal to the east of the North-Western Provinces by 35 million to 18 million (p. 91). But Gracey does not always cite his statistics neutrally. When he records that the kingdom of Hyderabad in south-central India, ruled by the Mughals and much of it ceded to the British in 1823, is as large as France, he adds that its 11 million people are 'fanatical' and 'bigoted and powerful' (p. 91).

Gracey observes that Muslims in India are 'much Hinduised' in their beliefs and cultural practices. For example, they have implemented the caste system, worship at the tombs of saints and, perhaps most significantly and in contrast to their co-religionists elsewhere, tend to 'deify Muhammad himself' (p. 91), looking on him as a 'sinless mediator'. They venerate relics of him, such as hairs from his head in Delhi and Lahore, and also his footprint, which is a copy of the Hindu custom of worshipping the footprints of Vishnu and the Buddhist tradition of *Buddhapada*, icons of imprints of the Buddha's feet. Gracey concludes that, from a missionary perspective, it is necessary to live among Indian Muslims to appreciate how far they have 'departed from the faith of Muhammad' (p. 92) by being in contact with Hinduism (p. 93). At this point, Gracey contradicts his earlier statement about the uniting influence of Arabic as the sacred language of Islam by asserting that many Indian Muslims cannot even recite the *shahāda* (the declaration of faith) in its original language, or grasp its meaning. He notes that the Qur'an has not been translated by or for them and that converts to Islam are very rare in India because conversion is only attractive to those 'falling into sin' or living in fear of falling lower in the caste hierarchy (p. 93).

Gracey goes on to quote a criticism of Islam from Matthew Atmore Sherring (1826-80), who served with the London Missionary Society in India and published works on Indian history, culture and religion: 'The

influence of Muhammadanism in India has been for evil rather than good' (p. 93). Gracey himself holds that the Hindus were more moral before coming into contact with Islam and that present-day Indian Muslims are 'among the most licentious people on the face of the earth' (p. 94). This is because Muslims introduce 'outrageous habits' and 'vile social usages' wherever they go: the seclusion of women in the north of India is of Islamic origin, and polygamy is practised to a 'wild extent' in Islam. Altogether, he agrees with Sherring that Islam is of 'the most deadly and pernicious character' (p. 94).

Gracey is very interested in Hinduism and sees its believers as ignorant or primitive but ultimately morally sound (thus ripe for Christian conversion). On the other hand, Islam should be treated as a dangerous monolith, a malign threat, it people a corrupted and corruptive people whose sinfulness makes the prospect of conversion an unlikelihood if not an impossibility.

In these six pages, Gracey sets out critical points that he develops in later works.

In 1889, Gracey edited and compiled a much more robust and far-reaching treatment of missionary activity. Its full title is *A manual of modern missions. Containing historical and statistical accounts of the Protestant missionary societies of America, Great Britain, and the Continent of Europe*. At 428 pages long, it is double the length of *India*. It is organised not by the regions or religions of the various missionary fields but by the headquarters or types of missionary societies themselves. Section 1 is concerned with general societies, including those for women, together with auxiliary and miscellaneous societies from Britain or Ireland; section 2 focuses on medical missions, missionary presses and missions seeking the conversion of Jews; section 3 covers continental European missionary societies; and section 4 is concerned with United States and Canadian societies. Each section is subdivided into chapters, each of which, in turn, is devoted to a single society or, less often, a cluster of smaller societies. In all, more than 147 are represented. *A manual of modern missions* can be considered a reflection and reinforcement of the objective Gracey pursued in his own life and works, which was to unify Christian mission, particularly across the Protestant churches: 'closer and holier bonds of fellowship' are the ideal that will bear the best fruit (p. 2). The text is an encyclopaedia. It does not take Islam as a primary subject or theme but any society that operates amongst Muslims is included. Most references are only cursory.

Including virtually every established missionary society, *A manual of modern missions* offers a good deal of information about their aims,

objectives and guiding principles and priorities, their geographical spread, membership, methods, institutions, and successes, failures and obstacles, as well as identifying prominent figures in them. For example, it explains how the Church Missionary Society was founded in 1799 out of the Church of England explicitly to function in the 'heathen and Mohammedan world'; prior to this time no Anglicans had worked systematically among Muslims (p. 70).

As he does elsewhere, here Gracey takes a strong interest in India. He refers to Islam as a blight in northern and central India, and comments on how the 'unchanging bigotry of the Mohammedan' is encountered at every turn in the north-west, making the comparatively rare but well-known instances of conversion all the more impressive (p. 81). He mentions the Revd 'Imāduddīn Lāhiz (1830-1900; *CMR* 24, 506-41), a former imam who, after being baptised, preached and translated the Gospels, wrote commentaries, and became the first Indian to receive a Lambeth degree from the Archbishop of Canterbury (p. 82). He follows the same format in virtually every one of his 147 chapters.

Gracey does not condemn Islam as openly here as in *India* but he consistently implies condemnation of it. In the chapter on the North Africa Mission, for example, he describes a population previously 'unreached by the Gospel' that is ready for a 'brighter era to dawn' (p. 216). They had been neglected by missionaries because it was supposed their dedication to Islam was so fanatical that it would be 'futile and dangerous to attempt to evangelize them' (p. 216), but when they were reached it was realised they were 'very ignorant of Mohammedanism' and therefore 'willing to hear the good news' because they were free from the fanaticism and bigotry that Islam cultivates. Similar comments are made about the four million-strong population of western Java.

Gracey published *Open doors* in 1891, two years after *A manual of modern missions* and 15 after his last missionary tour of West Africa (its full title is *Open doors. Hints about opportunities for Christian work in Africa, Japan, India, Burmah, China, Mexico, South America, the Turkish Empire, Korea, and the islands of the sea*). Here, he enumerates opportunities for conversion in several regions across the Ottoman Empire, Africa and India (among the other locations in the title). The work is intended for a general readership as well as for prospective missionaries: the prose is nearly as simple as that in *India* and it is far shorter at only 64 pages, and less structured with no introduction. Each chapter, offering hints about areas where missionary work might find success, is titled in the style of *The open door in the Turkish Empire* (pp. 54-61).

This particular chapter is the only one that deals with Islam in any detail. Gracey begins it by acknowledging that open evangelism among Muslim communities is not permitted in Turkey. Effectively 'no Musselman may become a Christian without persecution' and 'Christian work' is largely confined to the Eastern Churches (p. 54). He does not cite the Tanzimât reforms directly but refers to a sequence of imperial edicts issued under Sultan Abdülmecid I (r. 1839-61) and his grand vizier. For example, *Gülhane Hatt-ı Şerif* ('The Supreme Edict of Gülhane') allowed Christians to hold land from 1839, while a further edict issued in 1847 permitted the establishment of independent Protestant communities across the Ottoman Empire (Protestants were guaranteed *millet* status and were free to operate independently of the temporal and spiritual jurisdiction of the Armenian patriarch). He remarks that many of the Christians' newfound civil and religious liberties were 'never really enforced' by the Sublime Porte, although 'Moslem education' under Abdülmecid I was 'secularised' and the code of law, modelled on the French system, was no longer exclusive to the 'Moslem code' (pp. 54-5). Gracey does not recount these recent events just to interest the reader. He describes why and in what ways the *door is open* in Turkey for the Christian missionary. He is interested in liberal reforms because they have paved the way for Protestant inroads within Turkey and the regions it governs. He advises caution in dealing with the Tanzimât reforms but he shows a sense of optimism that they are yielding practical benefits for Ottoman Christians.

Open doors entreats its audience to disregard geographical distance and to consider Ottoman Christians as neighbours. Serving as a missionary in Ottoman territories in the contemporary moment not only presents potential for winning Muslim converts, but is a matter of Christian duty and welfare. Gracey states with approval that the Protestant press and schools are active: 1,082 texts have been published in Turkey as well as two million copies of the Bible; there is no restriction on Christian schools, which are flourishing under European and American tutelage. This detail is all given in service of the contingent ideas that the Ottoman Empire is proving receptive to Christian work because it is in a state of decline and is on its knees: the time is nigh to push the mission; Ottoman civilians of all faiths are poor, having been 'robbed' by their central government; commerce and manufacture are emaciated and losing ground to Western economies and industries; in spite of some headway, Ottoman Christians, especially converts from Islam, are denied their rights and are suffering; Protestant missionaries have been failed in terms of their funding and are also struggling (p. 57). In the chapters on Africa, India and small pockets

of Muslim presence elsewhere, Gracey only mentions Islam rarely and in passing.

More a pamphlet than a monograph, *Open doors* is well illustrated. It functions to fortify Christian missionaries and to petition for the release of funding and resources to them by the Church of England and the Protestant churches in the West. It views mission as an allied force in tandem with European and American political, industrial, agricultural and economic ascendency – and the waning of Islam is fundamental to that equation. Gracey sees mission and empire as working hand in hand, mutually operational, unlike many of his Anglican colleagues, who preferred to uncouple Christian work from worldly forces such as commerce and diplomacy.

Gracey was a well-regarded and frequently published if not widely read or long-remembered commentator on Protestant mission. Of his three works examined here, two, *India. Country, people, missions* and *Open doors*, were designed to be digestible for popular reading. They were fairly original for the time in light of their brevity and broad intended readership. The *Manual of modern missions* is an encyclopaedic treatment of missionary activity meant for missionaries more than the general public; it belongs to a robust convention in late-Victorian literature of compiling and presenting masses of missionary and civil service records and reporting them in compendia that speak to the health status of church, military and imperial or diplomatic projects.

The two popular works, *India. Country, people, missions* and *Open doors*, were published in New York. Neither was reviewed by any major journal or organisation but they may have had some commercial success. The more rigorous and ambitious work, *A manual of modern missions*, does not appear to have registered on the American or British markets, nor was it consulted by missionary writers after the turn of the 20th century. The bulk of the content is reportage from extant records and not much of it is novel, insightful or theologically incisive.

SIGNIFICANCE

Across the three works, Islam is uniformly treated as an obstacle to Christian mission. Gracey evidently agreed with the majority opinion among late 19th-century Methodist missionaries, that Indian, Arab, Asian and African Muslims were less pliable and more hostile towards Christianity than their polytheistic countrymen because Islam was so well centralised and mobilised, and it condoned and rewarded hostility, bigotry and ferocity. Muslims therefore had to be met with special effort from missionary societies.

As well as representing Islam as an obstacle, Gracey also exhibits in these works the confident expectation that Islam is in decline and that the Ottoman Empire in particular is nearing its end. This perception was widely shared among missionaries and politicians in the 19th century, and in these works are signs that many thought it was not premature to plan for the inevitable changes that would come.

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Katherine Laura Jennings

Henry Mansell

DATE OF BIRTH 1834
PLACE OF BIRTH Trumbull County, Ohio
DATE OF DEATH 1911
PLACE OF DEATH Hartford County, Connecticut

BIOGRAPHY

Henry Mansell was born and grew up in a township in Trumbull County in north-east Ohio. After completing his education at Allegheny College, Meadville PA, and having married, in 1863 he travelled with his wife to India as a missionary of the American Methodist Episcopal Church (Reid, *Missions and Missionary Society*, vol. 2, p. 429). In 1864 he was appointed to the Moradabad circuit, east of Delhi, and, in 1868, the couple moved to Ghurwal in the north (Reid, *Missions and Missionary Society*, vol. 3, pp. 10, 13). After only five years there, his wife's bad health forced them to return to the United States, where she died on 17 May 1873 (pp. 13-14, 19, 20). Four years later, on 3 November 1877, he married Nancie Monelle, also a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, whom he had met aboard a steamer bound for India in 1873, presumably returning after his first wife's death (M.S. Wheeler, *First decade of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, with sketches of its missionaries*, New York, 1884, p. 159).

Henry and Nancie, who was a medical missionary, were stationed in the province of Oudh (Awadh). There, Henry was appointed principal of Reid Christian College in Lucknow and later served as principal of Bareilly Theological Seminary. From 1893, the couple worked in Mussoorie District, just north of Delhi, where he was principal of the Philander Smith Institute, a school for boys, as well as presiding elder of the district. He reported 1,427 baptisms in 1898 and worked 'tirelessly' there until 1901 (Obit., 'Rev. Henry Mansell', p. 76). He wrote in 1902 that his Methodist society, one of 70 Protestant societies across the country, secured twenty thousand baptisms a year and that three million Indians had converted to Christianity ('Missionary outlook', p. 29).

Mansell withdrew from active duty in 1892 but remained in India for a further eight years, returning to the United States in 1910 as a widower. He died on 8 November the following year.

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

'The new Mohammedan school of thought'

DATE 1891
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

In 1891 Mansell contributed a short, five-page article titled 'The new Mohammedan school of thought' to the *Methodist Review*. Its subject is a 'scientific society' or 'little society' called the Literary Club, an Islamic reformist group that had been founded by Sayyid Aḥmad Khān (1817-98; *CMR* 24, 424-47) in Aligarh, about 80 miles south-east of Delhi, 25 years earlier. Mansell thinks the club and its activities, and especially its founder, are worth reporting back home due to their 'bold and blank contradiction of the faith of Islam' (p. 99).

Mansell begins by enumerating a 'random' list of 14 of the club's radical departures from Abrahamic orthodoxy, among them that miracles credited to all prophets including Christ are denied and attributed to natural causes; the sinlessness of Mary is negated and Christ was born naturally; qur'anic prescriptions for animal sacrifice (*dhabīḥa*) are roundly rejected. Mansell hints here that Aḥmad Khān has not established a 'system of faith' but rather a 'loose texture of disbeliefs' (p. 100), and concludes that the Literary Club has cynical political designs. It does not even attempt to pose as a credible religious movement or cause, but instead offers a potent mix of theism, atheism and rationalism in order to 'cajole' governors and foreign diplomats into 'bestowing favour upon Mohammedans' (p. 100).

The rest of the article consists of a brief biography of Sayyid Aḥmad Khān. Mansell calls him 'our hero' and briefly recounts his Moghul

heritage, upbringing, training in the sciences and judicial work in the India Civil Service (pp. 100-1). Mansell lists notable translations and publications by him, and suggests that he was compelled to set out his 'false faith' in new ways because the Christian mission has had such success and is luring Hindu converts and even souring Indian Muslims against the 'dire defects' of Islam (p. 101). Aḥmad Khān has deployed several 'weapons' to prove that the form of the Bible 'commended in the Koran' does not exist and has been delegitimised and muddled by the boundless translations of it (p. 102), though he has had difficulties in finding 'much in favour of Mohammedanism' in his exegesis of Genesis and Exodus (this was presumably in Khān's *Tabyīn al-kalām fī tafsīr al-Tawrāt wa-l-Injīl ʿalā millat al-Islām*, 1862-5), and as a result is called an 'infidel' by more orthodox Muslims (p. 102). Resuming his biography, Mansell refers to the publications of the press founded by Aḥmad Khān, his visit to England, and the institutions he established, notably a joint 'Hindu and Mohammedan orphanage' to combat the practice of Christian priests 'taking helpless orphans and making Christians of them' (p. 102).

After completing this sketch, Mansell considers Aḥmad Khān's achievements in his endeavours to establish a new form of Islam, giving the answer under the two headings of animus and ritual. The animus (or motivation) is clear to Mansell: Khān wanted to 'ingratiate the Mohammedan community' with the British and to install sympathetic leaders in key political positions (p. 103). Mansell adds his belief that Muslims had been at 'the bottom of' the 1857 Indian Uprising and had merited tougher treatment from the British than that meted out to their Hindu countrymen. Aḥmad Khān sought to lessen the seriousness of this by arguing that educated and enlightened Muslims saw the Qur'an as only a sequence of fables in the same way that British and European elites looked on the Bible (both of these were an affront to Mansell as an ordained man from the American evangelical revivalist tradition that tended towards anti-elitism and intense pietism). Concerning the ritual element of the new form of Islam introduced by Khān, Mansell tersely comments, 'It has none' (p. 104); Khān permitted the celebration of marital and funerary rites to continue but otherwise dispensed with religious functionaries. For Mansell, the idea of limiting religious life to a select few sacramental functions is tantamount to atheism.

The article concludes with a few brief diagnoses. Mansell writes that the rationalist Literary Club is no religious movement and its attractiveness to some is incongruous given that Muslims in general are the 'strictest

of dogmatists with the least show of reason' (p. 104). His inference is that Christian mission has nothing to fear from Islamic reform and little to hope from it, apart from individual instances whereby the most educated Muslims, asked to critique the Qur'an from a rationalist perspective, will unbind themselves from dogmatism and perhaps prove more tractable to the Christian creed. Mansell adopts the Evangelical view that the 'rank and file' will take no notice of Aḥmad Khān or of his movement because it strips the holy scriptures of their miracles and meaning and removes from the interior and collective life all religious feeling and the striving for salvation: the club 'can scarcely be a factor in modern Mohammedanism' (p. 104).

Mansell was typical of his evangelical milieu in viewing Islam chiefly as an adversary to Christian and Western progress in India. He describes Muslims as lacking full humanity. 'The new Mohammedan school of thought' is a novel attempt to discredit a newly flourishing rationalist reformist movement within Islam, which Mansell identifies as cynical and as politically rather than religiously motivated, a sign of the 'neglect of religion' (p. 100). He says he does not fear the Literary Club but he nonetheless feels compelled to report home about it because it is populated by a new kind of Muslim who must be understood if new Islamic movements are to be combatted on the mission field. The threat of empowered leaders of Muslim thought such as Aḥmad Khān, who deny the miracles of Christ and his miraculous birth whilst promoting a modern, moderate and rational form of Islam, is to be taken seriously.

SIGNIFICANCE

'The new Mohammedan school of thought' was cited in several indices published at the time by the Methodist Episcopal Church and its missionary presses. One of these, *The Literary Digest*, refers to it erroneously as the work of the Literary Club of Rationalists, those who subjected the 'Christian Religion to the test of scientific criticism' (p. 307), failing to recognise that it is about, not written by, Muslim rationalists and has nothing to say about Christian freethinkers, rationalists or reformers. Otherwise, the article does not appear to have been noticed outside Methodist missionary circles or been widely read or engaged with academically or critically.

The article is notable in retrospect for having been proved incorrect in its prediction that Sayyid Aḥmad Khān was a fringe figure who would have no lasting influence. By the turn of the 20th century, he was a figure of

considerable influence and remained so both for the Pakistan independence movement and for many Muslims in Pakistan and India.

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Katherine Laura Jennings

Society for the Propagation of the Gospel

BIOGRAPHIES

This entry examines the work among Muslims of three of the many missionaries who served with the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG) in India.

Samuel Slater (1822-1904)

Born in Brentford, Middlesex, Samuel Slater studied at King's College London, and was ordained deacon by the bishop of London in 1845. He was ordained priest in Calcutta in 1847 and took charge of St Saviour's Mission from 1847 to 1850. He served as professor at Bishop's College, Calcutta, from 1850 to 1861, when he was compelled to return to England on account of his wife's ill health. He served as Professor of Hindustani at King's College London from 1861 to 1862.

In 1863, Slater returned to India to take up the position of headmaster of Bishop Cotton School, Simla, where he remained until 1885. He also served as secretary to the Calcutta Committee of the SPG and assisted in the translation of the *Book of Common Prayer* into Hindustani. In 1885, he returned to England and became rector of Stenigot in the diocese of Lincoln, remaining there until 1904. He died in Ealing in the same year.

Slater's writings include a treatise on the divinity of Christ entitled *Munyat ul-umam* ('A desire of all nations') and *Sarchashma-i-muhabbat* ('The fountain of love') (see *Two hundred years of the S.P.G.*, vol. 2, p. 812). A missionary evangelist at heart, he 'preached three times a week to Mahommedans. [...] Mr. Slater's earnest and efficient labours were met by cavilling and scoffing on the part of the Mahommedans; and though evidently a spirit of inquiry was raised among them, yet the effects were not visible in the accession of any numbers of them to the faith' ('Missions in Bengal', pp. 132-3). He was awarded a Lambeth DD on 17 February 1882 (*King's collections. Victorian lives*).

William O'Brien Smith (1817-79)

Nothing is known about William O'Brien Smith's birth and upbringing. He was ordained deacon in 1842 and priest in 1843. From 1843 to 1850 he

served in Calcutta, where his work at Bishop's College was reported as 'vastly increased and increasing. He has 150 [heathen] on the books and a regular attendance of 90' (Ingelby, 'Education as a missionary tool', p. 165). He took over the leadership of St Saviour's Mission from 1851 to 1871. SPG records report that he was involved in '[p]reaching to the Mahommedans and heathen at several stations, distribution of tracts in various languages, discussion with the more learned Mussulmans in the public Persian journals, and religious conversations with inquirers' (Pascoe, *Two hundred years of the SPG*, vol. 1, p. 479).

O'Brien Smith was an able church leader, in the mould of Samuel Slater, his predecessor at St Saviour's Mission, and as gifted linguistically, having mastered Urdu and Hindi. In a short account of him, Antony Copley reports on his work in the mission and also his involvement with the amirs of Sind, who had been deposed after the East India Company's conquest of their land in 1843. O'Brien Smith took up a lively correspondence with one of them, Meer Hosein Ali Khan, who was in custody at Dum Dum. His polemical attitude towards Islam is shown in a response to the amir's insistence that Muḥammad's *riselut* ('divine mission') was proved by the frequency of the miracles he performed, to which O'Brien Smith casually observed: 'It never seems to strike Mussulmans that if Mohammed's whole life were one uninterrupted series of miracles as they represent, these miracles must have been patent to all and would have been a sufficient answer to the Querishi [the Quraysh tribe of Mecca] and others who doubted' (Copley, *Religions in conflict*, pp. 82-3). He also expressed some irritation with Muslims' 'extremely imperfect acquaintance with historical facts and their inability to discriminate between fabulous legends and true history [...] their deep-rooted prejudices and predetermination to admit nothing against Islam and nothing in favour of Christianity' (p. 83), and some exasperation: 'One feels also that with Mussulmans there is no religious element, no spiritual feeling to work upon. No heart, no conscience to appeal to. It is merely a hard intellectual struggle' (p. 83).

After his retirement in 1872, O'Brien Smith returned to England. He died on 1 January 1879.

Thomas Williams (1839-1900)

Thomas Williams was a prolific writer against Hinduism and, to a lesser extent, Islam. After studies at St John's College, Cambridge, he went to India, probably in 1872, and was apparently first at Kolhapur before the

bishop moved him to the SPG mission in Ahmednagar. There he proved to be effective: 'Mr. Williams entered on his work with great earnestness, and in the first week of his tour baptised no less than fifty-five persons. Before the end of the year his congregation had increased to one hundred and sixteen' (Chatterton, *History of the Church of England in India*, p. 212).

Williams, who was described as a 'glutton for work' (Chatterton, *A history of the Church of England in India*, p. 213), succumbed to illness after only 18 months and had to return home, though he was soon able to go back to India. In 1880, he was involved in a controversy with Congregationalists of the American Marathi Mission over his refusal to admit a student whom other students found unacceptable (*Report of the American Marathi Mission*, p. 63). His main involvement was with Hindus, and he had a novel way of evangelising them by exposing fallacies in their religious texts but at the same time identifying common points and arguing that on these Christianity was superior (Bissell, 'Six months in Ahmednagar', pp. 107-8). This polemical method was replicated in his approach to Islam. Williams died of cholera while on holiday at Srinagar, Kashmir, on 23 September 1900.

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Thomas Williams

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

SPG missionaries and Islam

DATE 1849-92
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

Samuel Slater's *Narrative of a conference with a Mussulman* (1849), which is ten pages long, is the report of two meetings between him and a *moonsiff* (Urdu *munṣif*), who as a civil judge was a leading Muslim in the locality. Slater had previously composed nine questions on the overall theme of 'the connexion of the Gospel with Islám', which the *moonsiff* had heard

of and wanted to see. So he went, accompanied by two colleagues, one of them William O'Brien Smith, to present them formally in person. In the second meeting, which was less formal, they pursued some of the questions further.

The wording and content of the first two questions indicate that Slater was not looking for harmonious meetings with Muslims but rather debates in which one side would have to admit defeat.

Question 1: How does it appear that the Christian religion was an imperfect, and therefore not a final Revelation?

Question 2: What was there deficient in the Christian Religion which Islám has supplied?

Requiring proof that the premises built on them are not correct, these are deliberately worded to put anyone who answers on the defensive. The other questions are the same.

At the first meeting, the Muslim is particularly affected by Question 6: 'You say that Muhammad acts as Mediator in your system. Can the idea of mediation exist independent of the idea of atonement?' This touches on the Muslim belief that Muḥammad will be allowed to intercede for Muslims on the Last Day, raising the problem of how the sins they have committed with be repaid. The Muslim denies that mediation necessarily involves atonement, allowing Slater to show that it logically does. Obviously baffled, 'the *Moonsiff* passed on very abruptly to the seventh question, and showed how keenly he felt the defeat he had just suffered by turning up his nose at it, and declaring it to be written in such bad Urdú as to be quite unintelligible' (pp. 3-4).

The exchange proceeds in the same manner, with the *moonsiff* covering his confusion by criticising Slater's Urdu, and Slater feeling increasingly confident that he has gained the upper hand.

When Slater and Smith call again a few days later, the *moonsiff*, who has been in his court rooms (his *cutcherry*), takes the list of questions from his pocket, showing how much they must disturb him even when he is working, and starts objecting about Question 5, which is: 'What circumstances could have led to the belief of all Christians, that Christ is both God and man?', which is again worded so as to put the person answering on the defensive. Slater succeeds in reducing the *moonsiff* to confusion (at least according to his account), and he moves on to Question 8: 'If (as you say) the Christian Scriptures have been corrupted, in what books, or in what age (previous to Muhammad) may we find a correct statement of Christian doctrine? Or has this been lost? The issue of the corruption of the Bible was repeatedly raised by Indian Muslims at this time, and a

few years after this private encounter it was to be the issue that halted the famous debate at Agra between Karl Gottlieb Pfander (one of whose works Slater gives to the *moonsiff*) and Raḥmatullāh Kairānavī. But the *moonsiff* reframes it in terms of abrogation rather than corruption:

> as the Law was abrogated by the Gospel, so was the Gospel by the Qurán. I [Slater] immediately denied the *as*. The Law was not abrogated but fulfilled. He affected not to understand the distinction. I quoted our Lord's express words, 'I came not to destroy, but to fulfil'. (p. 7)

The two argue about this without reaching common understanding, not least because Slater cites shades of difference in the meaning of words that the *moonsiff* does not acknowledge. The two part without reaching agreement.

At the end of his account, Slater comments on the polemical and *ad hominem* character of the *moonsiff*'s approach (though saying nothing of the character of his own questions) and complains that in his experience this is typical of Muslims:

> It [this encounter] is worth recording, inasmuch as it supplies a good specimen of the unprincipled manner in which the Mussulmans argue with us. The reasoning of the *Moonsiff* recorded above, is the reasoning of a man who has made up his mind not to be convinced. And this is the case with the majority of the *Mussulmans* with whom I have ever conversed. Argumentation will never convert them, but still it is necessary. Our plan, I think, should be to beat them out of every argument they have been accustomed to use against us, and then to commit their conversion, in faith and prayer, to the Holy Spirit of God. (p. 9)

Lurking behind Slater's confidence here can just be detected an acknowledgement that this kind of confrontational arguing serves no constructive purpose.

William O'Brien Smith's 1854 article 'Missions in Bengal (I & II)' is an eight-page report of his missionary activities among Hindus and Muslims. In it, he turns to the question of miracles in Islam, including a truly bizarre account reported in the Calcutta Persian newspaper *Iām-e-jehán-namá* of an incident in the small Muslim village of Kallykuram near Madras. There, employing the same confrontational strategy as Slater during his meetings with the *moonsiff*, Christian missionaries attempt to convert the locals by asking them either to embrace Christianity or to answer challenging questions. The Muslims ask the missionaries for an eight-day delay to allow them to prepare a response, and on the seventh night four darweshes arrive and answer the questions, but the missionaries remain unsatisfied.

Then, a darwesh beheads one of them and challenges the others to revive him. When they fail, the darwesh miraculously restores the missionary to life, leading many to convert to Islam, though some resist.

The Calcutta editor also records in the same day's paper another miracle, which he says he witnessed himself. It concerns a missionary who, while he was preaching near Entally in Calcutta, insults Islam in the course of praising Christianity. This prompts a dispute with the *maulvī* Mahummed Yassīn, and the two agree to cast slips bearing the names of Muḥammad and Christ into a fire and to believe in the one whose name is not consumed. Muḥammad's name remains unburnt but the missionary refuses to convert.

O'Brien Smith dismisses these stories as blatant falsehoods, and then turns to the point for which he is using them:

> Now, these impudent and barefaced fabrications refute themselves; for, leaving out of the question all other considerations, and arguing only on Mussulman grounds, and from the Quran, these pretended miracles can be easily disproved. Muhammed never claimed either for himself or his followers the power of working miracles. On the contrary, in more passages than one of the Quran, he distinctly disclaims miracles, declaring that God sent him, not to work miracles, but to preach [. ...] If so, then, neither can Muhammedans now expect miracles for the confirmation of their faith. In arguing with a Mussulman, I pressed him with this. He admitted the difficulty, but said he supposed that God must have sent angels in the form of Darweshes to the assistance of the Mussulmans of Kallykuram. (p. 376)

When he saw that these miracle stories were spreading around, O'Brien Smith says that he took action:

> I wrote to the editor of the 'Iām-e-jehán-Namá' on the subject. My letter was merely a preliminary one, asking for further information as to names, places, and such matters. After a silence of some days, the editor had sent me a very civil answer, referring me to the editor of the 'Iam-ul-Akhbar' [a Madras paper], and furnishing me with a copy of the number in which the account of the Kallykuram miracle is given. In reference to his own article detailing the Entally miracle, he informs me that the Moulvie Mahummed Yassin is, he believes, to be found somewhere in Burdwan; and regrets that he, the editor, cannot furnish me with the name of the Missionary who consented to the test mentioned in the account of the miracle. He states also that he is only a chronicler of events; but that if I have anything to say on the subject of these miracles, he will insert my article in his paper. Of this permission I shall certainly avail myself, and report progress in my next communication. (p. 377)

In his second report, dated November 1853, O'Brien Smith returns to the controversy about the 'Kallykuram miracle'. His tone here is at times acerbic, and he accuses Muslim commentators of 'unprincipled interpretation' and observes that numerous books 'are filled with these wondrous fables' (p. 461), meaning miracles supposedly performed by Muḥammad but of dubious authenticity.

Thomas Williams's 1892 tract, *A summary of the history of Muhammad*, which is eight pages long, centres on Muḥammad's years in Medina between 622 and 632. The concluding section, entitled 'Jesus Christ and Muhammad compared', contrasts the actions and characters of the two figures.

The work begins with a series of recollections of incidents in Muḥammad's life that reveal him as a weak and imperfect man: 'We read of "dacoities" [banditry] in Burma. Muhammad's "dacoities" were just the same [. ...] These dacoities were attempted against the Mekkan caravans, but failed, so no loot was obtained', and then refers to Muḥammad's marriage to ʿĀ'isha: 'Just before the second dacoity, Muhammad married Ayesha, Abu Bakr's daughter. Her age then was ten, and her husband's fifty two' (p. 1). These disparaging accounts are followed by references to Muḥammad having people murdered, his raids and battles, and his growing harem of wives and concubines (p. 4). At the end, he denounces Muḥammad for continuing pagan practices when he entered Mecca as victor, because he

> left one idol, the famous [...] Black stone. This he himself reverenced in the usual style. The insane and idolatrous circuits of the Kaaba, and places in the vicinity of Mekka that were wont to be made, Muhammad himself continued and enjoined on his followers in the Koran. (p. 6)

In the comparison between the two religious leaders that follows this, Williams shows how Muḥammad's birth and actions are inferior to those of Jesus, and he also identifies him as more cowardly: 'Jesus to save Himself did not run away, but to be the Atonement for the World's sin, committed Himself to his enemies. Muhammad to save his life, ran away from Mekka to Medina' (p. 7). He goes on to list how Muḥammad violated many of the Ten Commandments (p. 8).

At the beginning of the tract, Williams acknowledges that he is indebted for most of his information to Sir William Muir (*CMR* 24, 666-96), though with the exception of this final part: 'For this comparison the Rev. T. Williams is responsible' (p. 6).

SIGNIFICANCE

The SPG clearly considered Slater's *Narrative* important enough to be published:

> The following interesting Report by the Rev. S. Slater, in charge of the Calcutta Hindustani Mission, maintained by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, was ordered to be printed at the Quarterly Meeting of the Committee of Correspondence held on Monday, the 5th March, 1849. (*Colonial Church Chronicle* 3, p. iii)

It is listed (without comment) in *Trübner's American and Oriental literary record. A monthly register*, London, 1867, p. 403, and in the *Catalogue of the library of the India Office*, vol. 1, London, 1888, p. 480, though it does not seem to have influenced later works. This is maybe because it is only concerned with an encounter between two individuals and has no detailed theological or missionary apologetic to offer, and certainly nothing original (save for one point, below). Another possibility is that Slater's general experience with the *moonsiff* was seen as typical of Christian-Muslim encounters.

Given its nature as a report in a missionary journal with a limited readership, it is not surprising that O'Brien Smith's 'Missions in Bengal (I & II)' does not seem to have been widely noticed.

Nothing is known about any reaction from Muslims to Williams's extremely polemical tract, though in an article entitled 'Has Islam a future?', which appeared in the American journal *Arena* in 1892, Thomas P. Hughes indicates that it was widely circulated among Indian Muslims:

> The writer states that the matter for his tract has been taken from Sir William Muir's *Life of Mahomet* whose 'statements', he adds, 'have never been shown to be wrong, and thirty years is ample time for testing them'. Mr. Williams surely ought not to be ignorant of the fact that a learned Muhammadan, Mr. Syed Ameer Ali, published, in London, an English life of Muhammad, in which he pointed out that Sir William Muir's interpretation of the motives and character of the Prophet of Arabia were neither true nor just. And yet Mr. Williams' pamphlet, the sole object of which is to attack the character of Muhammad, and to institute a comparison between the life of Muhammad and that of the Lord Jesus Christ, appears to have been scattered broadcast among the English-speaking Muhammadans of Northern India, and for their special conversion. This method of dealing with Muhammadanism is so reprehensible that it demands attention. (pp. 534-5)

Hughes was clearly intent on criticising any kind of polemical, hostile approach to the evangelisation of Muslims, especially with respect to the

person of Muḥammad. His article is proof that Williams's tract must have reached the United States (where Hughes had settled), but its absence from any other publication – perhaps because of its size, and obvious indebtedness to Muir – suggests that its impact outside India was minimal.

Unless their authors exaggerated for effect, these three publications all attest to the raw and acerbic nature of encounters between Christian missionaries and Muslims. Their use of arguments that were mostly well known from earlier works indicates that they were expressly intended as tests of the other's debating ability rather than as enquiries that might arrive at new understanding. The general relationship that they indicate must have been combative and unyielding, with both sides fixed in their own positions and only interested in exposing the deficiency of the other.

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W. O'Brien Smith, 'Missions in Bengal II – Calcutta', *Colonial Church Chronicle and Missionary Journal* 7 (June 1854) 454-62; 011569750 (digitised version available through Hathi Trust)

T. Williams, *A summary of the history of Muhammad from his running away to Medina up to his death*, Rewari, Punjab Province (present day Haryana): France Press, 1892

Anthony McRoy

Jani Alli

Janni Alli, Jahni Ali Sahib

DATE OF BIRTH 1838
PLACE OF BIRTH State of Hyderabad
DATE OF DEATH 15 October 1894
PLACE OF DEATH Calcutta

BIOGRAPHY

Jani (or Janni) Alli was born into a Persian family in Hyderabad State, India, in 1838. His father was a merchant and his family were devout Shīʿī Muslims. Alli enrolled in the Church Missionary Society's (CMS) Anglo-Vernacular School (later known as Noble College) in Masulipatam where the family lived, and became the 312th of the headmaster Robert Noble's (1809-65) converts when he was baptised in 1855 (CMS, '853 'Alli, Jani'). After graduating, he worked as an assistant teacher for two years in Noble's school, before entering government employment. He moved to England in 1873 as a non-collegiate at the University of Cambridge and was admitted to Corpus Christi College on 1 October 1874. Initially interested in studying to be a lawyer, he switched to study theology. He graduated in 1877 and was ordained deacon at St Paul's Cathedral, London, on 27 May that year, and priest in Bombay on 22 December 1878. In 1877, 'he became the first Indian engaged as a missionary by the CMS and was appointed to Bombay' (Kerr, 'Alli, Jani'), where he established a Christian hostel. He returned to England in late 1882 and resigned from his position on 3 October. The following year, he was awarded his Cambridge MA and rejoined the CMS on 6 November as a European missionary. He was dispatched to Calcutta as the first full-time CMS missionary there to work among Muslim communities. He visited England one last time in 1892 and died in Calcutta on 15 October 1894.

Alli was particularly remembered for the contributions he made at the Church Congress on Mohammedanism in Croydon in 1877 and the Second Decennial Missionary Conference of 1882-3, which 'raised the priority of Anglican mission work in Bengal', for challenging the inequality between indigenous and foreign missionaries, and for encouraging his fellow missionaries to engage with 'Islam as the religious context of their Christian educational and preaching work' (Kerr, 'Alli, Jani').

Some of Alli's personal correspondence and printed documents relating to him can be found in the CMS Archives at the Cadbury Research Special Collections, University of Birmingham, particularly in the files pertaining to him (CMS/B/OMS/C I3 O7/1-9), but also in holdings pertaining to his colleagues such as the papers of Arthur William Poole (1852-85, CMS/ACC340).

MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION

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R.D. Paul, *Lights in the world. Life sketches of Maulvi Safdar Ali and the Rev. Janni Alli*, Lucknow, 1969

WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Pamphlets and addresses

DATE 1875-92
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

Jani Alli left a small number of speeches, pamphlets and letters, most of which were delivered, composed or printed during his three visits to England.

Evidence of one of the earliest of these can be found in a pamphlet entitled *Conference on missions to the Mohammedans held at the Church*

Missionary House, Salisbury Square, on the 20th and 21st of October, 1875, which contains quotations from a speech Alli made at that conference at the invitation of the chairman, Captain Francis Cornwallis Maude (later Colonel, 1828-1900). In it, he first mentions that there were Muslim students at the Anglo-Vernacular School he attended in his youth and then turns to the topic of missionary sympathy for Muslims, which had been remarked upon by a previous speaker. He expresses his disappointment at and disagreement with statements made by the Revd Robert Bruce (who had worked in Persia), who had made sweeping comments about the character of 'Oriental' peoples, and he notes that he is affected by Bruce's comments because he is from both the East and Persia. (Here Bruce interjects to apologise to Alli for the offence he has caused and to clarify his comments.)

Continuing his speech, Alli argues that the perception that Eastern peoples have a 'roaming character' stems from the overly high expectations and harsh judgements of missionaries who come from a civilisation that has embraced Christianity and made improvements based on its teachings for over a millennium. When missionaries make judgements about converts from abroad, he urges them to remember the failings of those who became Christians in early times and goes on to argue that, since foreign converts were brought up in other religious traditions, they require the missionaries' assistance and support. In addition, he notes that missionaries are often quick to baptise would-be converts, maybe at too premature a stage.

In the same vein, he challenges the practice of street preaching, noting that the feelings of Muslims who are often passionate about their religion should be taken into account. Loving one's neighbour and showing them sympathy may, he argues, allow a great deal of good to be done without the need to preach. He draws his short speech to a close by observing that perseverance and faith are needed when evangelising amongst Muslim populations and that Muslims will respond if they are shown love and sympathy.

In 1877, Alli gave an address at the Church of England Congress on Mohammedanism in Croydon. The text was printed in *The official report of the seventeenth annual meeting of the Church Congress held at Croydon, 1877*, in which it occupies approximately five pages. Eugene Stock wrote in *The history of the Church Missionary Society* (London, 1899, vol. 3, p. 13) that the address was the main attraction of the congress and in response to the audience's positive response was allowed to exceed its alloted time. Alli begins by noting, with reference to contemporary scholarship, that Islam

and Christianity are closely linked, and that, according to this scholarship 'Islam is an ally and not an enemy to Christianity' (Wilks, 'Rev. Jani Alli', p. 44). Whilst he notes that Islam does good, and provides some examples of this, he is nevertheless careful to clarify that, though Islam has provided many with knowledge of God, it has failed to inspire them to love Him. Alli goes on to compare Christianity and Islam, noting first the similarities between them, including their monotheism, beliefs about God's attributes, ideas about idolatry and use of the Old and New Testaments. Then, in a much longer section, he turns to the differences, among which he notes disagreement about the divinity of Christ, the crucifixion, atonement and original sin. He ends with a short discussion of the mission of Muḥammad, noting the importance of Muḥammad's reforms, which destroyed idolatry and returned the Arabs to belief in one God, and refers to him as 'one of the greatest men that ever lived' (p. 46).

Turning to the topic of whether Islam is an ally of Christianity, Alli argues that, since Islam denies the divinity of Christ and rejects those who follow him, to recognise it as an ally is equivalent to accepting that 'Jesus was an imposter [...] and the New Testament a Book of Fables' (p. 46). Neither does Islam prepare people to accept Christianity, but actually makes them opposed to it. In the final and longest part of his address, Alli asks whether Islam can 'satisfy the wants of man's spiritual nature' (p. 46) and instantly denies this possibility because it focuses primarily on externals – Muslims observe their laws strictly, but their religion cannot satisfy spiritual desires once a person's conscience is awakened.

Next Alli turns to the topic of mission. He argues that divisions within Christianity have made mission to Muslims difficult and that 'Christian Missionaries should bury their differences, and present an unbroken front to the enemy' (p. 47). He calls on missionaries to have sympathy for those among whom they work, noting that Islam's success can be attributed to the equal treatment it has afforded to all the people it has subjugated and converted. He also urges missionaries to persevere, noting that, since a small numbers of Muslims have already converted, there is hope for conversions amongst Muslims in India. He closes his address on this hopeful note, quoting from General Gerard Lake (1744-1808) to suggest once again that converts may be made amongst the Muslim populations of India.

Two annual letters from Alli, one dated 29 November 1878 (CMS/B/OMS/C I3 O7/8) and the other December 1879 (CMS/B/OMS/C I3 O7/9), each four pages long, shed light on his early activities as a missionary. The November 1878 letter covers his first year in Bombay following his graduation, ordination and return to India in 1877. It is divided into four sections,

in which he first writes a little about himself and expresses gratitude to those who have supported him, and then goes on to talk about the hostel for boys he has opened, the schooling of the boys and the visits he has made. He notes that the boys in the hostel are catechised at what he calls 'family prayers' each evening and talks about their Bible classes. He also writes about acquaintances he has made in Bombay, saying that he visited the home of one well-educated young Muslim and discussed religion with his family and their *maulvī* for two hours. He met the young Muslim a few more times but the *maulvī* suspected that he was about to abandon Islam and began to obstruct Alli from meeting him. He also mentions another Muslim enquirer who had been reading the New Testament with him each day for several months.

The second letter, from December 1879, covers Alli's second year in Bombay. It is also divided into four sections: on the hostel, schools, enquiries, and visits to people in their homes. He records that he had started a small school for Muslim boys, which by the middle of the year was attended by an average of 20 pupils, though after the Muslim teacher went on leave the number dropped to two or three. Alli also mentions several Muslims whom he had been meeting over the year, though one had been long absent and had only just returned from a trip to his village, while another, who had studied with Alli for several months, had suddenly been engaged by a missionary from the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, after which they had only met a few times.

A short pamphlet by Alli entitled *To the supporters of missionary work amongst Mohammedans* is preserved among the papers of the missionary in India, Arthur William Poole. Including a one-and-a-half page report and call for donations from Alli, it lacks a date, though it was most probably written after 1883, which is referred to in the past tense, and perhaps before Poole's death in 1885. In it, Alli notes that, although missionaries have experienced difficulties working among Muslims, they are 'accessible' in Calcutta (where Alli was working when he wrote). He notes the enrolment of 217 Muslim students in his mission's middle and high schools in Calcutta and records that several have come to 'know Jesus Christ to be their only Saviour; but [...] lack the courage and need the Grace of God to enable them [...] to make an open profession of their faith' (p. 1). Furthermore, through the schools, missionaries have been able to access the students' families and social circles, and have preached to them. He claims that the school system has reduced anti-Christian prejudices, and notes that missionaries have held two discussions at a mosque with the *maulvī*s and often visit their students' homes to care for sick family

members, offer advice and pray for them. He says that some families have asked for a hostel for the boys to be built, and for this reason he writes to request money (30,000 reals or £2,000) for a building that will act not only as a hostel but also as the middle school, for which a rented house has been used up to now. The rest of the pamphlet includes messages from prominent figures in support of Alli and details of where contributions can be sent.

In 1888, Alli published a 12-page essay in the *Indian Church Quarterly Review* entitled 'Mohammedanism, with special reference to the controversy raised by Canon Taylor's paper read before the last Church Congress'. At the 1887 Church Congress held in Wolverhampton, Canon Isaac Taylor (1829-1901; *CMR* 17, 307-15) had delivered a speech 'on the success of Islam's mission in Africa in comparison to the failing Christian missionary efforts there' (Kateman, *Muḥammad ʿAbduh*, p. 90). Following a request, presumably from the editor of the journal, Alli then composed this paper in response to Taylor's speech and the controversy it stirred up. Its theme and approach are similar to his 1877 address, though here his arguments are significantly expanded.

Alli starts with the differences between Christianity and Islam. He argues that others (by whom he evidently means Taylor) are preoccupied with the differences between Christian and Muslim practices, though they should instead focus on the essential aspects of a religion. He identifies the two claims made in Taylor's speech: that Islam might be transformed into Christianity; and that it is an imperfect form of Christianity. In order to address the second of these, which is a theme throughout the essay, Alli first provides a brief description of Islam, focusing on the Qur'an, Hadith and Sunna, the Six Articles of Belief and five practical obligations, which, alongside the promotion of monotheism and rejection of idolatry in Islam, may be viewed as something good and not anti-Christian. He goes on to describe the nature of God in Islam, and notes the absence of conceptions of sinfulness and love for God. Then he turns to the person of Muḥammad, whom he describes as a great man who had 'good intentions and pure motives' ('Mohammedanism', p. 257), as is illustrated by his demands that his followers should shun idolatry and refrain from vices such as theft. Alli attributes the rejection of Christianity in Islam to corrupt practices in the churches, such as the worship of saints, martyrs, angels and Mary, and the use of images and relics. In fact, Islam was originally a reaction to aspects of Christianity that appeared to be idolatrous to the 'unsophisticated mind' of Muḥammad (pp. 257-8). Turning to the missionary success of Islam, Alli denies common Christian tropes such as the idea that Islam

has been spread through conquest and violence, and focuses instead on Islam's inclusion of its followers into a 'world-wide brotherhood' whose members are given responsibilities, including the need to undertake missionary activity (pp. 258-9). This tendency towards inclusivity, which goes beyond social, national and ethnic distinctions, and the equality of opportunity that it offers, differs from current Christian missions, which set up boundaries between Europeans and local people. Furthermore, Islam is all-encompassing and influences every aspect of life whereas Christianity has become divorced from daily life. In Alli's words 'Islam [...] has acquired a mighty power, and unbounded influence by the amount of truth it contains, by wonderfully assimilating nations and races [...] and by infusing into these personal responsibility and zeal for the honour and worship of the one true God' (p. 261). Emphasising that Islam has achieved a great deal of good and that Muḥammad was sent by God with a purpose, Alli tells his readers that they have no right to denounce the faith or abuse the Prophet. Although Islam is imperfect, Alli notes that it has provided support for millions of people over the centuries.

Following this, Alli turns to the topic of sin, arguing that Islam has provided its followers with a knowledge of what sin is 'but has not taught them the nature of it' (p. 262). Although Islam has a concept of atonement and concepts of punishment for sin, he argues that Muslims are not given any way to repent, unlike in Christianity. But Muslims are not fools, and they will not easily accept the arguments of missionaries, especially when the missionaries focus on doctrines such as the Trinity that 'do not in themselves save a sinner' (p. 262). Alli gives a short explanation of Christianity tailored for a Muslim audience and interlaced with Islamic terminology, noting, for instance, that the idol the human worships is *self*, that God's justice 'will not allow Him to become *Al-Afu* [*al-ʿAfū*, 'the Effacer of sins']' and that 'man must make *tauba* – turn away altogether from sin' (p. 262).

For Alli, 'Christianity takes up and carries [Islam] to its completeness [...] Christianity steps in and supplies the deficiencies [of Islam] and thus brings it to perfection' (p. 264). The deficiencies of Islam, he points out, have resulted in the creation of numerous Islamic religious orders that are trying to find a way to return to and know God. A route may be offered by introducing them to Christianity.

At the end of his essay, Alli writes that Christ bridges the gap experienced by Muslims between God and humankind. Christ fulfils the requirements of Islam: he is a mediator who can intercede on the day of judgement, he is sent by God, he is a prophet and he is sinless. Alli expands upon this by stating, and in the process correcting, qur'anic evidence for

the importance of Christ. He offered perfect *kaffara* and it was the union of the spirit of God (*Ruh-Alla*) with sinless humanity, and the union of Godhead and manhood in Christ, which was imperfectly expressed in the Islamic concepts of *tauba*, *kaffara* and *al-afu*. The problems inherent in these concepts as they are perceived in Islam are solved by the God-man nature of Christ, his death and resurrection, and his assurance of humankind's redemption. In this way, the Gospel can fulfil all the spiritual needs of a Muslim and, as the means to salvation for those who believe, is superior to Islam. Alli concludes: 'When the Spirit of God convicts a Musulman of sin, he cannot but accept that Gospel, which alone shows him how and where his sins could be forgiven, and be united to God, in which Islam has failed signally' (p. 264).

The text of an address entitled *Work among the Mohammedans in Calcutta*, 12 pages long, that Alli delivered at Monkton Combe Junior School, Bath, on 15 July 1892, during his third trip to England, is also preserved among Arthur William Poole's papers (addressed to J.G. Poole). The first two pages include a general introduction, an introduction to Alli and his life, and the start of the address, which focuses on how Alli's mission to Calcutta began. He notes the difficulties of working in India caused by the religious and racial tensions prevalent there but argues that Islam is a 'purer and high religion' than Hinduism (p. 5). As in his other works, he notes that Muslims are monotheists and not guilty of idolatry but, although they worship God they do so 'without knowing anything about Him' (p. 5). He notes that Muslims have 99 names for God, each of which encapsulates an attribute, although no term conveys the idea that God is just or loving. The absence of these qualities from the Godhead, he argues, is the primary difference between Christianity and Islam. It results in Islam lacking a conception of God as father and more importantly that humankind are God's children.

Following this brief exploration of the differences between Christianity and Islam, Alli gives an account of his mission in Calcutta. During his first half year there, he spent his time visiting Muslim families and prominent Muslim individuals, such as those working for the government. When the last king of Awadh, Wajid Ali Shah (r. 1847-57), was exiled by the East Indian Company, he and around 6,000 of his followers set up residence near Calcutta. After getting to know some of the king's noblemen, Alli secured permission to establish a school and, following the king's death in 1887, he gained access to his palace and was given permission for a female missionary from the *zenana* missions to give lessons to one of the king's granddaughters there.

Alli records conflict between Muslims in Calcutta ('Suni' and 'Shea'), who called upon him to help settle their differences. In this capacity, he visited Wajid Ali Shah's heir, probably Birjis Qadr (1845-93), to invite him to adjudicate with him, and through this acquaintance he secured some support for the school, including use of the former king's audience chamber for a prize-giving ceremony and a donation of prizes.

Alli turns to other mission schools in Calcutta, such as a preparatory school for Calcutta University and a school exclusively for Muslims. He details the Christian instruction given in these schools, starting with recitation of prayers and basic Bible passages for young students, progressing to Bible studies in native languages as students advanced, and finally Bible studies in English. In this way, he says, the students become interested in and inquisitive about Christianity, so that, in Alli's words, 'More than one boy has openly said that he has no longer faith in his own religion. And one or two have come forward to be baptized, but there are difficulties in the way' (p. 10). The education provided by the schools has also led to frequent discussions about religion more widely and has facilitated sales of Hindi, Persian and Arabic translations of the Bible, though it has also resulted in conflict. In addition, some students were withdrawn from the schools following a campaign in the newspapers organised by parents who had discovered that the Bible was being taught. In response, the missionaries put out their own articles in local newspapers asking readers to give proof that the Bible was incorrect, if they disapproved of it being read, or inviting their adversaries to public discussion. Alli records that, since there was no reply to the missionaries' campaign, they continued to teach the Bible and find new pupils to replace those boys who were removed.

Recently, Alli continues, after requests from the students the missionaries had begun to engage in public debates with local *maulvī*s. The two sides met at a mosque and the missionaries had twice defeated the *maulvī*s. In Alli's words, the *maulvī*s 'were not able to gainsay what we stated in defence of Christianity; and of the superiority of Christianity to Mohammedanism' (p. 11). One student had even engaged in the discussion, defending Christianity rather than his own religion. Alli then goes on to record several other stories about students on whom the missionaries' teachings had left a deep impression, including one who, when he was sick, called upon the Christian God rather than Muḥammad.

Next, Alli turns to his current plans to build a hostel in Calcutta for some of the students. In the middle of this, he notes the risk that the school could be closed at short notice and certainly would be if they baptised one

of their students, since it is in the Muslim quarter and housed in a building rented from a Muslim.

Alli ends the address by returning to a point that has appeared intermittently throughout, which is that his stories indicate that God is blessing the mission with opportunities.

Alli's contention throughout his works is that Islam is superior to other non-Christian religions and is perhaps even a lesser form of Christianity, though it is imperfect because it does not offer its followers knowledge of sin, redemption and, ultimately, the love of God. In this, and like some of his contemporaries (including Isaac Taylor, mentioned above), he holds a positive view of Islam, though he differs from others in focusing on the 'essentials' of Christianity and Islam rather than on their worldly and moral practices. Moreover, he argues throughout his works that Muslims should be treated with respect and sympathy, and that to disparage them for their differences from European Christians will not aid missionaries in making converts.

In the background of much of Alli's work are references to his attempts to make converts. Some of his speeches and written works accentuate the difficulties he encountered, presumably as a ploy to arouse the sympathy and support of British donors. But his accounts are nevertheless important for understanding Christian-Muslim relations in Calcutta and Bombay during his time there.

SIGNIFICANCE

Through his speeches and writings Alli offered CMS missionaries insights into a religious world about which they would otherwise know little. His speeches at the Congress on Mohammedanism in 1877 and the Second Decennial Missionary Conference in 1882-3 appear to have been highlights of the meetings. He is referred to as the man who inspired Henry Perrott Parker (1852-88), later bishop of Eastern Equatorial Africa, to undertake missionary work (Stock, *The history of the Church Missionary Society*, pp. 418, 462), and it was his speech at the Decennial Conference that led to the founding of a mission to Muslims in Calcutta. In this way, he exerted some influence on the direction of CMS missions to India between the 1870s and 1890s.

Alli did not exert any strong or lasting influence on the CMS and its approach to mission among Muslims. Other than entries in a few biographical works and Rajaiah David Paul's biography from 1969, his life and work have received little scholarly attention.

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London Missionary Society

The London Missionary Society (LMS) was formed in 1795. In principle, it was interdenominational, though it was mainly Congregationalist in its outlook and membership. It sent its first missionary to India three years later in 1798 (M.A. Sherring, *The history of Protestant missions in India*, London, 1875, p. 76). Here, the works of two of its missionaries, William Campbell (1799-1878) and James Kennedy (1815-99), will be discussed.

William Campbell was born in Old Kilpatrick, Dumbartonshire, and studied in Glasgow. After ordination in 1823, he joined the LMS in 1824 and was posted to Bangalore with his wife Anne. He worked among Canarese-speaking people in a majority Tamil-speaking area, establishing a school and a Christian village. His wife's poor health compelled her to return to Britain in 1832, followed by Campbell in 1835 (Lovett, *History*, vol. 2, pp. 105-8). He published *British India in relation to the decline of Hindooism* in 1839. From 1841, he worked as a pastor in Croydon and died in Islington in 1878 (*Register*, p. 24).

James Kennedy was born in Aberfeldy in 1815. He studied theology in Glasgow and joined the LMS in 1837. He was ordained as a Congregationalist minister in Aberdeen in 1838 and left Britain for India on 15 September 1838. He arrived in Calcutta in January 1839 and went on to Benares on the Ganges. He married Margaret Walker (1814-91) on 1 May 1840 (*Register*, p. 44).

According to his memoirs, Kennedy was mainly engaged in evangelism and pastoral work, and also the mission's education system and mission tours. Owing to ill health, he had to return to England in May 1850 and remained there for two years. He spent the years 1858 and 1859 in Ceylon recovering from another bout of ill health and was compelled to return to England once more from early 1862 until 1865. He spent the next few years engaged in work in Benares and Almora before being appointed to a new post in the village of Ranikhet in May 1869. In the eight years he was stationed there, he worked on developing the infrastructure of the village, establishing schools and evangelising. Finally, he and his family left Ranikhet on medical advice at the end of 1876 and departed finally from India in February the following year.

When he returned to Britain, Kennedy became pastor of the Congregational church in Portobello, Edinburgh. He retired to Acton, West London,

and, after his wife's death in 1891, he wrote a *Memoir of Margaret Stephen Kennedy* (1892). He died in Acton in 1899 (*Register*, p. 44).

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Works concerning Islam

DATE 1837-91

ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

Here, *British India in relation to the decline of Hindooism* and 'Mohammedanism in India', a short article that contains much the same material, by William Campbell will be discussed, and also four books by James

Kennedy, *The great Indian mutiny of 1857, Christianity and the religions of India*, *Life and work in Benares and Kumaon, 1839-1877* and *Memoir of Margaret Stephen Kennedy*.

William Campbell's *British India in relation to the decline of Hindooism* (1839), 596 pages long and divided into 27 chapters, focuses on the contemporary socio-political and religious contexts of India, and Christian missions and their work. In ch. 18 (pp. 357-70), entitled 'Cuddapah', the town where Campbell was first stationed, he refers to tense relations between the missionaries and Muslims in 1832 'when so many plots were formed, throughout the peninsula, by the Mahommedans, to destroy the British power' (p. 363). During the Shīʿī observances in the month of Muḥarram, a dead pig was discovered in a mosque. This led to a riot in which the mob sought vengeance against the resident missionary and other Christians. The district sub-collector, Charles Edward MacDonald, attempted to persuade them to disperse, but they killed him before British troops could arrive to quell the riot. Campbell offers two items of commentary on these events. First, he suggests that the pig's body was placed in the mosque by 'some disaffected Mussulman to exasperate his people against the Christians, and against the government' (p. 364) and, second, he predicts that, even though only seven rioters have so far been executed, many more will yet receive justice for their role in the murder of MacDonald, whose stalling of the mob, together with the intervention of the military, he describes as a 'gracious interposition of Providence' (p. 365).

Campbell recounts a similar story in ch. 24 (pp. 476-92), entitled 'Government support for idolatry'. During Ramaḍān 1832, Muslims in Bangalore arrived at their *eidgah* (a small shrine) to find that 'a pig had been killed there, that its blood had been sprinkled over the place to pollute it, that its head was stuck upon the parapet and the whole was surmounted by a cross' (p. 486). Blaming Christians for this desecration, the Muslims attacked a Roman Catholic chapel, though it was saved by military intervention. It subsequently transpired that the perpetrator was a Muslim. Campbell notes that, in response, the government debated whether the missionaries should be exiled from Bangalore and decided in the end to erect a new *eidgah*. He thinks that this was support for 'idolatry and Mahommedan delusion' (p. 487) and, by putting Christians in charge of the erection of the new *eidgah*, it was also an afront to them and an act that degraded Christianity. The result of these decisions, he argues, was that Muslims became emboldened since they regarded the decision as cowardly.

Shortly after the *eidgah* had been completed a rumour emerged that a pig's head was buried in its foundations. The Muslims vowed to destroy it, so the government was forced to put a guard on it and the ongoing turmoil meant that the missionaries were unable to carry out their usual work. Campbell also records a further conspiracy against the Europeans by Muslims, and its suppression. He regards this as providential, because it provided a means for God to expose the colonial government's policy and deal a triumphant blow against Islam, when those responsible for the conspiracy were executed and others exiled.

In ch. 20 (pp. 397-408), on the town of Belgaum, Campbell refers to Muslims converting to Christianity. Muslims have so far been opponents of Christian mission, causing him to comment: 'It is very pleasing to hear [...] that some are renouncing their enmity, and their delusion, and are taking upon them the reproach of Christ' (p. 407). He also defends the lack of any collective attempt to convert Muslims, noting that they are a minority, scattered throughout the country and speaking a different language from their Hindu counterparts.

Ch. 21 (pp. 409-23), on Mysore, includes a section on the Muslim rulers Hyder Ali (1720-82) and his son Tipu (1751-99). Campbell describes the father as '[b]old, powerful, valiant, ambitious and enterprising' (p. 419), but emphasises that both he and his son used bribes and various forms of persecution against Hindus to force them to convert to Islam. He describes at length the atrocities they committed to spread their religion, and notes that they used these methods to maintain their power. In contrast, Christian mission has been spread by the use of texts, sermons and education, and has been guided by the Spirit rather than being perpetrated through the use of weapons. Campbell contrasts 'the lust and brutality of their Mahommedan rulers' (p. 422) with the kindness, compassion and benevolence of Christian rule and the meekness, patience, love, peace and gentleness of the gospel. All of this leads him to conclude that Mysore is the most 'important and interesting sphere of missionary labour [...] to be found on the face of the earth' (p. 423).

'Mohammedanism in India', a short paper only seven pages long that focuses on uprisings during the month of Muḥarram in 1832, had appeared in *The Christian keepsake and missionary annual 1837* (pp. 27-34), two years before *British India in relation to the decline of Hindooism*. It covers many of the same incidents, as well as revealing the same attitude towards Islam, which at the beginning Campbell calls a 'system of error and imposture' (p. 27). He focuses first on the Muḥarram celebrations in



Illustration 15. A Muḥarram procession

India in general, providing a brief explanation of their origins as a Shīʿī memorial observance for the two grandsons of Muḥammad, the martyrs 'Houssein and Hoossein' (p. 27). He describes the mourning and the festivities, the strange dress, dancing, fighting between the adherents of Houssein and Hoosein, feats of strength and fireworks. He then turns to the uprisings in 1832 and records how the discharge of Muslims from the army inflamed tensions. He argues that Christianity and Christian missions were subject to much criticism from Muslims, and he judges 'that the English government were determined to employ force in the propagation of their faith' (p. 29). Though he does not describe the origins of the uprising at Cuddapah and the murder of Macdonald as he records them in *British India*, he does give an account of the uprising itself. He then turns to the uprising at Bangalore, which he also includes in the later work. He describes the *eidgah* as a contemptible 'small and dilapidated wall' (p. 30) but argues that, as a shrine of the Muslims' religion, it 'ought to have been respected' (p. 30). As in *British India*, he describes the discovery of a pig's head and notes the revulsion Muslims feel towards swine.

He also describes the destruction of the Catholic chapel, which he merely mentions in *British India*, and the restoration of peace, before moving on to criticise the government's response. Much of this closely follows the corresponding section of *British India*, though it includes less detail. He next turns to the conspiracy that he describes in *British India*.

It began when a Muslim fakir was able to seduce numerous Muslims in the British forces and use them to stage an uprising. This was supported not only by Muslim soldiers but also by Muslim servants: 'proclamations had been circulated far and wide, denouncing Christianity and a Christian government, calling upon all the faithful to rally around the crescent, and establish their own religion and their own rule' (p. 33). But it was put down and peace was restored:

> Mohammedanism was laid prostrate in the dust, and, as though Divine Providence had determined [...] to shew that no resource of its own, and no favours granted by others, could preserve it from destruction; one calamity has come upon it after another, and every attempt to rise has only sunk it in deeper disgrace and degradation. (p. 33)

Campbell closes with a declaration of the need to double efforts to evangelise Muslims, reflecting that redemption and the deliverance of Muslims is close at hand, and noting that the situation of government attempts to protect Islam and the decay of the religion 'cannot fail to excite our liveliest solicitudes for the unhappy victims of its iniquitous delusion' (p. 34).

In both these works, Campbell appears to see little good in Islam. He portrays it as an obstacle to British rule, which he implicitly regards as enlightening and civilising, and to Christianity, though he believes it is on the verge of withering away.

James Kennedy's *The great Indian mutiny of 1857. Its causes, features and results* is a short 70-page work without chapter or section divisions, which was published in 1858. Focusing on the Indian Uprising of 1857, Kennedy starts with a description of the military, mentioning that the majority of the cavalry are Muslims, and then explores the character of Muslims more generally. He notes Muslim religious and political disdain for the British but suggests that this is misplaced since, if the British had not arrived in India, Muslim power 'would have passed over to fresher and manlier races' (p. 3) anyway. Since Muslims show clear antipathy towards the British, he argues, they should not be expected to 'like us, and aid in the maintenance of our rule' (p. 3). Although they enrol in the civil and military services, their loyalty is weak and they join in rebellion not because of personal insult but because their lands are dominated by non-Muslims and they have the idea engrained within them that Muslims should hate Europeans. Kennedy notes that, in areas where Muslims gained the upper hand during the Uprising, even those who were previously in British service massacred men, women and children, who were killed 'for no other reason than that they were Christians' (p. 4).

Kennedy returns to the topic of Muslims when he explores the origins of the Uprising. He notes that some commentators have sought to attribute the rebellion entirely to Muslim intrigue and their desire to expel the British and establish their own rule. Whilst he admits that Muslims have been the bitterest enemies of the British, he also notes that it is impossible (at the time of writing) to determine the extent to which the Mughal Emperor Bahadur Shah II (r. 1837-57) was responsible, although it is clear that he gave his support to the rebels and led them after they appeared in Delhi.

Kennedy identifies a number of causes of the Uprising and therefore does not blame Muslims alone. Indeed, he notes that the majority of the rebels were Hindus and that 'It is inconceivable that they can have become enamoured of Muhammadan rule' (p. 17). Ultimately, whilst Muslim intrigue played a part, it 'would have been utterly fruitless, had there not been strong predisposing causes in the army [...] which would, in all probability, have led to the outbreak, had such intrigue never been employed' (p. 18). He next explores the possibility that Christian mission contributed to the outbreak, including rumours that the British intended to force Christianity upon the entire population. He also notes rumours that rifle cartridges and the paper for rifle cartridges had been prepared with the fat of pigs and cows, which Muslims and Hindus believed were being used in an attempt to destroy their castes and religions. He argues that, although there is little truth in these rumours, they were being used by many as a pretext to rebel. He also ridicules the idea that India is 'a land of singular moral perversity' (p. 25), where the mere idea that Muslims might be in actual contact with pig fat or Hindus with cow fat might be 'enough to call forth a howl of horror' (p. 26). He sees similarities in the feelings and backgrounds of Muslims and Hindus and detects shared causes for the Uprising.

He notes that different groups joined in the Uprising, including prisoners and villagers, among whom Muslims were only one part (p. 37), and repeats that the rebels were little concerned with oppression and bad government, but instead focused on Christianity, the European race, and the destruction of caste and Indian religions. Returning to the topic of cow and pig fat, he insists that the 'English have committed many violent deeds in India; but the very rumour of greased cartridges has more power in it than all of them together, to inflame the public mind against us' (pp. 44-5).

In his exploration of cruelty, Kennedy notes that Muslims 'are generally charged [...] with having been foremost in the abominable conduct pursued towards European women' (p. 53). He links Muslim cruelty to their

religious beliefs, noting that they are taught 'that infidels are detestable, and that their destruction, when practicable, is to God a most acceptable sacrifice' (p. 53). He goes so far as to state that, in fact, wherever Islam predominates lust and cruelty are observable as its followers' key characteristics.

In conclusion, he turns to the results of the Uprising. These include the destruction of confidence between Europeans and Indians, and also a better understanding of each other's 'true' character (p. 57-8). He is primarily concerned with the potential effects of the rebellion on mission and appears to suggest that the approach in India has been too soft and that religious change cannot be manifested without conflict.

Kennedy's *Christianity and the religions of India*, published in 1874, is a collection of nine essays, the seventh of which is entitled 'Muhammadanism contrasted with Christianity' (pp. 209-78). In this, he notes that, unlike Hinduism, Islam could not have existed without Judaism and Christianity. He observes that, like Christianity, which affirms Judaism and claims to take it further, Islam respects its forerunners whilst claiming to bring its own followers to a fuller understanding of God. This leads him to the main purpose of the chapter, which is to examine whether Islam is an improvement on Christianity or 'at least [...] more fitted to guide human beings [...] in the way to heaven' (p. 211). Kennedy acknowledges an extensive lineage of Christian misrepresentations of both Muḥammad and his religion, though, whilst Muḥammad and Islam have been misrepresented by Christians, Muslims are also guilty of over-glorifying their prophet – a situation exacerbated by the centuries-long collection of his biography. This context – Muslim praise and Christian misrepresentation – hinders inquiry. Kennedy argues that the Qur'an offers a good source for Muḥammad's character and should be used as a standard for other biographies.

Following this, Kennedy presents a biography of Muḥammad that reflects the type of biographical explorations given by his contemporaries, such as William Samuel Lilly (*CMR* 24, 880-8). He also records the contemporary context of Arabia and its history of monotheism – knowledge of which (amongst both Arabs and Muḥammad himself) he attributes to interactions with Jews and Christians. He argues that Muḥammad wanted to spread monotheism and believed that he had been divinely commissioned to do so, though this belief was probably the result of visions brought about by epilepsy. He then argues that, between the ages of 40 and 53 (the years when he attempted to proclaim his message in Mecca), Muḥammad provided an example of moral courage, but this is in stark contrast to the final ten years of his life (the years when he led

the community on Medina). In this later period, Muḥammad changed from being a persecuted preacher who used moral weapons to a prophet-king figure who used actual weapons to spread his creed. For Kennedy, Muḥammad's 'character deteriorated with his rising fortunes' (p. 216) and the once monogamous individual engaged in polygamy and concubinage. Nevertheless, Kennedy also asserts that Muḥammad had the qualities of a good leader, as is illustrated by the devotion shown to him, his keeping of simple habits, his love of his friends and his generosity. He 'adopted measures well adapted to secure success' (p. 216), though he could also act cruelly and treacherously towards those who refused to submit to him. He justified his conduct in the last ten years of his life by referring to divine revelation, causing Kennedy to assert that he rejects 'with horror the thought that God could have given his approbation to the life Muhammad was living' (p. 218). Muḥammad is thus an example of self-deception, a religious man whose religion was ignorant and misdirected.

Kennedy argues that Islam, like Muḥammad himself, has been unfairly treated by Christians. He acknowledges that it has done a lot of harm in the world and should be overthrown, but at the same time it has been 'employed in the Providence of God for the accomplishment of good' (p. 218), in support of which he instances Muḥammad's denunciation of idolatry, including within Christianity, arguing that the Christians of that time 'needed a scourge' (p. 219). Thus, Muḥammad can be seen as 'a reformer of great and crying abuses' (p. 219) and Islam has continued to rebuke corrupt Christianity wherever it has appeared. Although Kennedy believes that Muḥammad's perceptions of God were defective, he asserts that Muḥammad offered a great service to humanity by denouncing idols and proclaiming monotheism. Another positive contribution of Muḥammad was his account of Christ. Whilst the Qur'an, compiled from apocryphal stories, gives a false account, it also serves to place Christ higher than any other human being, ensuring that he is given great reverence amongst Muslims. Kennedy also praises the encouragement of arts, sciences and learning in early Islamic societies and even makes a link between the Reformation and the revival of learning that was made possible by Muslim scholarship.

Kennedy goes on to explain his reasons for believing that Muḥammad 'was not the Apostle of God, and that Muhammadanism is the deterioration not the improvement of the religion of the Bible' (p. 221) by discussing the composition and publication of the Qur'an. He affirms that the core of the text was derived from Muḥammad, recording in his footnotes that the defects in it are evidence of its genuineness. Concerning its contents,

Kennedy largely dismisses the miracles attributed to Muḥammad and also challenges the claims that Muḥammad prophesied conflict between the Persians and Romans (see Q 30:2-5) and the claims that his coming is predicted in the Bible (e.g. Q 7:157). Kennedy argues that, whilst numerous writers have commented on the exceptional style of the Qur'an, it ought instead to be judged by the truth of its contents. He notes that the language of the Qur'an does not translate well, commenting that the

> exceedingly rhapsodical and diffuse style of the Qurán, and its want of order, are very trying to the reader, but his patience and charity are perhaps tried most of all by Muhammad's incessant reiteration of his prophetic claims, and his fierce denunciation of all who reject them. (p. 225)

Despite this, Kennedy admits there are also well-written parts and interesting stories to be found in the text. He regards the Qur'an as primarily derived from Jewish and Christian materials, supplemented by Arabian traditions. Further, since the Qur'an claims to be a continuation of the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament, if it is to be considered to have a divine origin it 'must accord with the Old and New Testaments in its representation of the past, and in its leading principles, and [...] carry the revelation of God's character and will to a higher level' (p. 226). But if the Qur'an contradicts the Bible's narratives or principles, it should be rejected, though, in addition to agreeing with the Bible, it must also show that it is indeed superior, which it is not.

Kennedy refers to the work of William Muir (1819-1905; *CMR* 24, 666-96) to suggest that the Qur'an respects the Bible as divine revelation, but he departs from Muir in arguing that Muslims regard Jewish and Christian scriptures as corrupt. He challenges the Muslim claims, looking on the idea that Christians and Jews worked together to corrupt the Old Testament as part of some joint project against Islam as an historical impossibility. He then uses Muslim claims of biblical corruption to argue that the Qur'an, which 'assumes their authority, authenticity, and genuineness' must therefore be 'consequently false' (p. 229). After defending the Bible against these charges, he asks to what extent the Qur'an agrees with the Bible and repeats that it is indebted to the Bible and often repeats what it contains, though he also warns that, as a general rule, biblical versions are transmogrified to such an extent that 'their original simplicity, beauty, and verisimilitude are destroyed' (pp. 230-1). Qur'anic versions of biblical accounts contain contradictions, such as the lack of congruence with accounts of the death of Christ, which Kennedy attributes to Muḥammad's ignorance of the New Testament. He also explores the denial of Christ's divinity and

divine sonship by Muḥammad and within the Qur'an, and concludes that this betrays lack of correspondence with the Old and New Testaments.

Kennedy moves on to the question of whether the Qur'an is superior to the Bible. First, he explores the question of God's character, noting that Christians agree with much that the Qur'an has to say about God's unity. Nevertheless, there are key differences in the portrayal of God in the Bible and the Qur'an, where God's will, rather than his excellence, wisdom, righteousness or love, lies behind God's action. In other words, the Qur'an highlights God's status as sovereign of the world and as king, but not as moral sovereign and as father (pp. 236-7). Second, Kennedy gives a defence of the doctrine of the Trinity, which, he argues, represents a manifestation of God's moral attributes, pointing out that the treatment of human sin, depravation and wickedness, and the methods of repentance and human renewal in the Qur'an are inadequate. Third, he explores salvation and whether this is achieved through God's grace, according to the Christian perspective, or human action, which is self-righteousness, combined with God's mercy, according to the Muslim perspective. Fourth, Kennedy focuses on sacrifice, highlighting its centrality in the Bible in comparison with the trivial and insignificant treatment of it in the Qur'an. His fifth point is a discussion of Muslim externality – the detailed prescriptions for worship and religious practice – and Christian spirituality, which is based on 'great principles' and 'general guidance' (pp. 245-8). He argues that the Qur'an's 'minute instructions have ever tended to turn men into praying *automata*, while the teaching of the Bible has ever tended to foster the true devoutness' (pp. 247-8).

The sixth point focuses on Muslim theocracy and Muḥammad's establishment of a this-worldly political realm. Christ and the Apostles focused on a spiritual kingdom and abstained from politics, meaning that as long as the good of the governed is protected 'Christian nations are left to adopt the political institutions they deem best' (p. 248). Muḥammad, in returning to Jewish practices and setting up a theocracy with himself at its head, created a pattern of Muslim rulership that was at odds with ideals of civil and religious liberty. While, for example, the position of slaves has improved under Muslim rule, the institution of slavery remains in place.

Kennedy singles out his seventh point, a comparison of domestic purity and family life, as particularly important. He notes the delicate nature of the topic and the varied way in which it has come to play upon different individuals and nations, and so he is able to devote little more than a cursory discussion to it. He outlines the Christian perspective on marriage, relationships between men and women, and lust. Then he discusses

Muslim family relations, beginning with a brief clarification of Muslim positions, against common misunderstandings. He notes, for example, that the Qur'an regards women 'as possessing a rational and moral nature' (p. 255), that it gives instructions and injunctions for their kind treatment, and that they are afforded various freedoms. Nevertheless, Muḥammad, 'has done more perhaps than any man who ever lived to degrade woman, and thereby to degrade man' (p. 255). He shows that Muḥammad gave polygamy divine sanction, which placed it on a more secure basis, and he discusses his practice of concubinage with his female slaves. On the topic of divorce, he argues that Muḥammad's rules make sexual immorality possible and thus compromise the purity of family life. He also records Muḥammad's perceived difficulties with the religious place of women, noting the division of women and men in worship and the provision (for men only) of heavenly virgins in paradise. Kennedy affirms Christian ideas that Muslims are proud, self-righteous and sensual people, though this does not mean that all Muslims lead sensual lives. Drawing on the work of Syed Ameer Ali (1849-1928; *CMR* 24, 863-79), he notes that, among the lower and middle classes, there are many who live pure family lives.

Kennedy's eighth point explores the future as envisioned in the Qur'an and the Bible. He argues that whilst the Bible links 'the suffering of sinners and the upholding of God's moral government' (p. 260), passages in the Qur'an describing future punishment appear to be an outlet for Muḥammad's anger with his enemies. Like its discussion of punishment, the Qur'an also contains detailed expositions of the sensual nature of paradise, which most Muslims have taken literally, making them a corrupting influence. Kennedy's ninth point discusses perspectives on who will be punished or reach paradise in each religion. His tenth point, which is brief, focuses on the progressive nature of revelation in the Bible in contrast to its regressive nature in the Qur'an. His eleventh point explores God's sovereignty and the freedom of humanity, and argues that the Qur'an presents a fatalistic doctrine grounded in its vision of 'God as a great and dread Sovereign, who does all things according to His mere pleasure' (p. 267). Kennedy's twelfth point focuses on the spreading of the two religions. He argues that in the later part of his mission Muḥammad opted to spread his teaching through force, whereas the Bible is opposed to the use of force. His thirteenth and final point is that the successes achieved by Christianity and Islam are radically different. He repeats his praise for Islam's challenge to idolatry, emphasis on monotheism and improved moral teachings, but he notes that these successes are markedly different from those of Christianity. Islam has failed to address issues related to sin, focuses

on 'outward services' and earthly ambitions, and champions violence as a way to enter a paradise of sensuality. The success of Islam cannot be used as proof of its divine origin since this would lead to the conclusion that all other successful religions originated with God. Kennedy also employs some of these points – particularly discussions of the Qur'an's representation of God and of salvation – to criticise Christians of denominations other than his own.

Moving towards his conclusion, Kennedy notes that the rites, practices and opinions found in Christianity and Islam vary widely, and that a focus on their sacred texts is therefore fairest to both faiths. Attributing to Christ the errors and wickedness of Christians is an injustice and, at the same time, Muḥammad ought to be judged by the same standards as are applied to Christ. Kennedy provides an imagined (and one-sided) conversation that he would have with a Muslim in an attempt at conversion, before offering a brief defence of his reading of the Qur'an against charges of injustice and arguing that it should be read alongside the Bible. The final few pages of the chapter are a lengthy footnote on Ameer Ali's *A critical examination*, in which Kennedy claims that Ali's criticism of Muir and Aloys Sprenger (1813-93; *CMR* 24, 472-95) is unfair, challenges the work's lack of acknowledgement of Muḥammad's concubinage of slaves, and takes issue with Ameer Ali's perceived lack of belief in supernatural revelation. Kennedy also challenges Ali's concluding expression of hope that Muslims and Christians may become friends: 'By that time each system must abandon every distinctive feature, and when they become so essentially changed, the retention of the old names will only minister to an illusion' (p. 277).

Life and work in Benares and Kumaon, 1839-1877 (1884) is an autobiographical exploration of Kennedy's missionary work. Muslims feature in the narrative throughout, but particularly in ch. 28. Some sections point to positive relationships with Muslims and positive assessments of Islam. For example, writing on his journey from Calcutta to Benares, Kennedy records that he was helped greatly by a young Muslim in his study of Hindustani, while another Muslim, about whom he writes warmly, was a potential convert. He also provides an account of a Kashmiri Muslim student (and friend) who came to him seeking advice following a dream he had had of Jesus. The student was worried that, if he followed Jesus, he would be killed by his countrymen. Kennedy praises the simplicity of mosques in Benares, arguing that Christians have much to learn from their design.

Other sections betray his mostly negative impressions of Muslims and, in ch. 11, where he explores missionary work, he writes that Muslims are the 'most eager and bitter opponents' and often raise challenges concerning questions of 'the Sonship of Christ, the Trinity, [...] the authenticity of the Scriptures, [... and] the alleged incompleteness of Christ's prophetic office' (p. 123). He acknowledges that there have been sincere Muslim inquirers but argues that they are 'a small minority compared with the many whose pride and bigotry have shut up their mind against everything we had to advance, and whose sole aim has been to assail Christianity and Christians' (p. 123).

Kennedy's exploration of the Indian Rebellion of 1857 in this book, like that in *The Great Indian Mutiny of 1857*, examines different causes of the Uprising, including the rumours that animal fats were being used on rifle cartridges. Focusing on the rebellion in Benares, he notes that native Christians would be able to ensure their safety by declaring that they were Muslims, but claims that none of them did so. Though they had their own approaches to worship, these people were proud to be Christians. Kennedy records that, when a man who claimed to be a Muslim and who regularly worshipped at a mosque died, these people and Christian drummers claimed the body (against his family's wishes) because he had been baptised as a baby. The man was thus given a Christian funeral.

The chapter on Muslims (pp. 329-37) focuses first on demographic variety, noting that they are spread unevenly through the country, follow a variety of professions and vary in their culture and character. In his assessment of Islam, Kennedy argues that, whilst the Bible and the Qur'an may look similar at first glance, Muslims in India have shown themselves to be 'hostile to the Gospel' (p. 330). Although these texts agree on some points, anyone who reads them will note the disagreements between them. For Kennedy, a Muslim reveres God, despises idol worship, places 'importance on outward rites and services [...] pays comparatively little attention to inward excellence, and sees no need for a change of heart' (p. 330). Furthermore, Muslims look down on non-Muslims and may even want to put them to death. Even if a Muslim behaves immorally, because he is a Muslim he believes he will have better treatment in the next world than those of other religions. Kennedy sums up his view in the judgement that 'outward religiousness, pride and self-righteousness, are [the] distinguishing characteristics' of Muslims (p. 331).

Kennedy next turns to the topic of Muslim sensuality, noting that Muḥammad's acceptance of polygamy and divorce exerted 'a depraving influence' (p. 331). In the case of India, licentiousness is found not only

among Muslims and Hindus, but also among many Europeans. However, there is a difference between Muslim and Christian attitudes towards licentiousness in so far as Christians are encouraged to oppose it and keep a pure heart whilst Muslims are often allowed to engage in licentious practices in spite of qur'anic condemnation of the gratification of unlawful desire.

In general, Kennedy attempts to offer a more nuanced vision of Muslims and Islam than some of his contemporaries, arguing that they should not be treated as a homogenous whole and noting that he is unable to provide a sweeping condemnation. For example, he notes that, among some social classes in north India, monogamy is a general rule. He also notes that some Muslims have a praiseworthy character, 'whose bearing would do honour to the adherents of a far higher creed' (p. 332). With respect to some of his Muslim friends, he thinks highly of their ability to speak about higher topics, their skills in listening and their openness to reading material that he has given them. However, Muslims often approach him with questions regarding Christian doctrine at inopportune times, such as when preaching to an interested Hindu audience, resulting in the topic of discussion shifting or the audience dispersing. In most of his discussions with Muslims, they 'resort to the verist sophistry, and fly from one point to another, and with a love of disputation which led to wrangling, and could accomplish no good' (p. 333). Though Islam is so close to Christianity as to almost be a Christian heresy, this does not provide common ground for discussion. Muslims are at odds not only with Christians, but at various times also with Hindus. Kennedy praises Muslim opposition to polytheism and idol worship. He also notes that Islam is a proselytising religion and, although few converts have been made in north-western India, a large number have converted in Bengal, though it seems the change is only 'one of name and ritual' (p. 334). He also notes that, though few Muslims have become Christians, those who have done so make the best sort of converts. However, many Muslims have been 'Hinduized' and Hindus 'Muhammadanised', of which Muslim belief in the Hindu caste system is an example. Kennedy also notes the existence of Muslims supporting political and religious reform inspired by the failure of Muslims to accommodate themselves to English rule. These reformers encourage English education and the reconciliation of Islam with the new order of things in India. In terms of religion, the reformers support a broad platform ranging from orthodoxy to rationalism. These reformers, Kennedy writes, are 'the antipodes to the Wahabees' (p. 336). The majority of Muslims, however,

fall between the Wahhābīs and the reformers, who they regard as 'sacrificing Islam to their ambitious and selfish views' (p. 337).

Kennedy's *Memoir of Margaret Stephen Kennedy*, published in 1891, contains only a few references to Muslims, though in ch. 5 (pp. 46-66) there are some notable descriptions from his journey to Almora and Kumaon. Writing about a six-month stay with his wife in Kumaon in 1847, he notes the widespread fatalism amongst Hindus and Muslims, arguing that, whilst people's action is not always governed by fatalism, it nevertheless 'has a soothing and stupefying [...] at times an emboldening and strength-giving effect' (p 60).

During the Kennedys' return from Almora, they stopped in Delhi near the Baptist Mission-House, home to a Mr Thompson. Kennedy records that Thompson's widow and two daughters were killed during the Uprising of 1857 and that the rebels also captured a former Muslim named Wilayat Ali, who was a catechist. They gave him the choice either to embrace Islam or be killed and demanded that he should repeat the Muslim declaration of faith. When he refused, they beheaded him.

SIGNIFICANCE

Neither Campbell's nor Kennedy's works appear to have been particularly influential. Kennedy is referred to by some contemporary scholars such as J.W.H. Stobart (*CMR* 24, 325-31) but there appears to be little else to suggest that either author was widely read or quoted. Nevertheless, Campbell's two works provide valuable evidence about the nature of the tensions that could arise between Christians and Muslims, while Kennedy's accounts of incidents in the Uprising of 1857 contribute towards a picture of the fragility of relations within the wider context of religious instability.

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James Harry Morris

John J. Pool

DATE OF BIRTH 19 July 1857
PLACE OF BIRTH Allonby, Cumberland
DATE OF DEATH 29 October 1927
PLACE OF DEATH uncertain; England

BIOGRAPHY

John Pool was born in the village of Allonby on the coast of Cumberland in 1857. His father, Robert, was a Congregational minister. Like his brother William, John was educated at Sedbergh School, entering in 1869 and leaving in June 1872. He spent five years training for the ministry at Rotherham Independent Academy, which, as its name implies, was a 'Dissenting' college for the training of 'Independent' (i.e. Congregational) ministers at a time when Nonconformists were barred from entry into the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. Following this, he served in Todmorden, Yorkshire, from 1882 to 1883, before moving to Union Chapel, Calcutta, where he worked from 1883 to 1889. He then moved to the English Church in Rheims, northern France, where he stayed until 1899. After returning to England, he worked at Hanover Chapel, Peckham, from 1901 to 1907, and in other places in the south-east until 1923.

MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION

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E.E. Cleal and T.G. Crippen, *Congregationalism in Surrey*, London, 1908, p. 27
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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Studies in Mohammedanism, historical and doctrinal

DATE 1892
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

Pool wrote *Studies in Mohammedanism, historical and doctrinal, with a chapter on Islam in England* in the years following his return to England from Calcutta in 1889. The influence of his time in India on the work is clear from examples that obviously come readily to his mind, as in the chapter on mosques:

> I have seen in India mosques that would not hold a hundred people, and which were made of common bricks and mud, with whitewashed walls; and I have seen in the same country, and also in Egypt and Syria, buildings that would hold 15,000 people, and which were made of beautiful marble, some of them interlaid with precious stones. (pp. 21-2)

Other examples of Indian influence include when he discusses the place of women; he remarks: 'In India, seclusion is carried to an extreme' (p. 36), and 'During the years I was in India, and in my travels in other Mohammedan countries, though I entered hundreds of mosques, I never once saw a woman at public prayers' (p. 40). In addition, when he compares Christian and Muslim passion plays, he contrasts those in Germany and India: 'In 1890 I attended the Christian Passion Play at Oberammergau, and as in India I was a spectator of the Mohammedan Passion Play four or five years in succession, I am in a position to draw comparisons between the two' (p. 86); and, when he discusses pilgrimages in ch. 16, he mainly focusses on Indian pilgrims. Also, ch. 28 is devoted to 'Moghuls of India'.

It could even be surmised that, having left Islam in India as he thought, it was the news of a mosque and Muslim community being established in Liverpool by Abdullah Quilliam (*CMR* 17, 404-26) that induced Pool to write his book. In the Preface, after quoting Quilliam's justification of his activities as a response to Christian missionaries working in India and other parts of the Islamic world, Pool asks:

> Now what shall we who are Christians say to these things? We cannot assume an attitude of indifference with Mohammedanism at our very doors. Rather let us be stirred up to the comparative study of our own and

> the Moslem faith, so that we may be able to give intelligent reasons for the hope that is in us. (p. xv)

His alarm at the presence of a Muslim community in England would explain why he devotes ch. 40 to an examination of Quilliam's activities, which he finally judges to be 'a forlorn hope' (p. 404).

The work, which is 419 pages long, comprises 41 chapters. These range over the major aspects of Islam, combining religious and historical topics as the title indicates, and Pool's approach is clear from the beginning. He starts in ch. 1 with the Qur'an, which he allows contains *some* divine truth, although his source-criticism analysis sees it as a product of Jewish, Christian and Arab traditions, together with Muḥammad's own ideas : 'He derived his material partly from the Jews, partly from the Christians, partly from the Arabs, and partly from his own thoughts, aspirations, and convictions' (p. 11).

On mosques in ch. 3, Pool notes the anti-Christian character of many Friday sermons: 'Moreover, the Christian doctrine of the Trinity is a fruitful topic for discourse, the preacher often waxing eloquent over the idolatry of the followers of Christ' (p. 29). He ends with a statement of his own preference: 'Christian churches, with their singing of hymns, their reading of God's Word, their prayers, and their sermons, are infinitely to be preferred to Mohammedan mosques'.

The contrast between Christianity and 'Mohammedanism' continues in ch. 4, on women, where Pool notes that Muslims treat 'their women as an inferior creation to men, and [exercise] over them a despotic power. Mohammedan women labour under many disabilities and hardships of which Christian women, happily, have little or no experience' (p. 30). He addresses a topic of great contemporary concern in Britain, child marriage, with particular regard to ʿĀ'isha: 'Another wrong [...] is that of early marriage. [...] In this matter Mohammed himself set a very bad example. His third wife, whose name was Ayesha, was a mere child of seven years when the Prophet espoused her, and she was only nine when he married her' (p. 31). He also notes the issue of forced marriage: 'It should be borne in mind also in connection with Mohammedan early marriages, that the young people have no choice in the matter, but do what is arranged for them by their parents' (p. 32).

Pool attacks polygamy, which causes 'a fearful amount of discord and misery'. Linked to this, noting the threat of punishment for 'refractory wives', he comments: '[Her husband] can take her apart and chastise her,

and though the chastisement may be altogether beyond her deserts, the suffering creature has no redress. In defence of his conduct the husband can point to the words of the Koran, and say, "The mouth of the Lord hath spoken it"' (p. 33). This brings him to divorce:

> By the Mohammedan law a man is allowed a divorce from his wife for very slender reasons; but the wife, before she can obtain a divorce, has to establish the fact of absolute neglect or very serious cruelty. [...] This latitude in the matter of divorce is very greatly taken advantage of by some Mohammedans. (pp. 33-4)

Following this, Pool addresses concubinage, which he considers a form of slavery. He denounces the Qur'an's teaching on it as inhuman:

> A Mohammedan may really have more than four wives, and yet keep within the law [...] by means of living with concubines, which the Koran expressly permits. [...] At the present day [...] in multitudes of Mohammedan homes, slaves are found. [...] Thus the Koran, in this matter of slavery, is the enemy of mankind. And women, as usual, are the greatest sufferers. (pp. 33-4)

Pool ends this criticism by referring to the place of women in Paradise: 'Beautiful, "heavenly wives"; without number are promised to believing men, but no "heavenly husbands" are promised to believing women. Nor is it said they will ever see again their earthly husbands. The Mohammedan Paradise is without doubt primarily for men' (p. 41).

In ch. 8, on miracles in Islam, Pool critically states:

> Mohammedanism [...] has its recorded miracles, but these are of a childish and utterly foolish character. We have but to compare them with the noblest of the Jewish miracles, and with the miracles of Christ, to see how far below Judaism and Christianity Islam is in its conception of a miracle. (p. 75)

In particular, he decries the story of Muḥammad splitting the moon as 'the ridiculous moon story, which one would think was too stupid even for the most vulgar to believe' (pp. 75-6).

In ch. 11, Pool comments critically on the Umayyad mosque in Damascus as follows:

> For seventy years the adherents of the two great religions worshipped under the same roof; but in the reign of Walid the Mohammedans resolved to be sole masters. When, by order of the Caliph, the whole building was demanded, the Christians showed their treaty-rights, but they were only laughed at; and one morning Walid, with a company of soldiers, entered the sacred edifice and gave the order that every Christian priest should be

> turned out, and that every image of Christ, the Virgin Mary, the Apostles, and saints of which there were many in the great building should be destroyed. (p. 107)

In ch. 13, he refers to the discrimination suffered by Christians under the ʿAbbāsids of Baghdad:

> For instance, under the Caliphate of Motawakkel, in 842, stringent laws were passed against all Christians and Jews living in Mohammedan countries. [...] They were to be treated harshly. [...] Of Motawakkel it is written: 'He persecuted the Jews and the Christians, ordering that they should never ride on horses, but only on asses and mules, and that without stirrups; that their dwellings should be marked by figures of dogs and monkeys; and their persons always known by yellow dresses. He refused them the right to enter the baths frequented by Moslems, or to occupy any office of public service. They were restricted in regard to their schools and places of worship; their taxes were doubled; and the very indications of their graves were obliterated.' Thus was begun in the Mohammedan Empire that system of the persecution of subject races, especially Christian, which has continued till this day. (pp. 127-8)

Ch. 19 deals with the 'Ottoman Turks'. Pool comments about the founder of the dynasty: 'Othman [...] early in his reign set himself to harass the enemies of his faith, and to seek to win from the Christians additional land and towns' (p. 180); and about the Janissaries he says:

> About this time the Turkish Princes formed that famous body of troops called the Janizaries. [...] They were Christians, who were forcibly converted to Mohammedanism. Out of the families of the Christians conquered in the campaign against the Greeks, Orkan chose a thousand of the finest boys, and formed them into a Royal Body guard. Every year for three centuries a thousand Christian children were thus devoted to the service of the Ottoman power; and when there were not enough prisoners captured during the year, the number was made up from the Christian subjects of the Sultan. (p. 182)

In ch. 21, Pool addresses the question of Muslim teachings about hell. He observes: 'The third room in Hell, which is placed under the second, and is a degree hotter, will be inhabited by Christians. Mohammed [...] strongly denounced all Christians who believed that Christ was "God manifest in the flesh"' (p. 203); and later:

> Mohammedans very often, as a term of reproach or offence, call Christians 'Nazarenes', 'Infidels', and also 'Christian dogs'. The doom of the Christians is nothing short of eternal woe in Hell. [...] No matter how holy the life of a

> Christian may be, there is, according to Moslem teaching, no escape for him from the damnation of Hell. (p. 204)

Ch. 30 is on the Crusades. Here, Pool's perspective is guided by anti-Christian oppression in Palestine:

> In Jerusalem the Moslems gradually usurped three-fourths of the city, and confined the Christian Patriarch with his clergy and people to a small area around the ancient Church of the Holy Sepulchre. And as each year Christian pilgrims arrived at the Holy City from all parts of the West, as had been the custom for centuries, the Mohammedans threw every obstacle they could in the way of their visits to the sacred sites. (pp. 292-3)

Among the issues addressed in ch. 35, on 'Administration of justice', is apostasy. Pool observes: 'It is not often that a Moslem renounces the faith of his fathers, but for all who do there is theoretically no hope of mercy in this world or the next. An apostate must die the death of a malefactor.' He notes that, under British rule, this stipulation was a 'dead letter' and was practically so in the Ottoman realm, where 'for the last forty years it [was] not [...] enforced'. Observing that this was not so in earlier times, he notes 'many a case of the death sentence being passed on those who had dared to leave Islamism and embrace Christianity. And even now [...] some fanatical Moslems would fain see carried out against all faithless ones, the extreme penalty of the law' (p. 353).

In ch. 39, 'Slavery and the slave trade', Pool fiercely denounces this practice and contrasts Christian and Muslim attitudes towards it: 'At the present day Christian nations, generally speaking, are free from the curse of slavery. [...] Amongst Moslems this dreadful institution has existed from time immemorial, and has the sanction of their Sacred Scriptures, the Koran' (p. 385). He also notes: 'As a matter of fact, no Moslem state has ever voluntarily abolished slavery, and probably never will' (p. 386).

The penultimate chapter, 'Islam in England', is mainly concerned with the work of Abdullah Quilliam and the establishment of the Liverpool Muslim Institute. About this Pool comments: 'Perhaps the last place in the world where we should expect to find Mohammedanism is England, and yet it is a fact that this religion has been established in our land of late years, and, strange to say, by an Englishman' (p. 394). Significantly, he records that, in addition to the usual Friday prayers, Quilliam also held 'Divine service' at the 'Church of Islam' on Sunday morning at 11 a.m. and an evening service at 7 p.m, times when Protestant churches held their meetings (p. 394). Towards the end of the chapter, Pool exclaims: 'In my judgment the movement which Mr. Quilliam has inaugurated is a forlorn

hope. Islam in England may drag on for some years a feeble existence, but then it will probably die a sudden death. Islam, indeed, the world over, is a lost cause! Christianity is everywhere in the ascendant (p. 404).

The final chapter contrasts Christianity and Islam. Although Quilliam's group conduct themselves 'with the direct object of converting us all to the doctrines of Mohammedanism' and 'believe that they have found in Islamism a better religion than they had aforetime in Christianity' (p. 405), in Pool's opinion Muḥammad cannot be accepted because of 'his intense worldly ambition and his licentiousness' (p. 407) and, while there are some positive points in the Qur'an, he laments 'its childish stories, its bitter invectives against unbelievers, and its licentious references to the joys of Paradise', and thus 'it is a poor volume when compared with the Bible' (p. 408). Concerning the Muslim doctrine of God, he notes the absence of the biblical statement 'God is love' or the term 'Father' (p. 410), while on Muslim ethics he particularly attacks the Muslim attitude to women, who for most men are 'a plaything, a pretty toy, as soulless almost as his turban' (p. 412). This leads him to conclude about Christianity: 'It shall prevail!' (p. 413).

Pool does not provide a bibliography, but he quotes from several publications (usually without full attribution), showing that he clearly had extensive knowledge of both Islamic and local Muslim customs, beliefs and practices, much of his knowledge of the latter coming from his personal experience in India. It is the breadth of the book in its coverage of a range of countries, epochs, events and detailed outlines of Muslim sects that distinguishes it from earlier such works.

SIGNIFICANCE

Some of the main elements of *Studies in Mohammedanism historical and doctrinal* can be related to attitudes in Britain in the late 19th century. Regarding what Pool wrote about child marriage in Islam, contemporary British readers would have been shocked that such practices were endorsed by Islam's founder himself, not least because, motivated by Christian morality, evangelicals were leading the fight against child prostitution and trafficking. In 1885, Parliament had raised the age of sexual consent for girls from 13 to 16. Likewise, regarding wife-beating, whilst domestic abuse was obviously present in Britain and its colonies, it was not generally upheld as an example of Victorian Christian culture. As for Islamic divorce, since 1857 divorce in Britain could only be attained by either spouse on the grounds of adultery, cruelty or desertion. Pool appears to have been determined to show that Islamic ethics were inferior

to British and Christian morality. He was also obviously uncomfortable with the idea of native Britons converting to Islam, both because of British tradition as a Christian land, and because of what he describes as the oppressive character of Islam in contrast to British traditions of civil and religious liberty.

Soon after it was written, the book was listed in libraries throughout the British Empire and the USA (e.g. *Catalogue of the Library of the India Office*, vol. 1, 1895, p. 515; *Annual Report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution*, 1893, p. 506) and was required reading for the Student Volunteer Movement (*The Student Volunteer* 4 [1895] 73). It also received a number of reviews. *The Literary World* (46 [1892] 205-6) published an extensive account of it, stating: 'The work is agreeably written, and contains a large amount of information that will be new and instructive to very many readers'. It declared that 'Mr. Pool's attitude towards Islam is not one of unreasoning hostility' and it predicted that 'his book will do good service'. In contrast, however, *The Imperial and Asiatic Quarterly Review* (July-October 1892, p. 554) issued a highly negative assessment: 'The high-sounding title led us to expect much, and we are disappointed. Had it been called "Gossips on Muhammadanism" we should have said the book was very readable and interesting, though not free from errors. But Mr Pool's *Studies* are neither deep nor correct'.

The Calcutta Review (96 [1893] xxxix-xl) began its review with a reference to Quilliam:

> These studies in Mahomedanism are avowedly intended as a counterblast to the crescentade on a pettifogging scale that is being attempted by Mr. William Quilliam and his family in Liverpool [...] but we will take leave to suggest to [Pool] that, in exalting a temporary aberration of mind on the part of a few sensation mongering English gobemouches to the position of a heresy formidable to Protestant orthodoxy, he does but play into the hands of the puny antagonists before whom he throws down his glove.

It noted positively: 'Mr. Pool's manner of treating his subject is excursive, his style in writing simple', though negatively it declares:

> As to the position of women in Islam, Mr. Pool, "late of Calcutta," takes the conventional view generally adopted by stay-at-home middle class society in England. Indeed, throughout these professedly impartial *studies*, a muffled Philistinism is the really dominant note.

This review is significant, given that it issued from the very city in British India where Pool had been stationed.

Beyond these mixed reactions, *Studies in Mohammedanism, historical and doctrinal* does not appear to have attracted much attention. It was not reissued after its first publication, and it was not mentioned by later writers on Islam.

PUBLICATIONS

John J. Pool, *Studies in Mohammedanism, historical and doctrinal, with a chapter on Islam in England,* London, 1892; 008728468 (digitised version available through Hathi Trust)

Anthony McRoy

George Campbell

Sir George Campbell

DATE OF BIRTH 1824
PLACE OF BIRTH Scotland
DATE OF DEATH 18 February 1892
PLACE OF DEATH Cairo

BIOGRAPHY

Sir George Campbell was born into a wealthy Scottish family in 1824. After attending the Edinburgh New Academy and St Andrews University, where he studied law and political economy, he left for India with his two brothers in 1842. He held senior administrative posts in the North-Western Provinces and in the Punjab, where he became a consistent advocate for the needs of the local people. Returning to Britain due to ill health in 1851, he married in 1854 and then returned to India with his wife the same year. He was in Ambala waiting to take up his appointment as Government Secretary to the North-Western Provinces when the 1857 Uprising broke out. Campbell was one of the first into Agra and Lucknow and took part in lifting the sieges.

He remained in senior posts in the Indian administration, helping to respond to the Orissa and Bengal famines of 1867 and 1871. In that latter year, Campbell was appointed Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, serving until 1874 before leaving India for good. He was elected to Parliament as the Liberal Party member for Kirkcaldy in Fife in 1875 and he continued to travel, visiting America and Turkey, both of which he wrote about.

In addition to *A handy book on the Eastern Question* (1876) and *Memoirs of my Indian career* (1893), Campbell wrote various other works, including *Modern India. A sketch of the system of civil government* (1852); *The ethnology of India* (1866); *Specimens of languages of India, including those of the aboriginal tribes of Bengal, the central provinces, and the eastern frontier* (1874); *The Irish land* (1869); and *The American people, or, the relations between the white and the black. An outcome of a visit to the United States* (1889). His reflections in all his writings were based upon his personal visits to the regions in question, accompanied by interviews with local people, diplomats and state officials, along with personal observation. As can be seen from the titles of his works, he was not afraid of engaging with

sensitive, high-profile issues or of delivering his opinions firmly, but with a degree of humility as well. In that sense, one might say that he was a humanist, fascinated by different peoples and the issues that arose from interactions with them.

He died in Cairo in 1892 while he was completing *Memoirs of my Indian career*.

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

A handy book on the Eastern Question

DATE 1876
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

A handy book on the Eastern Question, being a very recent view of Turkey, 212 pages long, is based on Campbell's travels in Turkey and discussions with senior diplomats, British, Turkish and others. The work is a thoughtfully presented reflection on Islam as a faith, as well as the contemporary state

of Turkey as a nation. It was written in the context of the public outcry that accompanied press stories about the Ottoman massacre of Bulgarians in 1876, the actual year in which it was published. This was an incident that generated such strong feelings that the recently retired William Gladstone returned to frontline politics, specifically to ensure that a hard line was taken against Turkey (*CMR* 17, 265-77).

The work comprises seven chapters, with Campbell offering his views on Islam in ch. 2 before moving on to discuss Turkey, its government and recent events. In sharp contrast to many of his peers, notably William Gladstone, who in the same year also published a tract on Islam and Turkey entitled *Bulgarian horrors* (*CMR* 17, pp. 269-71), Campbell is quick to defend what he sees as the failings of the Ottomans as well as highlighting what he characterises as the humanity inherent in Islam. He also describes what he sees as the similarities between Christianity and Islam, before arguing that Christians have plenty of actions to be ashamed of and that there is much to be admired in Islam. Comparing the two faiths, Campbell seeks to offer what he considers a fair critique of both:

> On the whole, my impression of the Mahommedan religion is, that it is radically a much lower religion than true Christianity, but that in practice it is at least as good as, perhaps better than, the corrupt forms of Christianity so long prevalent, and which were so overlaid by Roman mythology and Greek metaphysics that the essentials of the religion are greatly lost to practice. The Mahommedans miss the vital principle of Christianity, the humility, mercy, charity, and love of our neighbour; but, then very few Christians have practised these parts of their faith; while the Mahommedans, taking a lower standard, more easily accepted by weak and corrupt man, have better carried their religion into practice. While the corruptions of Christianity have largely conciliated and attracted women, Mahommedanism is more a religion of man, and more influences them. They are certainly not ashamed of open prayer and the forms of religion. There are good and bad of course among them, as among all religions, and they have some great vices, but I believe that a very large number of them are influenced for good. (pp. 36-7)

Towards the end of the book, in ch. 6 he talks about Britain's role in the region before moving on in ch. 7 to discuss possible ways forward. The book displays Campbell's ongoing interest in and advocacy on behalf of non-British viewpoints.

SIGNIFICANCE

Campbell was always sympathetic to the views of the local people wherever he worked and travelled. For that reason, this book is an important

perspective on Turkey at a time when prevailing public opinion characterised it as barbaric. For the historian, it is also a reminder that not all British officials held negative opinions about Islam and the Ottomans and, moreover, that there were senior officials such as Campbell who were more than willing to offer unpopular opinions in the public square.

PUBLICATIONS

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STUDIES

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Memoirs of my Indian career

DATE 1893
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

Campbell died while he was writing this book in Cairo and it was published posthumously. It is an autobiographical essay in two volumes of 334 pages and 428 pages, in which he offers his observations on the administration and peoples of India, employing material he gathered during his tenure there. His views on Christianity and Islam (as well as other faiths) are woven into the narrative. Much of it is a discussion of administrative issues, his views on relationships between the administrators and the Indians and on relationships between different Indian peoples and communities. In these contexts, Campbell discusses inter-faith relationships as well as his views on Islam, and expresses a range of positive attitudes to Muslims he encountered: 'In Badaon [...] there were a good many Mahomedans of sorts, and the Mahomedan gentlemen were a pleasant, well-educated, well-mannered set of people[. ...] I have always liked the Mahomedans, and in religion I think they are only a kind of more advanced Protestants' (vol. 1, p. 26).

Campbell's interfaith open-mindedness is evident at many points in the work, extending to Hindus as well as Muslims:

> I have already expressed a favourable opinion of the Mahomedan native gentlemen, and the Hindoo officials, bankers, and traders I liked too. It is, I think, a very great mistake to talk as if these people were uneducated because they did not know English; the fact is that many of the better classes and all the officials were very well educated indeed, and had very great literary facility. (vol. 1, p. 34)

SIGNIFICANCE

Campbell was in the Indian administration during the important period when the East India Company's rule ended and direct rule by the British crown began. He was also part of the force that lifted the Siege of Lucknow and he travelled even to remote (and dangerous) parts of South Asia. His observations are therefore the invaluable first-hand account of a man who was not only widely travelled, but also sympathetic to the views of the various faith communities with whom he came into contact. The extent to which he seems to have been a calming voice in the midst of the bitter conflict of the 1857 Uprising is summarised by Peter Hardy: 'The remarkably perceptive and balanced observations of Sir George Campbell, written in July and August 1857 when the conflict was at its height, cannot be improved upon today' (*Muslims of British India*, p. 67).

PUBLICATIONS

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STUDIES

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Sean Oliver-Dee

Chirāgh ʿAlī

DATE OF BIRTH 1844
PLACE OF BIRTH Meerut, India
DATE OF DEATH 1895
PLACE OF DEATH Unknown

BIOGRAPHY

Maulvī Chirāgh ʿAlī Khān (1844-95), sometimes referred to by the honorary title Aʿẓam Yār Jang, was one of the most significant Islamic modernist thinkers in South Asia during the British colonial period. He was born into a Kashmiri family in Meerut, north-east of Delhi (now part of the state of Uttar Pradesh). Although he had no formal education, he received a thorough schooling at home: he learned Farsi and Urdu and then taught himself English, which he came to master. From childhood, he was an enthusiastic learner and he eventually came to be one of the best-read Indian Muslims in European literature (Powell, 'Chirāgh ʿAlī'). This accomplishment would serve him well as he worked in various public offices, eventually landing an administrative position working for the Nizam of Hyderabad under the Prime Minister Sir Salar Jung, during a period of rapid modernisation in Hyderabad (Khalidi, 'Muslim debates', p. 307). While in this position, he wrote a four-volume account of contemporary Hyderabad titled *Hyderabad* (*Deccan*) *under Sir Salar Jung*. With its detailed descriptions of the period, this history showcased his literary talents (Wahidur-Rahman, 'Religious thought', pp. 66-7). It was through his work in public administration that he was to rub shoulders with the leading Indian Muslim intellectuals of his day, who would set him on a new course.

ʿAlī's foray into the world of Islamic modernism began when, while working for the British government, he had come into contact with Sayyid Aḥmad Khān (1817-98), who had recommended Chirāgh ʿAlī for the position in Hyderabad. At this time, Aḥmad Khān was the leader of a burgeoning new Islamic intellectual movement that sought to reform Islam along the lines of European-style liberalism. This movement was part of a broader trend in the Muslim world called 'Islamic modernism', which interpreted Islam through the lens of modern liberal ideals and values (Moaddel and Talattof, *Contemporary debates*, pp. 1-7).

Aḥmad Khān solicited ʿAlī's help in the new Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College in Aligarh, which he founded in 1875. Over time, ʿAlī came to be more closely aligned with Aḥmad Khān's circle of Muslim reformist colleagues, who became known as the 'Aligarh movement'. He contributed to Aḥmad Khān's Urdu journal, *Tahzīb ul-akhlāq* ('Refinement of morals'), which was their main publication for promoting the reformist cause (Powell, 'Chirāgh ʿAlī'), though while he came to espouse many of the ideals of the new movement, he was also an independent thinker, and soon began promoting views that went beyond even what many of his contemporaries were willing to accept. John Esposito notes that, while ʿAlī borrowed the main currents of Aḥmad Khān's thought, he went beyond Khān in many of his views on Islamic law and society (Esposito, *Islam and politics*, pp. 55-6).

Conservative Muslim critics of ʿAlī have accused him of slavish adherence to Enlightenment ideals, with one writer arguing that ʿAlī and Aḥmad Khān 'rejected every facet of theology and philosophy which does not accord with an Enlightenment and positivist notion of reason' (Lumbard, 'Decline of knowledge', p. 41). ʿAlī was most controversial in his rejection of the majority of established Hadith narrations and *fiqh* rulings as unreliable. In his view, only the Qur'an provided timeless moral principles. He saw other sources of Islamic law as 'common law' applications of qur'anic guidance for specific occasions that could be disregarded if the times called for new applications of qur'anic principles, especially on such thorny issues as divorce and polygamy (Powell, 'Chirāgh ʿAlī'; Asani, 'Islam', p. 4652). Besides this, ʿAlī argued for non-supernatural interpretations of the Qur'an (e.g. positing that the *jinn* were actually a race of very strong men) and was an early proponent of the 'swoon theory' in interpreting the death of ʿĪsā in relation to Q 4:157 (Wahidur-Rahman, 'Religious thought', pp. 82-6; cf. Lumbard, 'Decline of knowledge', p. 41).

ʿAlī was also a staunch defender of Islamic civilisation against European critiques of it as outmoded and uncivilised, to which he responded in a number of works, the most notable of which are *The proposed political, legal and social reforms in the Ottoman Empire and other Mohammadan states* (1883) and *A critical exposition of the popular 'Jihād'* (1885). In these works, he countered accusations that Islam was an irrational and unreformable religion, and presented a conception of the faith that was compatible with the then prevailing liberal ideals (Mohomed, 'Islamic reformism', pp. 73-105). He also responded to the arguments of Christian converts from Islam such as ʿImāduddīn Lāhiz (1830-1900; *CMR* 24, 506-41),

a Muslim *maulvī* who had converted to Christianity after listening to the debate between Karl Pfander and Raḥmatullāh Kairānavī in Agra in 1854 and finding Pfander's arguments more compelling (Powell, 'Processes of conversion', pp. 36-42). 'Imāduddīn wrote a critique of Islam in Urdu titled *Taʾrīkh-i Muḥammadī* to which ʿAlī responded with *taʿlīqāt* ('annotations') (Wahidur-Rahman, 'Religious thought', p. 59). In addition, ʿAlī wrote a number of minor works. His arguments in *A critical exposition* were first aired in an earlier work titled *Dafʿ-i ilzām az ghazawāt-i Islām* ('Repudiation of blame concerning the wars of Islam', 1874; see Wahidur-Rahman, 'Religious thought', p. 62). He also wrote a defence of the life of Muḥammad in English, entitled *Muhammad. The true prophet* (n.d.; see Wahidur-Rahman, 'Religious thought', p. 63). However, none of these had the same impact as his two main works.

Although ʿAlī's works were scholarly and well-argued, they were ultimately nowhere near as influential as those of his contemporaries. Esposito, for example, spends an entire chapter of his book *Islam, the straight path* (Oxford, 2015, pp. 163-71) on Islamic modernism in India discussing Sayyid Aḥmad Khān and Muḥammad Iqbāl, but does not mention ʿAlī at all. In his *Islam and politics* (Syracuse NY, 1998[3], pp. 55-6), Esposito only mentions ʿAlī in a single paragraph as one of Khan's followers. When Muslim writers do mention him, their appraisal is mostly negative. One such writer, for example, describes him as 'a radical proponent of modernism [whose] espousal of modern Western civilisation was even more extreme than Sir Sayyid's', and calls his theology 'a second-rate bourgeoisie Protestantism marked by excessive rationalism' (Naeem, 'Traditional Islamic response', pp. 89-90). His ideas were especially attacked by more conservative Indian Muslims who belonged to the Deobandi school, such as Ashraf ʿAlī Thānwī (Naeem, 'Traditional Islamic response', pp. 105-6). As a result, he died in relative obscurity in 1895. It was only long after his death that interest in his works increased (Powell, 'Chirāgh ʿAlī').

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

The proposed political legal and social reforms in the Ottoman Empire and other Mohammadan states

DATE 1883
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

This major work, 225 pages long, was first published 1883 by the Education Society's Press in Byculla (Bombay). It was a response to works recently published by European Christian writers critical of Islamic civilisation. Most notable among these was the Revd Malcolm MacColl (1831-1907), a British clergyman who had written numerous books and articles criticising the Ottoman Empire and defending the interests of Christians under Ottoman rule. In a number of his works, MacColl identified Islam as the primary cause behind the backwardness and lack of civil liberties prevailing in the Ottoman Empire, as well as in the broader Muslim world. In his view, as well as that of several other Christian critics of Islam, the religion was incapable of reforming itself, and continual adherence to its tenets was holding back the Muslim world (Mohomed, 'Islamic reformism', pp. 74-5).

Chirāgh ʿAlī accuses MacColl of suffering under the 'delusion' that Islam is not capable of undergoing political, social or legal reforms and laments what he considers the lack of proper knowledge among European writers regarding Islam and its sources. He then proceeds to accuse European writers such as MacColl, Edward Sell (1839-1932; *CMR* 24, 781-803), William Muir (1819-1905; *CMR* 24, 666-96) and others of accepting uncritically the picture of Islam that was developed over the centuries by the jurists of the four established *madhhab*s (pp. i-lx). Whether his accusations are true or not, it is clear that ʿAlī did not agree with their use of traditional Islamic sources to characterise Islam.

In the following section (pp. 3-28), ʿAlī begins to explain the sources of Islamic law, the Qur'an, Hadith, *ijmāʿ* (consensus) and *qiyās* (analogy). His primary argument in this part of his work is that none of the 'common law' beliefs held by the *madhhab*s on the basis of *qiyās*, *ijmāʿ* and Hadith that are of questionable value should be held as sacrosanct because these *madhhab*s did not emerge until over a century after Muḥammad's death as a means of legitimating the rule of the Umayyads and ʿAbbāsids, and the Hadiths they relied on for their rulings were not compiled according to

critical rational principles. ʿAlī therefore asserts that the *madhhab*s are not indispensable aspects of Islam, their rulings should be rejected, and new rulings more in line with the needs of the modern Muslim world should be developed, based on a more 'enlightened' understanding of the message of the Qur'an (pp. 3-28; Moaddel and Talattof, *Contemporary debates*, pp. 28-34).

In the rest of his book, ʿAlī applies his modernist methodology to key qur'anic passages that treat such social and legal issues as the rights of non-Muslims under Muslim rule (pp. 29-111), the 'position of women', marriage, polygamy and divorce (pp. 112-44), slavery (pp. 145-74) and concubinage (pp. 175-83). In the chapter on marriage, for example, he rejects any suggestion that the Qur'an permits concubinage, and argues that polygamy is prohibited by the Qur'an when it says in Q 4:3 that, if a man is unable to do justice to more than one wife, then he should marry only one (Mansoor and Talattof, *Contemporary debates*, pp. 145-58). In this, he shows an iconoclastic approach to handling Islamic law and jurisprudence.

Views such as these were found to be so controversial among Muslims that, when ʿAlī requested Sayyid Aḥmad Khān to translate this book into Urdu for publication in *Tahzīb ul-Akhlāq*, Khān wrote in reply that he did not think it was a proper time to do this, since most Muslims would react adversely to ʿAlī's arguments and inflame negative sentiment against him and his views (Wahidur-Rahman, 'Religious thought', p. 6).

SIGNIFICANCE

Despite the controversial nature of ʿAlī's views, many of his reformist ideas continue to inform Muslim responses to Christian critiques of Islamic practices and legal norms, particularly in the areas of marriage and the treatment of women. ʿAlī's perspective, which is relatively novel in the 1,400-year history of Islam, presents a synthesis of Islamic theology with Enlightenment liberalism. *The Proposed political legal and social reforms* exemplifies a significant and robust Muslim response to the characterisations of Islam by European writers, whose works ʿAlī repeatedly names and quotes. From his work emerged a new emphasis amongst Muslims to present Islam in egalitarian or sometimes even feminist terms as a rebuttal to the notion that Islamic principles of morality and society are inferior to Christian or secular Western morality. Its relative novelty has not detracted from its appeal among Muslims living in Western or liberal societies.

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STUDIES

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Mohomed, 'Islamic reformism'

Guenther, 'Ḥadīth in Christian-Muslim dialogue', pp. 276-7 (about Chirāgh ʿAlī on Hadith)

Wahidur-Rahman, 'Religious thought'

A critical exposition of the popular 'Jihād'

DATE 1885

ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

Chirāgh ʿAlī's other major work, published a few years later and 249 pages long, is a response to accusations made by European Christian writers and scholars such as William Muir and George Sale (1697-1736; *CMR* 13, 325-43) that Islam is a violent religion that was spread through military conquest (its full title is *A critical exposition of the popular 'Jihād', showing that all the wars of Mohammad were defensive, and that aggressive war, or compulsory conversion, is not allowed in the Koran*). It was occasioned by the aftermath of the Indian Uprising of 1857. Although not all the mutineers were Muslim, several prominent leaders were, including the last Mughal emperor, Bahadur Shah II (r. 1837-57). Thus, many Britons held the Muslims of India responsible for the rebellion, and there was a strong suspicion that Indian Muslims would take any opportunity to rise against

them again (Khalidi, 'Muslim debates', p. 305; Wahidur-Rahman, 'Religious thought', pp. 28-9).

The Aligarh movement led by Sayyid Aḥmad Khān strove to allay this suspicion by encouraging Muslims to become loyal subjects of the British Empire, seeing this as the only viable path forward for them (Khalidi, 'Muslim debates', p. 306; Wahidur-Rahman, 'Religious thought', p. 36). Chirāgh ʿAlī, for his part, tried to accomplish this by writing this book. His goal, as he states in his introduction,

> is to remove the general and erroneous impression from the minds of European and Christian writers regarding Islam, that Mohammad waged wars of conquest, extirpation, as well as of proselytizing against the Koreish, other Arab tribes, the Jews, and Christians; that he held the Koran in one hand and the scimitar in the other, and compelled people to believe in his mission. (p. i)

ʿAlī's main argument is that all the wars Muḥammad fought were defensive in nature, and were either intended to safeguard the religious liberty of Muslims from the persecutions of the Quraysh, or reprisals for violent attacks and assassination attempts against him and his followers. By the standards of international law, he asserts, Muḥammad was well within his rights and fully justified in engaging in all defensive conflicts. He advances this point through analysis of numerous episodes in Muḥammad's life, as well as several qur'anic passages that refer to war, most especially *Sūrat al-tawba* (or *al-barāʾa*, Q 9), which is the most contested sura on this topic (pp. 1-113).

In doing this, he was arguing not only against European Christian writers (he also seeks to repudiate Robertson Smith, Aloys Sprenger, T.P. Hughes, and Samuel Green), but also against numerous Muslim jurists and legal experts who taught the permissibility of offensive jihad. In fact, it would not be an exaggeration to say that he was the first to argue that jihad was *only* defensive in nature. A significant section of his work is dedicated to showing how previous generations of Muslims have misinterpreted the Qur'an's injunctions on jihad, arguing that none of the verses used to teach offensive warfare actually do so but only sanction defensive warfare (cf. Ahmad, *Islamic modernism*, pp. 62-3; Hardy, *Muslims*, pp. 113-14; Metcalf, *Islamic revival*, p. 324). He then proceeds to refute authors such as Muir and Sale, who appeal to the writings of these Muslim jurists, asserting that none of them have properly understood the source material from which they are quoting (pp. 114-61).

SIGNIFICANCE

By asserting that the nature of Islamic warfare is purely defensive, Chirāgh ʿAlī opened the door to more 'moderate' expressions of Islam, especially among those living in British territories in the 19th century. This was in contrast to the militaristic interpretations favoured by more traditionalist scholars, who often resented colonial occupation by European powers. ʿUbaydullāh Sindhī (1872-1944), for example, criticised him for diverging from 'the Quranic movement for a militant Islamic revolution' (Rahman, *Interpretations of jihad*, p. 153). Meanwhile, Peter Hardy has characterised his argument as brushing aside 'twelve centuries of authoritative interpretation with a casual wave of his pen' (Hardy, *Muslims*, p. 114).

Prior to *Critical exposition*, ʿAlī wrote a work in Persian, no longer extant, as a first foray into the arguments he sets out in the later book, titled *Dafʿ-i ilzām az ghazawāt-i Islām* ('Refutation of the accusation concerning the military expeditions of Islam'; Wahidur-Rahman, 'Religious thought', pp. 62-5). Many of his arguments would become very popular among Muslims living in Western countries, or in former colonial territories such as India. They continue to be standard fare up to the present day among Muslims who seek to distance Islam from any perception that their religion sanctions violence and conquest.

PUBLICATIONS

Chirāgh ʿAlī (Moulavi Cherágh Alī), *A critical exposition of the popular 'Jihād', showing that all the wars of Mohammad were defensive, and that aggressive war, or compulsory conversion, is not allowed in the Koran*, Calcutta, 1885, repr. Karachi, 1977, New Delhi, 2003; 103030142 (digitised version available through Hathi Trust)

Chirāgh ʿAlī, *Taḥqīq al-jihād. Tarjumah kritīkāl aikspozīshān āuf dī pāpūlar jihād*, trans. Ghulām-i Ḥasanīn Pānīpatī, Lahore, repr. Hyderabad, 1950 (Urdu trans.)

STUDIES

T. Rahman, *Interpretations of jihad in South Asia*, Berlin, 2018

Khalidi, 'Muslim debates', 305-21

Moaddel and Talattof, *Contemporary debates*

B.D. Metcalf, *Islamic revival in British India*, Princeton NJ, 1982

Wahidur-Rahman, 'Religious thought'

P. Hardy, *The Muslims of British India*, Cambridge, 1972

Ahmad, *Islamic modernism*

Minor works

DATE 1873-95
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English and other languages

DESCRIPTION

Besides the two major works mentioned above, Chirāgh ʿAlī wrote a number of other works on religious issues. Wahidur-Rahman mentions them in a short bibliography of ʿAlī's works ('Religious thought', pp. 62-5).

The first six works mentioned are either no longer extant or only exist in manuscript form and have never been published. They mention matters that ʿAlī would later discuss in greater detail, both in *The proposed political legal and social reforms in the Ottoman empire …* (1883) and *A critical exposition of the popular 'Jihād'* (1885).

Taʿlīqāt ('Annotations'), a response to ʿImāduddīn Lāhiz and his critique of Islam in *Tavārīkh-i Muḥammadī* (Lahore, 1870) (Ali and Ahmad, 'Early Christian Sīrah writings', p. 136). This may have been one of Chirāgh ʿAlī's first works (Wahidur-Rahman, 'Religious thought', p. 59). In it, Chirāgh ʿAlī objects to ʿImāduddīn's use of two popular Muslim accounts of Muḥammad, *Rawḍat al-aḥbāb* and *Madārij al-nubuwwa*, contending that many of the Hadiths cited in them are unreliable (Becht, *The book and the Prophet*, p. 242). This is a matter that ʿAlī later expounded in greater detail. In the work he also mounts a critique of Christianity by arguing that the four canonical Gospel accounts cannot be reliable.

Dafʿ-i ilzām az ghazawāt-i Islām ('Refutation of the accusation concerning the military expeditions of Islam'), a response to the claims of Christian writers that Islam is a violent religion, based on the wars that were fought during Muḥammad's lifetime. This is Chirāgh ʿAlī's first foray into the arguments that would later be fully fleshed out in *A critical exposition of the popular 'Jihād'*.

Kashf al-ibhām ʿan tabriyyāt al-Islām ('The removal of doubt about the purity of Islam'), a series of footnotes that Chirāgh ʿAlī wrote for Sayyid Aḥmad Khān's *Tabriyyāt al-Islām* or *Ibṭāl-i ghulāmī* ('Abolition of slavery'). These arguments would later be touched on in great detail in *The proposed political legal and social reforms*.

Dhabb-i ḥarīm al-nabī ʿan al-sarārī ('The prohibition of the sanctuary of the Prophet to concubines'), a discussion of concubinage, which is another topic Chirāgh ʿAlī would later discuss in detail. Both this and the preceding work only exist in manuscript form and have never been published.

Muhammad. The true prophet, a defence of the life and work of Muḥammad based on Islamic descriptions of his character against the objections of Christian writers. Of the works listed, this was the first to be written in English. Today, it only survives in an incomplete unpublished manuscript.

Qadīm qawmūṇ kī mukhtaṣar tārīkh ('A short history of ancient peoples'), a response to the claim that the Qur'an contains accounts of mythical or legendary peoples. Here, Chirāgh ʿAlī uses his knowledge of Hebrew and Greek literature to demonstrate the historical existence of all these various tribes and nations.

Besides these six works, Wahidur-Rahman mentions two others that have been published and are still extant, both of them collections of tracts, booklets and short articles by Chirāgh ʿAlī. The first is *Majmūʿa-i rasā'il-i Chirāgh ʿAlī* ('A collection of the tracts of Chirāgh ʿAlī'), four tracts that he wrote at various points in his literary career, touching on specific topics such as slavery, concubinage and polygamy in Islam, and on the truth of Islam more generally.

The second work is *Tahzīb ul-akhlāq*, vol. 3, a collection of all the articles ʿAlī wrote for *Tahzīb ul-akhlāq*, the magazine founded by Sayyid Aḥmad Khān in 1870, up to the year 1876, as well as a few he published independently elsewhere.

SIGNIFICANCE

Although not as well-known as his *The proposed political legal and social reforms* or *A critical exposition of the popular 'Jihād'*, these minor works are important for tracing the progression of Chirāgh ʿAlī's thought. Many of them contain earlier versions of the arguments he would later use in his major works, and show how his thought on these topics had not been arrived at haphazardly but was the result of decades of writing and debate with Christian interlocutors.

ʿImāduddīn, whom Chirāgh ʿAlī had criticised in his *Taʿlīqāt*, later wrote a response titled *Taqlīʿāt-i taʿlīqāt* ('Annihilation of annotations', 1877; *CMR* 24, pp. 533-4) ('Christian moulvie', p. 494). He repeated what he had written in his *Tavārīkh*, that the Islamic sources he had chosen for his life of Muḥammad were recognised as trustworthy by orthodox Muslims, including Raḥmatullāh Kairānavī, and that 'all other trustworthy Islamic writings' cited the same details (Becht, *The book and the Prophet*, p. 242).

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Chirāgh ʿAlī, *Taʿlīqāt*, Lucknow, 1873

Chirāgh ʿAlī, *Dafʿ-i ilzām az ghazawāt-i Islām*, Lucknow, 1874

Chirāgh ʿAlī, *Kashf al-ibhām ʿan tabriyyāt al-Islām*, written in 1875 at Sītāpūr

Chirāgh ʿAlī, *Dhabb-i ḥarīm al-nabī ʿan al-sarārī*, written in 1875 at Sītāpūr

Chirāgh ʿAlī, *Muhammad. The true prophet*, manuscript, n.d.

Chirāgh ʿAlī, *Qadīm qawmūṇ kī mukhtaṣar ta'rīkh*

Chirāgh ʿAlī, *Majmūʿah-i rasā'il-i Chirāgh ʿAlī*, ed. ʿAbdullāh Khān, Hyderabad, 1918

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F. Ali and H. Ahmad, 'Early Christian *sīrah* writings of subcontinent. A comparative study of their methods, impact and cogitating on new contemporizing methodology', *Journal of Islamic Thought and Civilization* 8 (2018) 129-43

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J. Luis Dizon

Scottish Presbyterian missionaries in India

BIOGRAPHIES

The Church of Scotland began to consider the establishment of a mission to India in the mid-1820s (Hunter, *History of the missions*, pp. 8-11). One of its first missionaries to foreign lands, Alexander Duff, was commissioned on 12 August 1829, and reached Calcutta on 27 May 1830 (Hunter, *History of the missions*, pp. 12-14), starting the Church of Scotland's mission to India. In this entry, the work of five Church of Scotland missionaries will be surveyed: Alexander Duff himself (1806-78), John Murray Mitchell (1815-1904), Thomas Smith (1817-1906), Henry Rice (1846-1922) and John F.W. Youngson (1852-1920).

Much has been written about the life of **Alexander Duff**, including a two-volume biography by George Smith in 1879. He was born at Auchnahyle Farm, Moulin, Perthshire, on 26 April 1806 and studied arts and theology at the University of St Andrews, where he and a few others founded a missionary group that subsequentially developed into the University Missionary Society in 1824-5. He was appointed as a missionary in 1829 and ordained as a minister on 12 August that year. A month earlier, he had married Anne Scott Drysdale (1796-1865). They left for India in October and reached Calcutta on 27 May 1830, after a protracted voyage during which they suffered two shipwrecks and lost all their property.

After arriving in Calcutta, Duff established a school with the help of Raja Ram Mohan Roy (1772-1833). Prominent early converts included Krishna Mohan Banerjea (1813-85) and Lal Behari Day (1824-92), both Hindus. Due to ill health, Duff returned to Britain in 1834, where he raised support for the mission through speaking tours and the publication of pamphlets and treatises. He and his wife had five children (one of whom died) during six years at home and returned to India in 1840, leaving the surviving children in the care of friends.

After the Disruption of 1843 (a schism in which over 400 evangelical ministers broke away from the Church of Scotland), Duff joined the Free Church of Scotland, which resulted in all the possessions he had collected for his mission having to be surrendered. In 1844, he helped to found the *Calcutta Review*.

In 1849, Duff returned to Scotland, again for health reasons, and was elected in 1851 as Moderator of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland. His spoken and written testimony to the House of Lords in 1853 helped to shape the changes to Indian education policy that were encapsulated in the despatch sent by Sir Charles Wood of the East India Company to the Governor-General of India in 1854.

Duff returned to India again in 1856, where he helped to establish the University of Calcutta. In 1863, he was called home by the church to become the convener of its foreign missions committee. He raised an endowment to install a missionary chair at New College, Edinburgh, and was appointed as the first professor to occupy it. In his later years, he was instrumental in establishing the Alliance of Reformed Churches that held to the Presbyterian system. He died in Edinburgh on 12 February 1878.

John Murray Mitchell was born in Aberdeen on 19 August 1815. He studied at Marischal College, Aberdeen, and completed his MA in 1833. He then began to prepare for ordained ministry in Aberdeen and Edinburgh. In 1835, he became acquainted with Alexander Duff, during the latter's time home. He was ordained in Aberdeen in 1838 and was sent to Bombay. In 1842, his fiancée, Maria Hay Mackenzie Flyter (1820-1907), whom he had met during his time in Edinburgh, moved to Bombay and they were married on 22 December. Maria was to become a distinguished missionary author in her own right. Like Duff, Mitchell joined the Free Church of Scotland after the Disruption of 1843 and became an important participant in the missionary activities of the church. The following year, he helped Stephen Hislop (1817-63) to establish a new mission at Nagpur and subsequently helped to develop the mission in other areas, notably at Poona and also Jalna and Hyderabad.

Maria's bad health forced the couple to return to Britain, but Mitchell returned to India at the end of 1846, with Maria joining him in 1849. He served at Poona from 1854 to 1856, while his fellow-missionary James Mitchell (1800-66) was on leave in Europe, though health issues again forced Maria back to Europe, with Mitchell joining her in January 1857. During this short stay, Mitchell was awarded an LLD from Marischal College in December 1858. He toured Europe, the Near East and Egypt, where he met his wife in the autumn of 1859 before returning once more to India. The couple were forced to return to Britain once again in the early 1860s and, for the next four years (until 1867), Mitchell served as minister of a congregation in Broughty Ferry (present-day Dundee). In 1867, he

was asked by the Foreign Mission Committee of his church to return to India to serve in Calcutta. He arrived there with Maria in January 1868 and served as principal of Duff College before returning to Scotland in 1873, where he acted as secretary of the church's Foreign Mission Committee. He spent a final two years in India during an international tour that commenced in 1880 and retired as a missionary in 1888. From that year until 1898 he served at the Scottish Church in Nice and then spent his last years in Edinburgh, where he died on 14 November 1904.

Henry Rice was born in Bangalore on 4 January 1846 to Benjamin Rice of the London Missionary Society (LMS) and his wife Jane. He joined the LMS in 1869 and was stationed in Madras. In 1880, he moved to the Church of Scotland's mission there. He died in Polton, Scotland, on 22 October 1922.

Thomas Smith was born in Symington, Lanarkshire, on 8 July 1817. He began to study at Edinburgh University at the age of 13 and, from 1834, studied divinity and received his licence to preach in 1839. Influenced by Alexander Duff, he was appointed to the Church of Scotland's mission to Calcutta on 7 March 1839, though he left for the Free Church of Scotland following the Disruption of 1843.

Smith was active as a teacher and editor of both the *Calcutta Christian Observer* and the *Calcutta Review*, and was also well known as a mathematician. During the Indian Uprising of 1857, he served as a chaplain to the 42nd Highlanders (the Black Watch). He contracted cholera in 1858, which forced him to retire as a missionary and return to Scotland. From 1859 to 1879, he served as the minister of Cowgatehead Free Church, Edinburgh. He then succeeded Duff in the missionary chair at New College and held this until he retired thirteen years later in 1893. In 1891, he served as moderator of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland. Edinburgh University awarded him an honorary MA in 1858, a DD in 1867 and an LLD in 1900. He died in Edinburgh on 26 May 1906.

John Forbes White Youngson was born in 1852. He was educated at the University of Aberdeen, receiving his BA in 1873, before being appointed to the Church of Scotland's Punjab mission in 1875. On 19 August of the same year, he married Helen Mair. He was moderator of the Presbyterian Church of India in 1905-6 and, although he retired in 1907, he continued to serve in India until his death on 27 June 1920.

MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION

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G. Smith, *The life of Alexander Duff*, 2 vols, New York, 1879
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'Church of Scotland Missions', and 'Free Church of Scotland Missions', in B.H. Badley, *Indian missionary directory and memorial volume*, Lucknow, 1886, 108-12, 113-23 (outline of history of missions and short bios of missionaries)
J.F.W. Youngson, *Forty years of the Punjab Mission of the Church of Scotland, 1855-1895*, Edinburgh, 1896
J.M. Mitchell, *In western India. Recollections of my early missionary life*, Edinburgh, 1899
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H. Scott (ed.), *Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticanae. The succession of ministers in the Church of Scotland from the Reformation*, Edinburgh, 1928
W.G. Blaikie, revised by D.W. Savage, art. 'Duff, Alexander', in *ODNB*
L.A. Ritchie, art. 'Mitchell, John Murray', in *ODNB*
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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Works on missions among Muslims

DATE 1856-96
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

Alexander Duff referred to Islam in at least two of his works, John Murray Mitchell in three, Henry Rice in two, Thomas Smith in two and John F.W. Youngson in one. What they say together (though there is no indication that they knew one another's works) gives a broad picture of Indian Islam and Christian impressions of it in the later 19th century.

A letter from **Alexander Duff** to Sir Culling Eardley Eardley (1805-63), the first chair of the Evangelical Alliance, entitled 'Opinions of the Mussulmans of India on the death penalty for apostacy from their faith', was published in the periodical *Evangelical Christendom* in November 1856, edited by Alphonse-François Lacroix (1799-1859), who 'carefully perused the whole'. There, it is six pages long. Duff describes how he made a survey of missionaries' views about Muslim opinions on this death penalty. He notes at the start that his survey shows that, when Muslims have been in power, they have in principle consistently followed the policy of executing apostates and that this is supported by learned Muslims of the present ('Opinions', p. 372). Duff and Lacroix record greater flexibility in the past towards female apostates if they repented, and the inability of Muslim rulers to carry out the death penalty for apostates because they had limited political power (pp. 372-3). They also record that, although many believe missionary work amongst Muslims is a lost cause, they themselves have renewed hope that 'the time of grace for the Mahommedan nations [...] is still to come' and that this change will come about through 'conquest by the sword of the Spirit' (p. 376). Appended to the letter is a short account by a learned Muslim translated from Persian (pp. 376-7).

Duff's *The Indian rebellion. Its causes and results* (1858) comprises 25 letters he wrote between 16 May 1857 and 22 March 1858 to William King Tweedie (1803-63), at the time Convenor of the Foreign Mission Committee of the Free Church of Scotland, about the Uprising of 1857, in which Tweedie's son William (1836-1914) was wounded while fighting for the British. The book is 408 pages long and includes both first- and second-hand accounts of the rebellion and Muslim involvement in it. For example, Duff reports a Muslim attack on the government and missionary schools at Agarpara on 23 June 1857, in which several hundred Muslims rushed into the schools 'ordering the teachers, on pain of death, to destroy their English books, and teach [...] only the *Koran*' (*Indian rebellion*, p. 44). Duff notes that, although no deaths resulted from this attack, there was violence and there were injuries, and he argues that this is 'a fair indication of the spirit and determination of Mohammedanism generally; and clearly proves how little not only Christianity, but even western civilization, has to expect from its intolerance' (p. 44).

Duff also explores the causes of the rebellion and repeats some of the common conceptions of the time, such as that rifle cartridges were prepared with pig's fat. He believes that the cartridge issue was being used as a pretext to initiate a 'long-concocted Mohammedan conspiracy against the supremacy and rule of Great Britain in India' (p. 51) for political gain

and later also suggests that Russian spies may have played a role (pp. 97-8). From a clear Protestant perspective, Duff makes comparisons between Islam and Roman Catholicism and between centres of Islam such as Lucknow and Catholic Rome (pp. 394-5).

John Murray Mitchell's *Letters to Indian youth on the evidences of the Christian religion* was first published in 1840 and, by 1870, it had gone through five editions (John Murdoch, *Catalogue of the Christian vernacular literature of India*, Madras, 1870, p. 256). The third edition, which is used here, was published in 1857 following extensive additions and revisions. This is 200 pages long and comprises 16 chapters in the form of letters addressed to the intended reader ('My dear young friend') and an appendix. The 13th letter (pp. 144-71) focuses on Islam and explores 'the evidences that can be adduced in support of the Muhammadan religion' (p. 144).

Considering first 'external evidence' (pp. 144-60), Mitchell questions the extent to which Muḥammad's life can be reconstructed, arguing that there is 'no account of Muhammad from the pen of any of his contemporaries[. ...] This is a fact [...that] leaves a painful degree of uncertainty respecting [his] real career and character' (p. 146). Even the Qur'an, Mitchell argues, is not reliable for this because parts of it were transmitted orally before they were written down, opening the way for potential editorial interference and making it impossible to prove that it was not corrupted (p. 147). This means that we are unable to get to the real person of Muḥammad and we are also unable to get to his real revelation (if he received any at all).

Next, Mitchell asks whether or not Muḥammad can be considered an apostle of God. He argues that the Qur'an does not mention Muḥammad performing miracles, and that the miraculous events that some commentators claim it contains are not actually mentioned there (pp. 148-52). Nor can the predictions of future events the commentators claim he made be substantiated (pp 152-4). Mitchell next discusses the success of Islam, which is generally taken as a sign of its being divinely inspired, but he argues that its spread is not a sign that it is true but rather that it was received because there is much truth borrowed from Christianity within it, and also because it is not opposed to baser human instincts. Among other reasons, certain features, such as its promise of other-worldly rewards for those who die in battle, appealed to the Arabs, while its ban on alcohol helped Muḥammad to control them (pp. 156-7). Following this, Mitchell argues that the Qur'an is not divinely inspired but mostly summarised

from the Bible, and he questions common Muslim assumptions that its style is beautiful.

Moving on to internal evidence for Islam (pp. 160-9), Mitchell first discusses the contradictions in the Qur'an and then explores Muslim claims that the Bible has been corrupted, that there are contradictions between the accounts given in the Bible and those found in the Qur'an, and that the Qur'an does not contain new revelations of the truth. Adding to this and offering examples from the text, he also argues that the Qur'an is often opposed to 'science, philosophy, and common sense' (p. 165). Amongst other topics, he also explores the 'persecuting principles' of the work, its errors in describing the character of God and sin, and Muḥammad's morally flawed character.

In the conclusion to the chapter, Mitchell notes that ignorant people are deceived by 'the puerile and ridiculous traditions and observances which have been added to [Islam]' (p. 169), and finds there is folly in exploring some aspects of it, such as accounts of Muḥammad's night journey, which is 'worse than silly; it is absolutely profane' (p. 170). He ends by expressing his hope that Muslims will turn from 'him of Mecca' to Christ.

Mitchell's 'The Musalmans of Bengal' is a paper presented at the General Missionary Conference at Allahabad in 1872-3. In the conference report, it is eight pages long. Mitchell begins by offering justifications for a mission to Muslims in India, noting that they are more numerous than the populations of predominantly Muslim countries such as the Ottoman Empire, and are more accessible than Muslims in other countries because of British rule in India, although 'here Muhammadanism is full of life; attacking the Gospel rather than waiting to be attacked' (p. 65). He suggests that the reason why Muslims are so numerous in Bengal is that many rural converts were offered by their Muslim rulers 'relief from oppression, and a higher social status, inasmuch as the Qurán inculcates the brotherly equality of all *mominin* or believers' (p. 66). But he warns that, since the British have taken the place of the Mughal emperors, Muslims have lost their status and many have had to earn a living in ways they find demeaning, causing 'disaffection to the British rule' (p. 67).

He compares Muslims and Hindus, noting that each is antagonistic towards the other and judging that Muslims are morally inferior: 'They are more litigious – which is saying a great deal – more restless – and more given to crimes of violence, especially against women' (p. 67). Their lower classes are not well educated because they cannot afford to send their children to school, where the language of instruction is in any case foreign to

them, while their upper classes despise foreign learning: 'They have been crushed by the strong hand of the Kafir [...] but they scorn the thought that their minds also should be enslaved by his miserable books' (p. 68).

Mitchell briefly describes radical revivalist movements, which, he believes, are taking advantage of the ignorant masses, turning them into intolerant fanatics and bringing matters to 'a very grave conjuncture' that missionaries, the government, Hindus and educated Muslims should not ignore (p. 71). The government should provide proper education, while Christian mission to Muslims in Bengal, which has been inadequate, should be expanded and conducted in a way that is numerically proportionate to the Muslim population.

The third of Mitchell's works that refer to Islam, *Foreign missions of the Protestant Churches*, contains an account of the state of non-Christian religions, Islam among them. This is in ch. 3, which is entitled 'The chief pagan religions'. In this account, entitled 'Mohammadanism' (pp. 43-60), Mitchell briefly outlines the presence of Islam in various countries and offers a view about the possibilities of evangelism. Concerning India (pp. 47-51), he challenges the claim that the country is becoming Muslim and gives evidence from his own experience to support his view. He sees Islam there in decline: 'Old families are decaying, and few new ones are taking their place' (p. 49); he knows that Muslims reject new forms of education, although efforts have been made to help them, and he is confident that the knowledge they acquire will 'certainly impair their bigotry – their boundless scorn and hatred of all religions save their own' (p. 50).

He points out that there have been conversions from Islam, so missionaries should not feel discouraged. Furthermore, as education spreads among Indian Muslims, there will be development, though this will be into a form of faith that is closer to theism. 'This implies a new attitude, not only towards Mohammadan traditions, most of which are exceedingly foolish, but towards the Koran itself' (p. 51). The result could be that Indian Islam may become a 'powerful factor' in the world, though it would be Islam in little more than name.

Mitchell pulls no punches. He clearly sees Islam as a religion that will not disappear, though his predictions that imply it will mature away from unquestioning acceptance of the teachings of the Qur'an and Hadiths have, in the years since he wrote, largely proved to be wide of the mark.

Henry Rice's *Native life in south India* (1889) contains only brief references to Muslims. They include short accounts of Muslims in Madras and brief descriptions of Muslim dress, marriage customs, the place of women with

focus on how they are tended by doctors, and funeral practices. He bases his description of marriage and the place of women on quotations from a Muslim informant.

Rice makes a more extensive exploration of Islam in a five-page article entitled 'Mohammed and Mohammedanism', which was published in the *Missionary Review of the World* in October 1891. In this, he portrays Christianity and Islam as being engaged in a 1,200-year conflict that has enveloped the whole of Asia and Europe. He starts with Muḥammad, whom he sees as a political leader who gained power by declaring himself to be a divinely commissioned prophet (p. 742). He understands the Muslim conquests as religious in nature and observes that, within Islam, 'there is no room for national distinctions; religious belief stands in place of nationality' (p. 742). He argues that, in Muslim countries, there is no separation between Church and State, but rather 'the State is simply the Church in its unavoidable temporal relations' (p. 742). Following the advent of Islam, every Muslim became an armed missionary.

Rice next notes that, within Islam, it is only the words of Muḥammad that are accepted as having divine authority. Like many others writing at this time, he defends Muḥammad's sincerity and honesty in the early part of his career and argues that Islam, and particularly its focus on belief in one God, was good for the people of Arabia. He explores the extent to which Muḥammad was influenced by Christianity, arguing that, although Muḥammad had contact with Christians, it seems unlikely that he came into contact with 'the genuine text of the New Testament or its genuine teaching in any shape' (p. 744). The only part of Christian doctrine that Muḥammad grasped correctly, he argues, was the miraculous birth of Christ. He suggests that Muḥammad may have rejected Christianity because of misconceptions, such as that the doctrine of the Trinity represented idolatry. Following this, he explores Muḥammad's 'sexual laxity', arguing that his relations with women show a fall from both 'the standard of the Gospel and from the standard of his own early life' (p. 745). He refers to the importance of the Qur'an's teachings on the nature of paradise and its focus on sensual reward as a key difference from the Bible.

His main criticism of Muḥammad is that, in a world that had received the Gospel, 'he fell back on the theology and morality of the Law' (p. 745). Islam, he argues, did massive reformatory good in Arabia and has also done so in other countries, but in passing to them it became 'the greatest of curses to mankind' (pp. 745-6). It represents a hindrance to the reception of Christianity and has encouraged systems of slavery and polygamy. Ultimately, Islam is 'a reform which has stifled all other reforms' (p. 746).

The antagonistic nature of Christian-Muslim relations, Rice argues, is grounded in the fact that Islam is the closest religion to Christianity and this makes it antipathetic towards Christianity. Nevertheless, the progress of the religion is limited and, in every place where it has met 'with Christian civilisation, it has succumbed' (p. 748).

Thomas Smith's *Mediaeval missions* comprises the lectures he gave during his tenure of the Duff Missionary Lectureship at Edinburgh and Glasgow Universities in 1880. It consists of seven lectures and is 279 pages long. Smith explores Islam in the fifth lecture (pp. 156-96). He does not engage in a detailed discussion of Muḥammad's life, though he does not think that valuations of him as either 'the purely virtuous man, the pure patriot, the earnest reformer, the universal philanthropist, the ardent aspirant after the pure worship of God' (p. 164) or delighting in 'unlimited blood-shedding and unlimited sensuality to a greater extent than that to which any other man in his age and country delighted in them' (p. 165) are correct. Muḥammad was first and foremost an 'Oriental [...who] had the Oriental idea that the privileges of a potentate include indulgence in sensuality' (p. 165). When we judge Muḥammad's character, he argues, it needs to be remembered that, with regard to his sensuality, 'he acted just as every other man of his age and his country would have acted' (p. 165). In addition, because Muḥammad was an Arab and Ishmaelite, he believed that 'the perfection of virtue was success against an enemy' (p. 165), which will have meant everyone outside his tribe.

Like many authors of his time, Smith applauds Muḥammad for challenging idolatry and focusing on belief in a single Deity, noting that he 'was capable of beginning the process of elevation, and was [...] an essential preparation for the better gospel of the grace of God' (p. 166), though there is no evidence that this has happened and in fact Muslims are often hardened against the gospel. Comparing Hindus and Muslims, he states that he does not believe that Muslims have 'purer notions of the Godhead, or [...] of morality' (p. 166) than their counterparts.

Then Smith discusses the Muslim conquest of North Africa and Iberia, and also the laws of apostasy in Muslim Iberia and the lack of religious choices available for contemporary Christians beyond martyrdom and unfaithfulness. This leads into the main focus of the chapter, which is a discussion of the missions of Francis of Assisi, Ramon Llull and others to Muslim Iberia and North Africa.

Smith also translated Gustav Warneck's *Die gegenseitigen Beziehungen zwischen der modernen Mission und Kultur* (1879) into English under

the title *Modern missions and culture. Their mutual relations* (1883). This includes some brief discussions of Islam and Muslims.

As its title suggests, **John F.W. Youngson's** *Forty years of the Panjab mission of the Church of Scotland 1855-1895* is an outline of the history of the Church of Scotland's work in the Punjab. It consists of 298 pages and contains 34 chapters. In the introductory chapter, Youngson briefly records the Muslim conquest of the Punjab, arguing that, although many people became Muslims in order to save their lives, large numbers of the newly subjugated people, 'refusing to accept a creed which they knew by its baleful fruits was false, either sacrificed their lands and other possessions or laid down their lives' (p. 3). He goes on to argue that Punjabi Muslims are superior to those found elsewhere.

While brief references to Muslims in the Punjab past and present are relatively frequent – in ch. 2, Youngson describes village life and the role of mullahs – the main exploration of Islam in the book comes in ch. 4, which is devoted entirely to it. Youngson suggests that many Hindus were forcibly converted to Islam and, as a result, some new Muslims continued to worship Hindu deities and follow Hindu religious customs. This means that Hindus and Muslims have 'common secular interests, […] drink from a common well, worship the same saints, and even in some places bow before the same idols' (p. 33).

Youngson groups the Muslims of the Punjab into Sunnīs, whom he regards as equivalent to Pharisees; Wahhābīs, whom he sees as equivalent to Puritans; and 'Naturis', who 'reject Mohammed's miracles and inspiration, as well as everything that makes religion the outcome of repentance, atonement for sin, and loving dependence on a personal God' (p. 34).

On the Wahhābīs, he observes that, unlike other Muslims in the Punjab, they do not pray to any prophet or saint, or visit shrines (p. 35). In his outline of religious life in Muslim villages, he mentions the general lack of literacy amongst the Muslim 'priests', though there are a few learned individuals among them conversant in Arabic and Persian who train others. He focuses on the Muslim practice of sacrifice, noting that, although they reject Christ's crucifixion, they sacrifice animals at ʿĪd al-aḍḥā. Closing this short chapter, he argues that the beautiful Muslim religious buildings in India, such as mosques, and their numerous clerics 'are among the strongest hindrances to the advance of Christ's kingdom' (p. 36).

Ch. 9, which explores the work in Bombay of the missionary Thomas Hunter (1827-57), who was killed with his family during the 1857 Uprising, includes the conversion narrative of a Muslim, Mohamet Ismael, and

quotes from his own testimony (pp. 79-83). This takes up most of the chapter. Although Youngson's description of the Uprising does not include many references to Muslims, when he discusses the murder of Hunter and his family he mentions that it was rumours about the opening of a school for Muslim girls by Hunter's wife that offended Muslims (p. 107).

Ch. 14, on the first conversions in the Punjab, records difficulties during street preaching to Muslims. Youngson notes that a Mr (Robert) Paterson took the line of argument that since all men are sinners, they require a saviour and that this is the role fulfilled by Christ and not Muḥammad (p. 123). In one village, this argument, which was put forward together with evidence that Muḥammad did not perform miracles and was himself a sinner, attracted threats against the preachers. The same reaction from incensed Muslims is recorded in ch. 24, which is concerned with street preaching, and ch. 25, which outlines trips made by missionaries to various villages.

SIGNIFICANCE

In their focus on the practical work carried out by missionaries in India, these books attest to the dedication of men and women of strong evangelical principles who held the clear view that Christianity was the only true faith and all others were misguided or demonic. The consequence was that, while they may have considered Muḥammad a good man, at least for part of his life, the religion he introduced had little, if any, value. There are few signs that they referred to the Qur'an in exchanges with Muslims, which suggests that they did not think it worth reading in any detail.

The works attest to a general attitude that, like all other 'pagan' faiths, Islam for these strong evangelical Christians was a faith and way of life from which its followers should be rescued. If they put forward any reasons for this, they often argued along lines favoured by missionaries throughout the 19th century, that human sinfulness could only be expunged by Christ and that Muḥammad could not compete with him because he was a self-professed sinner. There could be no accommodation between the two faiths and relations take the form of competition or open hostility. Experiences of the 1857 Uprising, which a number of them mention, very probably fed into this appraisal.

Duff's work has been used in an argument that the Uprising of 1857 served as 'an incentive that would encourage the Christian missionaries to speed up their process of proselytizing at the expense of the local religions, notably Islam' (Belkacem Belmekki, *Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan*, p. 34), while Mitchell's testimony about the rebellion has also been used to show

that missionaries saw this as a moment of evangelical opportunity (Green, *Islam and the army*, pp. 72-3). Nevertheless, most references to these missionaries' work focus not on their exploration of Islam and Christian-Muslim relations, but on their work related to other religions and their place in Indian colonial history.

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James Harry Morris

Thomas Walker Arnold

DATE OF BIRTH 19 April 1864
PLACE OF BIRTH Devonport, Plymouth
DATE OF DEATH 9 June 1930
PLACE OF DEATH London

BIOGRAPHY

Thomas Walker Arnold was born in Devonport, Plymouth, in 1864. He received his early education in Plymouth and, after a family move, in London. As a child and young man, he developed interests in the British Empire and navy, the Italian Renaissance and its art, and the life of St Francis of Assisi, though it was in Cambridge that he was drawn to Oriental Studies, which set the main trajectory for his scholarly career. Over the course of his life, he gained proficiency in Greek, Latin, Sanskrit, Persian, Arabic and Urdu, along with French, German, Italian, Dutch and Spanish.

A watershed in Arnold's life came in 1888, when, at the age of 24, he travelled to India to join the teaching staff of the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College in Aligarh, founded by Sayyid Aḥmad Khān (1817-98; *CMR* 24, 424-47) in 1875. In the ten years he spent there, he developed friendships and collaborations with, among others, the Muslim scholar Muḥammad Shiblī Nuʿmānī (d. 1914; *CMR* 24, 1029-38), with whom he promoted the two sides of the college's original mission: teaching 'modern' subjects in order to prepare Muslim students for productive lives under the British Raj, and maintaining a place for traditional Islamic learning. From early in his time at Aligarh, he was seen as a scholar who had a genuine feel and sympathy for Islam and Muslims, and who supported the cause of Islamic reform. He also adopted Muslim dress and built friendships with Muslim colleagues marked by mutuality. In 1892, Arnold married Cecilia May Hickson, and the couple had their only child in 1896. His first major academic work, and still by far his most influential, *The preaching of Islam*, was published the same year.

In 1898, Arnold left Aligarh and took up a post at Government College, Lahore. Over six years there, he published *Al-Muʿtazilah*, a translation of the part of Ibn al-Murtaḍā's (1374-1436) *Kitāb al-munya wa-l-amal* on the early Muslim rationalist theologians, and he continued his long-term project of translating *Fioretti di San Francesco* into English. By this time,

he had come to admire Islamic rationalism along with Sufi mysticism as important ingredients in his vision of what was needed for the modern revitalisation of Islam. In part, this reflected his personal, somewhat idiosyncratic religious views. Although he appears to have been brought up in a nonconformist Christian setting, by 1890 he had distanced himself from Christian doctrine and denominationalism and had embraced a non-dogmatic rationalist humanism that viewed mysticism as the common essence of religions. Owing to this rational-ethical-mystical approach, as well as to his lifelong attachment to St Francis, his associates gave him the nickname 'the saint'. Among the most significant aspects of his years in Lahore was the friendship he developed with his student Muḥammad Iqbāl (1877-1938), the outstanding 20th-century Muslim poet, philosopher and reformer. Throughout his life, Iqbāl paid tribute to Arnold's influence upon him.

Arnold and his family returned to England in 1904. Although he visited the Islamic world with some frequency, he lived in England for the rest of his life. He served in a number of government roles up to 1921, including as a librarian in the India Office, an educational adviser for Indians who had come to England to study, and an adviser to the India and Foreign Offices. He remained loyal to the British Crown (he was knighted in 1921), though he refused to engage in surveillance of Indian students in England and he maintained a sympathetic posture towards Indian calls for independence.

In 1921, Arnold was appointed professor of Arabic and Islamic Studies at the School of Oriental and African Studies, London University. This may have been the first time the title 'Islamic Studies' was used as part of an academic title in England. He served in this role until his death in 1930.

During these later years in England, Arnold published his translation of *Fioretti* in 1908, a new edition of *The preaching of Islam* in 1913, and *The caliphate* in 1924. As the English editor of the first edition of the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, he developed and maintained contacts with fellow Islamicists across Europe and collaborated with figures such as Alfred Guillaume (1888-1965), R.A. Nicholson (1868-1945) and other Orientalists of the time. The scholarly projects which took up his later years mostly focused on art in the Islamicate world. From 1924 to 1926, he published *Survivals of Sasanian and Manichaean art in Persian painting* and *Miniatures from the period of Timur* (with F.R. Martin), and in 1928 *Painting in Islam*, often hailed as his second most important work after *The preaching of Islam.* His 1928 Schweich Lectures, delivered to the British Academy (he was elected a fellow in 1926), were published posthumously in 1932 as *The Old and New*

Testaments in Muslim religious art. Arnold also catalogued the Mughal-era paintings of the Library of Chester A. Beatty, the results of which were also published posthumously in 1936.

Arnold's life and legacy defy simple categorisation. He was an Orientalist and servant of the British Empire who maintained a highly sympathetic approach to Islam and Muslims, as seen in his deliberate efforts to accentuate the rational and enlightened in Islam against what he regarded to be the biased approaches of other Orientalists. That he regarded himself as a figure who could interpret Islam to the 'West' and vice versa is apparent in his short 1922 essay, 'Europe and Islam'. Writing as a representative of 'Christian Europe', he argued that the remedy for the strained early 20th-century relations between Europe and the Islamic world lay in both sides' acknowledgement of their historical interdependence and the 'common elements' shared by the Christian and Islamic traditions. He also called for Europeans in particular to adopt a 'truer and juster estimate of Islam' ('Europe and Islam'), a statement that summarises well what Arnold himself attempted to provide over the course of his career.

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

The preaching of Islam

DATE 1896
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

Arnold's *The preaching of Islam. A history of the propagation of the Muslim faith* provides a comprehensive history of Islam as a missionary religion, explicitly focused on the labours of agents who spread Islam peacefully or 'unobtrusively', up to the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The first edition was researched and written in India, during the years of Arnold's service at the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College in Aligarh. The second edition, which includes revisions based on reviews of the first edition, along with new research Arnold had carried out in the meantime, was prepared in the years following his return to England and was published in 1913. Running to 496 pages, this edition is used here.

In ch. 1, the Introduction, Arnold lays out his goals for *Preaching*. Arguing that Islam is a 'missionary religion' like Buddhism and Christianity, he acknowledges that the astonishing spread of the religion around the world is owed to 'various causes, social, political and religious'. Yet among these, he continues, 'one of the most powerful factors at work [...] has been the unremitted labours of Muslim missionaries' (p. 3). Arnold defines the key term 'missionary' broadly so as to include a range of actors who contributed to the peaceful spread of Islam; Sufis, scholars and traders are among those he highlights most. But what about Muslim rulers and warriors? Since, according to Arnold, 'European writers have taken such care to accentuate' political factors, including violence and persecution, as drivers of the expansion of Islam, 'there is no fear of their being forgotten, and they do not strictly come within the province of a history of missions' (p. 7). Indeed, for Arnold, evidence of the 'missionary spirit of Islam' is best found 'not in the cruelties of the persecutor or [...] the exploits of [...] the Muslim warrior' (p. 5), much less in what Arnold calls elsewhere 'bigots and fanatics' (p. 420), 'but in the quiet, unobtrusive labours of the preacher and the trader who have carried their faith into every quarter of the globe' (p. 5).

To read *Preaching* correctly, therefore, one must understand Arnold's fairly firm separation of the 'political' from the 'religious', and his contention that 'the missionary life of Islam' emerges properly from the latter rather than from the former (p. 424). In this context, Arnold compares his own goals to those of historians of Christian missions: the true animating spirit of Christian expansion is seen, he suggests, not in the violence employed by history's Charlemagnes, King Cnuts or the Crusaders, but in the quiet activities of missionary monks and preachers such as Willehad, Gottfried and Francis Xavier (pp. 7-8). This does not mean that Arnold ignores political and military factors altogether, however: the second edition of *Preaching* in particular gives rather more space to such factors, probably in response to criticisms of the first edition (see Watt, 'Sir Thomas Walker Arnold', pp. 16, 18-19 and notes).

Having set out his agenda and perspective, Arnold proceeds to his discussion of the history itself. *Preaching* follows a geographical schema in roughly chronological order. Ch. 2 starts with the rise of Islam in 7th-century Arabia, tracing the traditional biography (*sīra*) of Muḥammad 'in one of its aspects only, that in which the Prophet is presented to us as a preacher, as the apostle unto men of a new religion' (p. 11). Arnold assembles anecdotes from Muḥammad's *sīra* and lists of qur'anic texts to support the idea that Islam is a universal religion that is meant to be spread peacefully (e.g. pp. 5-6, 30-1).

Ch. 3, 'The spread of Islam among the Christian nations of western Asia', turns to the period during and after the Arab-Islamic conquests. Arnold argues that the post-632 Muslim military conquests were not chiefly concerned with fostering conversions to Islam but with territorial expansion. Widespread conversions to Islam would follow in the centuries-long processes of 'peaceful penetration' (p. 50), inter-religious interaction and debate, and through the complex decisions of individuals and groups. Arnold gives numerous case studies of all these processes. Here and throughout the book, he makes use of a wide range of sources, including some that are evidently 'legendary' in nature. Yet, always the cautious historian, he is diffident about the kinds of conclusions one may, and may not, draw from these sources.

Arnold next turns in ch. 4 to 'The spread of Islam among the Christian nations of Africa', focusing on North Africa, and in ch. 5 he covers 'The spread of Islam among the Christians of Spain'. Ch. 6, 'The spread of Islam among the Christian nations in Europe under the Turks', is the last chapter that includes the word 'Christian' in its title. As their titles suggest, chs 3-6 deal significantly with historical examples of Christian-Muslim relations: the ways diverse Christian communities from Syria to North Africa, from

Armenia, Georgia and Serbia to Crete and Spain, encountered the 'missionaries' of Islam and interacted with the new faith and its adherents, along with how and why they converted, resisted conversion, and so on.

Chs 7-12 cover, in order, 'The spread of Islam in Persia and Central Asia', 'The spread of Islam among the Mongols and Tatars', 'The spread of Islam in India', 'The spread of Islam in China', 'The spread of Islam in Africa' (by which is meant Sub-Saharan Africa), and 'The spread of Islam in the Malay Archipelago'. Each of these chapters follows the pattern established in the preceding sections of the book, covering geographical regions more or less chronologically through numerous case studies of Muslim missionary activity, alongside discussions of the causes and consequences of the spread of Islam. The chapter on India deserves special mention. Because of Arnold's almost 16 years of residence in British India, along with his association with leading Indian Muslim figures, he was able to assemble unique sources from that context.

In the Conclusion, ch. 13, Arnold restates his main themes, draws out some contrasts with the missionary history of Christianity and highlights the roles women played in the missionary history of Islam. Most space is given to a discussion of the 'causes' of the success of Islam as a missionary faith. Arnold identifies, among others, Islam's simple creed and 'rationalism', the beauties of each of the Five Pillars, the role of Muslim traders, the overall tolerance experienced by non-Muslims under Muslim rule, daily contact with Muslim life and thought, and the achievements of Islamic civilisation. He ends with two notes on the present and future of Islamic missionary activity. First, he says that the 'Wahhabi reformation' has and will continue to 'awake and keep alive the innate proselytising spirit of Islam' (p. 426). Second, he suggests that pan-Islamic sentiments, awakened as a result of the 'loss of political power and worldly prosperity' in the age of European colonialism will make Muslims bold to speak about their faith with outsiders, a dynamic he suggests is especially prevalent among Indian and Malay Muslims (p. 427). *Preaching* has three appendices, the last of which discusses 'Muslim missionary societies', of which only a few existed in the early 20th century (p. 438).

SIGNIFICANCE

As is clear from this account, Arnold broke new ground in *Preaching*, a fact that was recognised by his contemporaries (see Stein, 'Thomas Walker Arnold', pp. 446-8; Watt, 'Sir Thomas Walker Arnold', pp. 16, 18-19). The first thing to note is that he was the first Western scholar to write a comprehensive missionary history of Islam and that he was able to tell a different kind

of story from conventional (for the time) histories of Islam, which focused on political events, battles, dynasties, great thinkers, and so on. While certainly not a 'social history' in today's terms, it usefully shifted the focus to the mundane, often grassroots activities of less-well-known figures. In so doing, it brought together a rich assortment of 'missionary' stories from across Islamic history. In fact, one of the enduring qualities of *Preaching* is the collection of delightful tales it contains. In this connection, it may be noted that Arnold necessarily focused less on the missionised, or recipients of the new religion, and more on the exploits of the missionaries, or transmitting agents. Nevertheless, he includes several, sometimes essentialist, discussions of the former under what we might call 'causes of conversion to Islam'.

Second and closely related, Arnold told a global story. Rather than focusing merely on the Muslim heartlands of the Middle East and North Africa, he included significant material from the so-called peripheries of the Islamic world such as Sub-Saharan Africa, India, South-East Asia, China and Indo-Malaysia. This obviously entailed a massive research effort. For Arnold, the nameless traders who brought Islam to the southern coasts of India or China, or the Sufi Islamisers (not his word) who spread Islam in the heart of north India and among the peoples of the Inner Asian Steppe were as worthy, perhaps more so, of inclusion in the story as the ʿAbbāsid caliphs in Baghdad.

Third, Arnold made a conscious choice to accentuate peaceful and tolerant factors that led to the spread of Islam, over against political and military factors. In this, he was ahead of his time. To give one example, he argues that the post-632 Muslim military conquests were chiefly concerned not with spreading the religion of Islam as much as with territorial expansion, a conclusion which is commonplace among scholars today. Although this brought criticism, which Arnold tried to address in the second edition of *Preaching*, he nevertheless maintained this historiographical perspective. In this way, it might be said that the book follows Arnold's own advice that Europeans should adopt a 'truer and juster estimate of Islam' ('Europe and Islam', p. 155). That he was successful in this can be seen in the ongoing popularity of *Preaching* well beyond his lifetime. Indeed, when many 'orientalists' of Arnold's era are summarily rejected as overly biased against Islam, his work is used by Muslims to this day. Contemporary Muslims celebrate the work as a powerful corrective to Western stereotypes about Islam and even as a resource in devising contemporary *daʿwa* strategies (Kuiper, *Daʿwa and other religions*, pp. 2-3, and notes).

Fourth, Arnold's work, while not focused on Christian-Muslim relations as such, contains much material that relates to this theme. Indeed, chs 2-8 include significant discussions of the ways in which Muslims and Christians encountered one another from the lifetime of Muḥammad through the entire period of the gradual diffusion of Islam across the Middle East, North Africa, Central Asia and beyond. As noted earlier, chs 3-6 include the word 'Christian' in their titles. While Arnold does not deny occasional instances of persecution of Christians under Muslim rule or the political incentives that might have caused some Christians to embrace Islam, he certainly minimises them in favour of an overall focus on peaceful and constructive interactions between the two communities. *Preaching* may thus be seen as a sourcebook of historical examples of Christian-Muslim relations, weighted towards the irenic and tolerant.

Fifth, Arnold rightly saw that it was important to study Islamic mission in the past because mission was destined to be central to Muslim thought and activism moving into the future. He gives no specific predictions, although his closing comments on the role of Wahhābism in prompting Muslim communities to take up mission with fresh vigour have been borne out by subsequent events – especially if 'Wahhābism' is taken as shorthand for reformist movements across the Islamic world more generally.

In the same way, the century and more that has passed since the appearance of the second edition of *Preaching* has borne out his concluding words on the leading roles India's Muslims seemed poised to play (pp. 426-7). India – along with post-Partition Pakistan and Bangladesh – has indeed proven to be an incubator for new missionary movements over the last hundred years or so (Kuiper, *Da'wa and other religions*, pp. 6-8, 257-8; Kuiper, *Da'wa. A global history*, pp. 164-71).

Finally, in the book's last appendix, Arnold discussed 'a recent development in the missionary history of Islam' – the founding of Protestant-style Muslim missionary organisations or societies (p. 438). At the time just a few existed, including Rashīd Riḍā's *Dār al-da'wa wa-l-irshād* in Egypt (which only lasted until the outbreak of the First World War). Yet one detects in Arnold's discussion that, in his view, this 'recent development' was the beginning of something much larger. And indeed, since Arnold's time Muslims have, under the banner of *da'wa*, founded hundreds of new missionary organisations in every part of the globe, a fact that has made the ongoing study of the missionary history of Islam an exciting and vital necessity.

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John Murdoch

DATE OF BIRTH 1819
PLACE OF BIRTH Glasgow
DATE OF DEATH 1904
PLACE OF DEATH Madras

BIOGRAPHY

John Murdoch was born on 22 July 1819 in Glasgow. He studied at Glasgow University and went on to train to be a teacher. In 1844, he travelled to Ceylon, where he was appointed headmaster of government schools in Kandy, though he grew increasingly uneasy at having to teach Christianity to Buddhists, Hindus and Muslims. In 1849, he finally resigned from his post.

He had already begun writing Christian tracts, and now he bought a printing press and worked to produce and circulate literature for the Sinhalese Tract Society. His travels in Ceylon alerted him to the spiritual needs of Indians working in the coffee plantations, leading him to take part in founding the Tamil Coolie Mission. Through this involvement he got to know about Christian work in India, forming connections that led to his being appointed Agent and Travelling Secretary for the Christian Vernacular Education Society in India (later renamed the Christian Literature Society). He remained with this society until he retired in 1903, working to produce vernacular literature that everyone could afford and to train school teachers and improve standards in schools. A major concern was to promote education in local languages rather than English.

His work took him to places outside India, including England, the United States, China and Japan, and he came into contact with well-known public figures such as Lord Curzon, the last viceroy of India, and Florence Nightingale, with whom he discussed matters of sanitation. He acquired a wide reputation as an author and educator and was awarded a number of distinctions, including the Kaiser-i-Hind medal from the Indian government at the very end of his life. He died in Madras in 1904.

Among Murdoch's many works a number include aspects of Islam, though none shows evidence of first-hand research. They include: *Arabia and its prophet. Compiled from Burckhardt, Burton, Muir, Hughes, Sell, Wherry, Osborn, and Pfander* (Madras, 1889), *The religions of the world,*

an illustrated sketch compiled from Tiele, Menzies, Monier-Williams, Max Muller, Oldenberg, Muir, Lyall and others (London, 1902) and *Hindu and Muhammadan festivals* (London, 1904).

He also wrote *God's voice from Armenia to the churches*, a short 16-page pamphlet dated September 1896 (*God's voice*, London and Madras, p. 16), the month following *Selections from the Koran* (*Selections*, p. v). He was deeply disturbed by the massacres of hundreds of thousands of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire by Sultan Abdulhamid II (r. 1876-1909) in 1894-7 in response to their attempts to seek help from European powers to gain reforms and more equitable treatment. In this pamphlet, Murdoch first declares that the massacres are not an outrage attributable to the sultan alone but are typical of Islam and in fact follow the precedent of Muḥammad himself. He adds that, while the great powers have done little, in England 'strenuous efforts' have been made to end them (pp. 3-6), and he goes on to identify two lessons to be learnt from the massacres: first, that they are typical of Islam and those who assert that contemporary Islam is not so different from Christianity are wrong; and second, that they may arouse Christians to perform their duty of evangelising Muslims. He goes into detail about the need to recruit more missionaries, to encourage missionaries in India to turn their attention from Hindus to Muslims, and to make more literature available in the appropriate languages and on the right topics, which experts in the field could be asked to suggest (pp. 9-15). His concluding thought is that it is imperative to focus more attention than at present on Muslims. Written at the same time as *Selections from the Koran*, much of this pamphlet summarises what Murdoch says there.

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Selections from the Koran

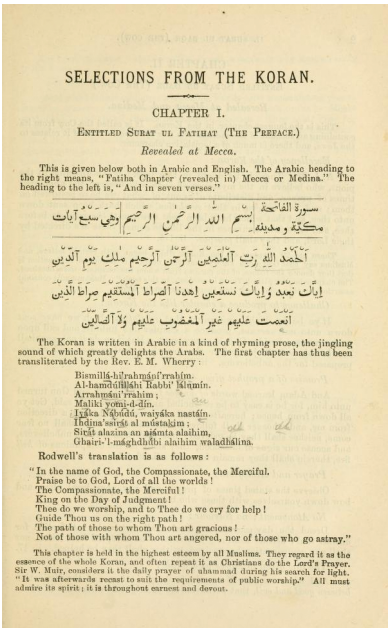
DATE 1896
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION
Selections from the Koran, with an introduction, copious explanatory notes, and a review of the whole, compiled from Sale, Wherry, Muir, Hughes, Osborn, Pfander, Palmer, Dods and other writers, written in Madras in 1896 and roughly 230 pages long, is a handbook on the teachings of the Qur'an and its status as scripture. It is divided into three parts: an introduction, short summaries and translated passages from the majority of the suras, and a critical 'Review of the Koran'. Murdoch explains his purpose at the very beginning:

> One aim of the following compilation is to assist intelligent Muslims in the study of their own religion and Christianity. The number of such at present is not very large, but it will increase with the spread of education. But the principal object is to afford Missionaries, in brief compass, a general view of Islam, and to direct them to the best sources of information. (p. iii)

Writing in the aftermath of 'the terrible atrocities in Armenia', Murdoch is horrified at 'the true character of Islam' and acutely aware of the need for systematic evangelisation efforts among Muslims in India (pp. iii-iv). This book is intended as a small contribution to equipping missionaries for this work. It is not the product of Murdoch's personal research on the Qur'an but rather the result of judicious reading in recent sources from European scholars, in this respect resembling his later *Arabia and its prophet. Compiled from Burckhardt, Burton, Muir, Hughes, Sell, Wherry, Osborn, and Pfander* (Madras, 1889) and *The religions of the world, an illustrated sketch compiled from Tiele, Menzies, Monier-Williams, Max Muller, Oldenberg, Muir, Lyall and others* (London, 1902).

In the introduction (pp. vi-xxx), Murdoch outlines the structure and character of the Qur'an, discusses editions, translations and studies,



SELECTIONS FROM THE KORAN.

CHAPTER I.

ENTITLED SURAT UL FATIHAT (THE PREFACE.)

Revealed at Mecca.

This is given below both in Arabic and English. The Arabic heading to the right means, "Fatiha Chapter (revealed in) Mecca or Medina." The heading to the left is, "And in seven verses."

سورة الفاتحة بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم وهي سبع آيات مكية و مدنية

الحمد لله رب العلمين الرحمن الرحيم ملك يوم الدين

اياك نعبد و اياك نستعين اهدنا الصراط المستقيم صراط الذين

انعمت عليهم غير المغضوب عليهم ولا الضالين

The Koran is written in Arabic in a kind of rhyming prose, the jingling sound of which greatly delights the Arabs. The first chapter has thus been transliterated by the Rev. E. M. Wherry:

Bismillá-hi'rahmáni'rahím.
Al-hamdúlillahi Rabbi' álamín.
Arrahmáni'rahím;
Maliki yomi-d-dín.
Iyáka Nábúdú, waiyáka nastáin.
Ihdina'sairá al mústakím;
Sirát alazina an aámta alaihim,
Ghairi-l-maghdhúbi alaihim waladhálina.

Rodwell's translation is as follows:

"In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful.
Praise be to God, Lord of all the worlds!
The Compassionate, the Merciful!
King on the Day of Judgment!
Thee do we worship, and to Thee do we cry for help!
Guide Thou us on the right path!
The path of those to whom Thou art gracious!
Not of those with whom Thou art angered, nor of those who go astray."

This chapter is held in the highest esteem by all Muslims. They regard it as the essence of the whole Koran, and often repeat it as Christians do the Lord's Prayer. Sir W. Muir, considers it the daily prayer of ahammad during his search for light. "It was afterwards recast to suit the requirements of public worship." All must admire its spirit; it is throughout earnest and devout.

Illustration 16. Surat ul Fatihat

relays Muslim accounts of its origins and briefly refers to its sources as understood in European scholarship. There is no discussion of its status or authenticity, as though Murdoch assumes that readers will take it as Muḥammad's own composition incorporating earlier Jewish, Christian and other works. He briefly explains the Hadith and their status and then examines the elements of the Muslim creed ('Iman') and duties ('Din'), effectively the Six Articles of Belief and the Five Pillars. He goes on to the 'sects', comprising Sunnīs, Shīʿīs, Wahhābīs, Sufis and 'the Modern School' and the main festivals observed by Indian Muslims.

The second part (pp. 1-118) includes summaries of the main elements of all the suras apart from some of the shortest at the end of the Qur'an, together with translations of some verses. Murdoch draws attention to significant points of doctrine and practice, among them references to Jesus and Christianity. His treatment of Q 4:157, the denial of Jesus's crucifixion, is particularly telling. The translation he quotes runs 'yet they slew him not, neither crucified him, but he was represented by one in his likeness', where the unspecific and allusive *wa-lākin shubbiha lahum* ('But so it was made to appear to them' in 'Abd Allāh Yūsuf 'Alī's translation) is made to mean that a substitute was crucified in place of Jesus, while Murdoch's

comment contains an uncompromising denial of the veracity of this based on persuasive evidence, including the Qur'an itself:

> Chapter iii. 54 [55] admits His death. 'When God said, O Jesus, verily I will cause Thee to die, and I will take Thee up unto me, and I will deliver Thee from the unbelievers.' The Jewish prophets, as Isaiah and Daniel, foretold the death of Christ. He Himself often said that He would die. Jewish, Heathen, and Christian histories attest the fact of His death. It was only a few obscure Christian heretics that denied it. This one passage refutes the claim of Muhammad to be a prophet of God. (p. 19, cf. p. 125)

Murdoch is just as uncompromising in the comment he includes following Q 54:1, 'The moon is cleft asunder', which has been understood by Muslims as a miracle performed by Muḥammad. This is from the translation of the Qur'an by Edward Palmer (d. 1882), which had appeared in 1880:

> A tradition refers this to a miracle : the unbelievers having asked for a sign, the moon appeared cloven in twain. This, however, is opposed to the direct teaching of the Koran elsewhere, in which the power to comply with the demand for a sign is always distinctly disclaimed. The usual explanation is the natural one, that the expression merely refers to one of the signs of the day of judgment. (p. 104)

Without discussion, Murdoch appeals to the common-sense judgement of his readers to reject the possibility of this happening.

The third part, titled 'Review of the Koran' (pp. 119-79), is an analysis of the deficiencies of the Qur'an. After prefatory comments about its literary 'excellencies' and its attestation to the Bible (pp. 119-22), Murdoch turns to the accusation that the Bible has been corrupted, explaining that the Qur'an does not contain this allegation but Muslims interpret the Qur'an in this way, and he shows in detail that the Qur'an accepts the authority of earlier revelations and does not regard them as abrogated (pp. 122-8). Murdoch then proceeds to argue that the Qur'an cannot be God's revealed word, detailing its errors, its 'monstrous fables', its inaccurate geography, its dangerous impracticality – in the north, where the sun does not set in some months, it would be death to observe Ramaḍān literally (pp. 134-5) – and similar shortcomings, including its fatalism, its perpetuation of slavery, its intolerance of other religions, its sanctioning of polygamy and secluding of women, the change in Muḥammad from someone who sincerely believed he was sent by God to a ruler who manipulated the 'revelations' as he chose (pp. 135-65). He then argues that there is no salvation through the Qur'an or Muḥammad (pp. 165-70) before making an appeal to 'enlightened Muslims' to recognise the deficiencies in the educational

and social systems based on Qur'an teachings and to see that Christianity is the faith of the civilised (pp. 171-8). He concludes with an appeal 'to obtain the Injil', study it and follow its teachings: 'Imitate Him of whom it is said, "He went about doing good." Teach by a pure and holy life. Looking up to God as our great Father in heaven, and regarding all men as brethren, seek to make them wiser and better' (p. 179).

SIGNIFICANCE

Murdoch's *Selections from the Koran* is emblematic of the activity that emerged from the confluence of post-Enlightenment scholarly analyses of Islam and European Christian efforts to evangelise Muslims. It assumes both that Christianity is correct in what it teaches and answers the needs of societies in all parts of the world, and also that it is the criterion by which the Qur'an and Islam should be judged. There appears to be no question that the whole structure of Islam has emerged from Muḥammad's creative energies, and that its deficiencies are evidence that it was not divinely sanctioned. The work witnesses to the unwavering confidence that fuelled missionary activities and the sense of superiority that influenced European Christians to reject all that diverged from what worked for them.

The work does not seem to have been noticed by reviewers or other contemporary authors. It is occasionally listed, most notably in modern editions of J.M. Rodwell's translation of the Qur'an (where Murdoch's name is spelled Murdock).

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R. Vennela

Sir William Muir

DATE OF BIRTH 27 April 1819
PLACE OF BIRTH Glasgow, Scotland
DATE OF DEATH 11 July 1905
PLACE OF DEATH Edinburgh

BIOGRAPHY

William Muir's evangelical Presbyterian family was involved in the textile business during the late 18th-century industrial advance in Glasgow and its hinterland. His father's sudden death, leaving eight children under the age of ten, led to relatives with Indian connections to direct William and his three older brothers to careers in the East India Company. After excellent educations at local academies and Glasgow and Edinburgh Universities, all four brothers trained for Indian service at the Company's Haileybury College in Hertfordshire. There, William commenced studies in Arabic, Persian and Urdu, as well as Sanskrit. Reflecting his deep evangelical convictions, his interests in Arabic language, Islamic history and society led to a desire to support through literary contributions growing missionary hopes for the conversion of India, especially its Muslims.



Illustration 17. Sir William Muir

Unlike his brothers, two of whom died young in India, and the eldest, Dr John Muir, who became a noted Sanskrit scholar, William reached the highest echelons of the Indian Civil Service, serving nearly 40 years (1837-76), mainly in the North-Western Provinces, and finally as its Lieutenant-Governor (1868-74), as a financial member of the Viceroy's Legislative Council in Calcutta (1875-6) and, until 1885, on the Council of India in London. Muir's Indian career was notable chiefly for his role in combating the risings of 1857 in the north-west (he later published his correspondence on the sequence of events that took place), his policies on land settlement and other revenue matters, and measures for famine prevention. A particularly strong interest was the furthering of Indian access to both elementary and higher-level education. The Muir College in Allahabad, later to become his province's first university, was named after him. His plans for female education, a concern close to his heart, were neglected by his successors.

Muir's official status precluded any open evangelism, which was prohibited during his service years by the government's 'neutrality policy' on religion. Nevertheless, his Arabic and Urdu scholarship made him the literary arm of missionary engagement with local Muslims. Missionaries to Muslims, notably Karl Gottlieb Pfander (*CMR* 24, 188-236) and Thomas Valpy French (*CMR* 24, 338-44), valued such scholarly support to Protestant missionary endeavours. Muir's writings on Islamic history and Christian-Muslim relations, in monograph, article and tract form, were published during his Indian service and especially during his long semi-retirement in London and in Scotland, where he was an active principal of Edinburgh University for 18 years (1885-1903).

His four-volume *The Life of Mahomet* (London, 1858-61) proved his most widely-read, but most controversial, work, both then and into the early 20th century. His *Annals of the early caliphate from original sources* (London, 1883), which he intended as a continuation, was less widely read. This work of 459 pages traces the history of Islam through the period of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs and the Umayyads as far as the massacre of Ḥusayn and his followers at Karbalāʾ in 680, and in a closing chapter Muir continues through the remaining years of the Umayyads and the first ʿAbbāsids as far as al-Maʾmūn (r. 813-33). This chapter concludes with a short section (pp. 454-9) in which he sums up Islam in the present, commenting on revivals – particularly in the emergence of the Wahhābīs in the Arab world and India, and 'in wild and mystical devotion, in the excesses of Soofeeism, and in the profane extravagances engendered by a belief in the Divine Imamate and emanations of the Deity' (p. 455) in Iran – but

seeing no essential change from the early centuries. 'Swathed in the rigid bands of the Corân', Islam cannot adapt. Within the state, there is no sign of 'any approach to free institutions, or any germ whatever of popular government', and within society 'polygamy and servile concubinage are still the privilege, or the curse, of Islam; the worm at its root, the secret of its fall', together with the husband's right to exercise divorce at will, weakening the marriage bond, and female seclusion, which shuts men out from 'the bright and gracious, purifying and softening influences, of female companionship' (pp. 457-8). Islam will therefore remain unchanged: 'The nations may advance in civilisation and morality, in philosophy, science, and the arts; but Islam stands still' (p. 459).

Like-minded evangelicals regarded Muir as the most effective mid-19th-century scholarly challenger to claims for the inspiration of Islam because of his knowledge of the Arabic 'original sources'. But Indian Muslim scholars rejected his interpretations as influenced by Christian bias. His Urdu history of early Christianity, *Masīḥī kalīsiyā kī tārīkh sanah 313 ʿī tak* (Agra, 1848) was used by some Indian *ʿulamā'* to point out alleged discrepancies between the Testaments. The leading 'modernist' Muslim of the region, Sayyid Aḥmad Khān (knighted by the British) criticised his views on the Prophet and also on Islamic social practices in *A series of essays on the life of Mohammed* (London, 1870).

In his later years, Muir also contributed prolifically to missionary efforts among Muslims in the wider Islamic world through translations of selections from the Qur'an from Arabic and Persian, accounts of inter-religious debates and other evangelical tracts. He was particularly vociferous in critiquing the position of women in Muslim societies, exemplified in an article on 'The veil; or seclusion of women in India', a practice extended to Hindu society, he thought, after the Muslim invasions, and only to be remedied by educating women in their *zenana* seclusion. As he regretfully intimates at the end of *Annals*, he thought that this treatment of women was partly responsible for Muslim society being incapable of progress.

Despite his criticisms of the Prophet, Islam and Muslim society, Muir had managed to create through his administrative and educational policies some positive relationships with leading Indian Muslims, including Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān (*CMR* 24, 424-47), his foremost critic, whom he addressed as his *dost* and *ʿaziz* ('friend'). No doubt, *Realpolitik* played a great part, but Muir's deep love of the Arabic language and genuine concern for the interests of India's Muslims seemed to struggle throughout his life with a need to express his certainty of the falseness of Islam and the shortcomings of Islamic society. A formative influence on Christian

perceptions of Islam in the late 19th century, Muir's critical tone was, by the mid-20th century, increasingly rejected by Western scholars.

MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Primary

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Avril Powell

WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

The life of Mahomet

DATE 1858-61
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

William Muir's *The life of Mahomet* is a four-volume presentation of the story of Muḥammad from the earliest Islamic narratives. The first volume appeared in the early part of 1857, the second in 1858 and the third and fourth in 1861. In the first edition, which is used here, the four volumes total 1,332 pages including supplements and appendices at the ends of vols 2-4 and an index at the end of vol. 4.

The presentation begins with a 103-page chapter on the Islamic sources for the biography of Muḥammad and a significant consideration of their historical reliability before their contents are reported. The remainder of vol. 1, comprising chs 2-4, sketches the pre-Islamic history of Arabia according to biblical and classical sources and Muslim tradition, and then begins the story of the birth and childhood of Muḥammad. Vol. 2 picks up the account from Muḥammad's childhood and traces his career until his migration from Mecca. Vol. 3 presents Muslim accounts of his first five years in Medina and vol. 4 takes the story from the sixth year of the hijra up to the death and burial of Muḥammad. Vols 2 and 3 contain sections on 'the Portions of the Coran' associated with successive parts of the story, and Muir breaks into the narrative to discuss issues within it at a number of points in vol. 2 and at the end of vol. 4.

Before presenting the story of Muḥammad as he understands it from the Arabic sources, Muir sets out the main sources of the story and justifies what will be his extensive and detailed use of the earliest Muslim narratives to which he has access. He first transmits Muslim accounts of the origins of the Qur'an and touches on the extent of the evidence for

Muḥammad within it (vol. 1, pp. ii-xxvi), and then considers the 'Tradition', by which he means the Hadiths (pp. xxviii-lxxxvii). He is sceptical about the historical reliability of the Hadith collections, even pointedly disagreeing with the 'too favourable' view of the German scholar Aloys Sprenger (p. lii; *CMR* 24, 472-95). He then introduces the early Muslim 'biographies' of Muḥammad to which he has access: the *Sīra* of Ibn Isḥāq in the edition of Ibn Hishām; the *Maghāzī* of al-Wāqidī; the *Ṭabaqāt* of Ibn Sa'd ('Kâtib al Wâqidi', 'al-Wāqidī's secretary'), and the *Ta'rīkh* of al-Ṭabarī (pp. lxxxvii-ciii). He reports the very recent discovery of manuscripts of three of these works in Syria and India, and finally makes the confident assertion that these narrative sources 'present us with all the credible information regarding the Arabian Prophet which mankind are ever likely to obtain' (p. ciii). The story Muir relates is now well-known because so many works that have appeared since it was published have recounted the same story – indeed, partly because of Muir's pioneering presentation of the contents of the Arabic sources in English. However, the four early Muslim narrative sources he chiefly uses were not known in the middle decades of the 19th century in any Western language and, perhaps surprisingly, even among Muslims generally (see Muir, 'Value of early Mahometan historical sources', *Calcutta Review* 46 [1868] 349-90, pp. 389-90).

Once he chose to trust the early Muslim narratives as history, Muir recounted the story of Muḥammad according to the traditional Muslim chronology as he found it. For example, he transmits 'a close outline' of the story of Muḥammad's 'lapse' (the incident of the 'Satanic verses', to use the term given by al-Ṭabarī, when Muḥammad is supposed to have delivered utterances that recognised three pagan goddesses worshipped at Mecca) as he reads it in Ibn Sa'd and al-Ṭabarī, in fact offering a translation of their accounts (vol. 2, pp. 149-53). He then discusses the story and its consequences in Mecca, appealing to his readers' reason to appreciate exactly what may have happened (pp. 153-8). In vols 3 and 4, Muir recounts Muḥammad's military expeditions (*maghāzī*) and battles from the initial raid against the 'Coreishite caravans' (vol. 3, pp. 64-5) through to the late campaign against Tabūk (vol. 4, pp. 186-7). Among a host of other details in his sources, he also passes on Muslim tradition about Muḥammad's dealings with Jewish tribes in Medina (vol. 3, pp. 208-9, 270-1) and Khaybar (vol. 4, pp. 61-2) and about the conquest of Mecca (vol. 4, pp. 109-35).

Parts of the work in which Muir deliberates about the contents of his sources include vol. 2, ch. 3, titled 'The belief of Mahomet in his own inspiration' (pp. 60-96); ch. 7, 'The relation of Islam to Christianity' (pp. 277-317);

and the final chapter of vol. 4, 'The person and character of Mahomet' (pp. 302-24). The first of these passages reports the material in the Muslim narratives that claims Muḥammad received revelation (pp. 74-88) as well as Islamic tradition about the activity of devils and *jinn* (p. 89-91), and then poses a question regarding Muḥammad's belief about himself. Muir proposes that the account of the devil's temptation of Jesus in the Gospel accounts may be the best illustration of the nature and possibility of Satanic influence, and then proceeds to describe the three temptations reported in the Gospel, asking after each about the analogous temptation in the case of Muḥammad (pp. 91-5) and concluding that, in the Muslim story he is recounting, Muḥammad failed to resist.

Vol. 2 includes 'praise of the virtues of the early Mussulmans' in Mecca, but at p. 272 Muir begins a comparison of these virtues with Christian and Jewish morality and, in ch. 7, he explores the material in the Qur'an and the Muslim narratives about Christians and Christianity. He locates the main comparison between Muḥammad and Jesus at the points in their respective stories where they suffer the greatest persecution (pp. 273-6). He quotes and discusses the main qur'anic passages related to Christianity (278-88) and speculates on the process by which the Qur'an, which at first Muḥammad and his followers considered auxiliary to the Jewish and Christian scriptures, came to supersede and even replace for them the 'previous Revelations' (pp. 290-8, 305). He spotlights the denial of the crucifixion of Jesus in particular (Q 4:157) as a case of Muḥammad being misinformed about Christian teaching (pp. 306-8). Muir characterises Muḥammad as earnest (p. 303) and sincere (p. 316) but, looking ahead to his years in Medina in vols 3 and 4, asserts that ignorance of the Christian faith became culpable when it was no longer involuntary.

Muir's assessment of the 'person and character' of Muḥammad in vol. 4 is largely positive about such aspects as his appearance, habits, daily conduct, simplicity, modesty and friendship towards those close to him (pp. 302-6), all details drawn from Islamic sources, which Muir also offers in a supplement taken straight from Ibn Sa'd (pp. 325-38). Muir is also positive about the story of Muḥammad in Mecca, highlighting his faith in God and sense of the divine, his moral daring, suffering and determination, earnestness and honesty, and lack of ulterior motives (pp. 311-18). 'But the scene altogether changes in Medina', writes Muir. 'There the acquisition of temporal power, aggrandisement, and self-glorification, mingled with the grand object of the Prophet's previous life' (p. 318). What follows is a straightforward and negative evaluation of the Muḥammad of Medina as this is portrayed by the Muslim narratives (pp. 318-20). Muir writes that the

character of Muḥammad in the Islamic sources is in fact inconsistent, and claims that the inconsistencies appeared 'from the period of Mahomet's arrival at Medina' (p. 323). He also refers back to what he characterised as Muḥammad's belief in his own inspired status. 'When once he had dared to forge the name of the Most High God as the seal and authority of his own words and actions, the germ was laid from which the errors of his afterlife freely and fatally developed themselves' (p. 323).

SIGNIFICANCE

The life of Mahomet soon became the standard English biography of Muḥammad, published in several editions during the 19th century and in a new revised edition by T.H. Weir in 1923. It was welcomed as a brand new and up-to-date presentation of the story of Muḥammad according to the Islamic sources and, in parts, a Christian response to the story. Indications of its significance and influence have moved in two main directions: the purely academic study and interpretation of Islamic sources, and Muir's own responses to the material he was recounting.

As a work of academic scholarship, *The life of Mahomet* is undoubtedly an important accomplishment, acknowledged (sometimes only conceded) even by its critics. Muir was one of the first writers to offer a detailed explanation of the material of the earliest Arabic Islamic sources on Muḥammad in a Western language, and possibly in any language other than Arabic. When he began, he could mention Aloys Sprenger's *The life of Mohammad from original sources* (Allahabad, 1851), but that only went as far as the flight from Mecca, and Muir disagreed with some of the basic assumptions in it ('Value of early Mahometan historical sources', p. 349). The Arabic manuscripts to which he and Sprenger had access in India 'were more complete and authentic than any available in Europe', he wrote. 'I found that there was no treatise, either in English or in any of the continental languages, entirely adapted for the end in view' (vol. 1, p. iv).

Muir 'was the first British scholar to attempt a popular interpretation of Islamic history based on study of the Arabic sources', and his books 'were widely regarded as authoritative during the colonial era'. Avril Powell comments that his work 'is original in many of its linguistic and historical assessments, which reflect sound Arabic learning' (Powell, 'Muir, Sir William'; see also Powell, 'Modernist Muslim responses', p. 73), while Clinton Bennett observes that his books on the origins of Islam 'broke new ground in using early sources' (Bennett, 'Muir, Sir William', p. 501). Albert Hourani writes that the books 'are still [in 1960] not quite superseded' ('Islam and the philosophers of history', *Middle Eastern Studies* 3 (1960)

206-68, p. 221), and Edward Said recognises that they 'are still [in 1978] considered reliable monuments of scholarship' before he criticises Muir for 'his attitude toward his subject matter' (*Orientalism*, New York, 1979, p. 151).

Muir's careful consideration of the historical reliability of his source materials in the book's extensive opening chapter was remarkable for its time. He gave 59 pages to an examination of the character of early Muslim tradition, and explicitly disagreed with the optimism of Sprenger that true traditions can be distinguished from false. He described Muslim tradition as: 'a work of entanglement and complication which would require for its perfect accomplishment a finer discernment, and a machinery of nicer construction, than human nature can boast of' (vol. 1, p. lii). Muir developed this discussion more fully after the publication of *Mahomet* in his 1868 essay, 'Value of early Mahometan historical sources', in which he reviewed Sprenger's essay on the nature and value of the Islamic sources prefixed to vol. 3 of the latter's *Das Leben und die Lehre des Mohammad* (Berlin, 1865). That discussion was possibly the most sophisticated academic enquiry into the issues to that point. In the same century, a sceptical approach to the materials of Muslim tradition was famously picked up by Ignaz Goldziher, who mentions Muir's *Mahomet* (*Muhammedanische Studien*, Halle, 1890, vol. 2, pp. 6, 50, 133, etc.), and, in the 20th century, in the studies by Joseph Schacht. Robert Hoyland observed more recently that Muir's introductory 'Sources for the biography of Mahomet' 'anticipates most of the subsequent objections to the authenticity of the traditions and has perhaps been unjustly neglected' ('Writing the biography of the Prophet Muhammad. Problems and solutions', *History Compass* 5 (2007) 1-22, p. 17 n. 7). A similar recent indication of the achievement of that introduction is Harald Motzki's mention of Muir's 'extensive list of possible biases' in the tradition material ('The murder of Ibn Abī l-Ḥuqayq. On the origin and reliability of some Maghāzī reports', in H. Motzki [ed.], *Biography of the Prophet Muhammad. The issue of the sources*, Leiden, 2000, 170-239, p. 171 n. 5).

In India during Muir's career there, a number of Muslim authors challenged him on his views about Muslim traditions as well as on his assessment of Muḥammad, including Sayyid Aḥmad Khān (1817-98), Syed Ameer Ali (1849-1928) and Chirāgh ʿAlī (1844-95). Alan Guenther writes that these modernist Muslim writers sometimes defended the traditional Muslim approach to the sources they used, while at other times they made use of European methodologies ('Ḥadīth in Christian-Muslim dialogue', p. 264). Aḥmad Khān, for example, agreed with many of Muir's comments on the fabrication of Hadiths but argued that Muslim scholars had developed

ways of distinguishing genuine traditions from false (Guenther, 'Response of Sayyid Aḥmad Ḫān', p. 230). A unique aspect of Muir's writing was that 'the context in which he wrote made Muslim evaluation of his research both immediate and interactive' ('Response of Sayyid Aḥmad Ḫān', p. 219).

On the other hand, Muir's decision to trust the Muslim narrative sources for the story of Muḥammad has since been shared by some of the best-known writers on Muḥammad, perhaps chief among them William Montgomery Watt in *Muhammed at Mecca* and *Muḥammad at Medina*. Writers continue to the present day to base their versions of the Muḥammad story on the same narratives that Muir used, often selecting from the great store of details those elements that put Muḥammad in a positive light (e.g. Lings, *Muhammad*; Ramadan, *Footsteps of the Prophet*; Cole, *Muhammad*). Other writers question the historical reliability of the accounts, characterising them as *Heilsgeschichte* (J. Wansbrough, *Sectarian Milieu*, Oxford, 1978, pp. 1-49), or denying the ability of human individual and collective memory accurately to transmit the facts over the gap of nearly two centuries up to the earliest written accounts (S.J. Shoemaker, *Creating the Qur'an. A historical-critical study*, Oakland CA, 2022, pp. 148-203). Trust in Qur'an, Prophetic tradition, and the earliest Muslim narratives continues to be a matter of disagreement among academic scholars (see e.g. S. Anthony, *Muḥammad and the empires of faith*, Berkeley CA, 2020, pp. 1-21).

Before writing this book, and even before starting his series of preliminary articles published in the *Calcutta Review* (1853-5), Muir wrote of a need for accurate writing on the story of Muḥammad, contrasting his conception of this with a number of books and articles that he felt missed the mark ('Biographies of Mohammad for India', *Calcutta Review* [1852] 387-411). At that time, he was already familiar with the scholarly writings of Sprenger, Gustav Weil (1808-89) and Armand-Pierre Caussin de Perceval (1795-1871). He wrote with excitement about the discovery of a manuscript of al-Wāqidī's *Maghāzī* and exulted that the facilities for the study of Islamic origins were 'probably, greater in India, than in any other part of the world'. He also wrote about 'the gratitude of all the lovers of Mohammed's biography' ('Biographies of Mohammad', p. 387).

Beyond his concern for accuracy and interest in the story of Muḥammad, Muir indicated a number of wishes about readers' reception of his book. At the very end of vol. 4, he indicated a hope of 'contributing fresh materials towards the formation of a correct judgment' of Muḥammad and the Qur'an (vol. 4, p. 324). And after reviewing Sprenger's essay on the nature and value of Islamic source materials, he reflected on the impact that the publication of such scholarly studies as Sprenger's and his own, based on

the earliest Muslim narratives, might have on 'educated and thoughtful Moslems' in India. He seemed to conclude that such an interest is 'almost unknown' and queried whether the spectre of 'the sword of Omar' was still discouraging Indian Muslims from free enquiry ('Value of early Mahometan historical sources', p. 389). He made a suggestion: 'The honest and enlightened Moslem ought not to shrink from a domain of inquiry, opening up a long vista of history and literature, which he naturally looks up to with veneration, and portions of which he may justly regard with pride' (p. 390).

Edward Said famously speculated in his *Orientalism* on the motivations for Muir's 'enormous labours' in *The life of Mahomet*, characterising the work as an example of a kind of literature that compares the European world with the Orient (New York, 1979, pp. 149-50). He commented that such literature highlighted some features of the Orient that it valued and perhaps even overvalued but then came back with a comparison that portrayed the Orient negatively. Said could evidently not think of any other reason for Muir writing it (p. 151).

Powell and Bennett seem to suggest similar psychological analyses of Muir. Both point out that Muir enjoyed close relationships with several prominent Muslims in India but, for Bennett, this was '[d]espite his negative view of Islam' (Bennett, 'Muir, Sir William', p. 500), and for Powell a 'paradox' because of Muir's disagreement with Muslim beliefs and social institutions (Powell, 'Muir, Sir William'; cf. Powell, 'Modern Muslim responses', p. 73). None of these characterisations seems to take seriously what Muir himself wrote in the first paragraph of his 1857 preface, that he initiated these 'enormous labours' at the request of a Christian apologist he respected, Karl Pfander (Muir, *Life of Mahomet*, vol. 1, p. iii). For an evangelical scholar such as he, there was no necessary contradiction in combining together original linguistic and historical assessment, love of Muslim friends and their cultures, and disagreement with Islamic truth claims for Muḥammad and the Qur'an. Muir's earliest writings on conversation with Muslims, more than ten years before *The life of Mahomet*, show a carefully thought-through integration of principled faith and sensitivity towards Muslims (1845, pp. 454-5). It is quite reasonable to understand with Alan Guenther that 'Muir's exploration of the sources of the traditions was to arrive at a historically reliable assessment of the life and character of Muḥammad', and that Christian missionaries working in India found his history 'useful in their own efforts to create an ordered understanding of the Muslims to whom they were presenting the Gospel of Jesus Christ' ('Ḥadīth in Christian-Muslim dialogue', pp. 276, 264-5).

Some of the best known criticisms of *The life of Mahomet* cite Muir's comments at the end of vol. 4 (pp. 302-24) about the 'person and character' of Muḥammad. The passage is, in fact, largely positive, and the negative remarks Muir makes are concerned with his approach to writing history: '...the darker shades of character, as well as the brighter, must be depicted by a faithful historian' (p. 307): Muir had chosen to trust the earliest Muslim narratives as history about the life of Muḥammad and these appeared to him to contain both positive and negative aspects, so he responded to both in a straightforward way.

This question is central to the significance of *The life of Mahomet* as well as to the entire history of Christian-Muslim engagement, so a fuller discussion is merited. Some writers have criticised Muir 'for introducing subjective opinion into his historical writings' (C. Bennett, *CMR* 17, 'Introduction', 1-22, p. 12). Seen from another perspective, however, the details as portrayed by Muir's Muslim sources paint a picture of the conduct and character of Muḥammad, and all subsequent thoughts of the reader about this conduct are opinions and subjective, including the many statements of approval.

Norman Daniel criticised Muir in a similar way, grouping him along with D.S. Margoliouth (1858-1940) and Henri Lammens (1862-1937) for not being 'fundamentally sympathetic to Muhammad or to Islam' (Daniel, *Islam and the West*, p. 287). A fundamental sympathy with Muḥammad out of academic familiarity with the Islamic sources that Muir presented is, of course, subjective. One may also ask what the attitude evidently required by Daniel has to do with the scholarly study of the subject (cf. A. Rippin, 'Literary analysis of Qur'ān, *tafsīr*, and *sīra*', in R.C. Martin [ed.], *Approaches to Islam in religious studies*, Tucson AZ, 1985, 151-63, p. 159). Interestingly, Daniel also faulted Muir and others for 'sympathy with many ideas that have served Christian apologetic since the time of St. John of Damascus; of criticism, for example, of Muhammad's personal standards, of his use of force and of diplomacy, even the suggestion of self-delusion' (p. 287). Sharing the responses of Christians of earlier times to the Muḥammad story does not mean, however, that Muir was perpetuating medieval polemic. His *Life of Mahomet* was at the time an up-to-date presentation and analysis of the earliest Islamic written sources of the story, some of them only just discovered, along with a Christian response to the story.

Daniel granted that '[i]t may well be argued that such criticism is essential to a Christian position' (*Islam and the West*, p. 288). Hourani also commented, though perhaps with less regard for Muir's personal position than Daniel, that '[s]uch views are typical of the attitude of orthodox Christian

thought in the nineteenth century' ('Islam and the philosophers of history', p. 222). Muir indeed asserted, at the start of his discussion of the 'supernatural influence' on Muḥammad according to the Islamic sources, that '[i]t is incumbent upon us to consider this question from a Christian point of view' (vol. 2, p. 90). And when he was comparing the decisions facing Muḥammad with the account of the temptation of Jesus in the Gospel accounts, Muir offered 'no apology for the introduction of this parallel' (p. 95). 'I have done this, I trust', he writes in the preface, 'with the combined caution and freedom which the obscurity and the importance of the question demand' (vol. 1, p. v). He seems to understand that his reader would also want to form a 'correct judgment' on the story given in the Islamic narratives.

A shift in attitude towards 'fundamental sympathy to Muhammad' seems to have taken place around the time of the publication of Daniel's *Islam and the West* in 1960. When T.H. Weir released a new, revised edition of Muir's book, *The life of Moḥammad from original sources* (1923), he left unaltered '[a]ll the learned author's expressions of opinion and the view he took of particular events' (p. i), including 'The person and character of Moḥammad' (pp. 510-23). Still, in 1953, Watt could write that declining to make judgements from a Christian perspective is an incomplete 'academic attitude'. 'In so far as Christianity is in contact with Islam, Christians must adopt some attitude towards Muhammad, and that attitude ought to be based on theological principles. I would readily admit that my book is incomplete in this respect' (W.M. Watt, *Muhammad at Mecca*, Oxford, 1953, p. x). After 1960, however, it began to be risky to express views that departed from 'sympathy to Muḥammad' in the academy, and the issue remains in relation to scholarly works about Muḥammad today. The example of M.G.S. Hodgson is instructive. 'It is not just a Christian squeamishness', he wrote, 'that points to Muḥammad's military measures as a central problem in his prophethood' (*The venture of Islam*, London, 1974, vol. 1, p. 186). Critics attempted to disqualify Hodgson on the grounds that he was a Quaker and a pacifist. But Richard C. Martin later took up his defence and challenged critics to 'direct their refutations toward his argument and not his religious background'. Then Martin paid a tribute to scholarly evaluation: 'The difference between Hodgson and many of his Western Islamicist critics is that Hodgson dared to believe that moral issues do not disappear when a scholar takes up the study of a civilisation other than his or her own' (R.C. Martin, 'The religious foundations of war, peace, and statecraft in Islam', in J. Kelsay and J.T. Johnson (eds), *Just*

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The Corân. Its composition and teaching

DATE 1878

ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English and other languages

DESCRIPTION

Muir's *The Corân. Its composition and teaching; and the testimony it bears to the Holy Scriptures* is a composite work. In the first part, which comprises three chapters (pp. 7-65 in the original edition of 1878), he introduces the Qur'an. This is a newly written account of its origins, chronology and teachings. In the second part, which comprises three sections (pp. 66-239), he lists and discusses Qur'an verses favourable to the Bible. This part is a third edition of his *The Testimony borne by the Corân to the Jewish and Christian*

scriptures, which, according to Muir's preface to *The Corân*, was originally published in Agra in 1855.

In ch. 1 of the first part Muir explains how the Qur'an came into being according to accounts of Muḥammad's life given in early Muslim histories and, in ch. 2 he explains how it was compiled and sets out a chronology of the 114 suras. In ch. 3 he gives a general sketch of the teachings of the Qur'an.

In the second part, Muir cites and discusses all the verses that refer in any way to the Jewish and Christian scriptures. After a short introduction, he quotes in Arabic and English translation the 131 passages he has identified, organised according to Meccan and Medinan suras, and within these two groups according to his scheme for dating the suras. He uses asterisks to highlight significant references to the Bible and, as important verses are repeated, he develops a cross-reference system for the relevant passages.

SECTION FIRST.

PASSAGES FROM SURAS REVEALED AT MECCA.

I.—The first passage, in the chronological order of the Corân, which contains an express reference to the Bible, is

SURA LXXXVII., v. 18. سورة الاعلي

ان هذا لفي الصحف الاولي * صحف ابرهيم و موسي *

Verily this is in the former pages;
The pages of Abraham and Moses.

Commentary of Jelaloddeen—ان هذا اي افلاح من تزكي و كون الاخرة خيراً لفي الصحف الاولي المنزلة قبل القران—"*Verily this, i.e.* the prosperity of the good, and their well-being in a future world, *is in the former books, i.e.* those revealed before the Corân."

II.—Similarly, SURA LIII., v. 36 † سورة لنجم

أم لم ينبأ بما في صحف موسي * و ابرهيم الذي

† A Meccan Sura of later date, introduced here on account of a similar expression to that in Art. I.

Illustration 18. Passages in the Qur'an revealed at Mecca that refer to the Bible

In addition to quoting and commenting on the many verses that refer positively to the *Tawrāt* and *Injīl*, Muir also discusses the 'tampering' verses (p. 232) upon which the harshest Muslim accusations against the Bible were based. Here, and also in the final section of the book, he makes a distinction between the way Christians and Jews are addressed in the Qur'an and clarifies that the verses understood to be the harshest accusations are against Jews, not Christians (pp. 229-35). He frequently includes interpretations from the well-known classical Muslim commentaries of al-Bayḍāwī and the Jalālayn, first quoting their original words and then supplying his own translations. He ends by making it clear that the Old and New Testaments were extant and accessible in the first half of the 7th century in the form of manuscripts, the Greek Septuagint and quotations in Christian writings, and pointing out that they were the same as the versions available in the mid-19th century. He reviews the verses that state that the pre-Islamic scriptures are 'with' the Jews and Christians and lists the many respectful expressions the Qur'an uses with reference to the *Tawrāt* and *Injīl* (e.g. that they are 'guidance and light', Q 5:46). He claims further that the Qur'an confirms the inspired status of the Jewish and Christian scriptures, and that Muḥammad appealed to them and 'inculcated' observance of them. Briefly describing the historical and regional setting in the first half of the 7th century, he finally appeals to the reader with a series of 'reasonable' questions based on the Qur'an, asking, for example, whether the People of the Book who are mentioned in the Qur'an as 'honest and faithful' (Q 7:159, 3:113; cf. 57:25, 4:55, 3:199) would have any interest in falsifying their own scriptures or would stand aside if others attempted to do this (pp. 232-4). He ends with an appeal to the 'sincere and honest Mussulman' to honour the Jewish and Christian scriptures, to read and study them, and to take them to heart.

In the preface to the 1855 edition of *The testimony borne by the Corân*, Muir explains that he wrote the work 'in conformity with a promise made in the conclusion to *Bahs mufíd-ul-am*, or "Controversy between a Christian convert and the Cazee of Delhi"' (Agra, 1852, p. 75; see p. 382 above). *The testimony borne by the Corân* was published the year after the famous public debate in Agra between Karl Gottlieb Pfander (*CMR* 24, 188-236) and Raḥmatullāh Kairānavī (*CMR* 24, 253-60).

The account in the first part of *The Corân* of how the Qur'an came into being draws essentially on Muslim tradition as contained in early Muslim histories and the Hadith. Here Muir shows that he trusts these sources and at the end of his account he declares confidently, 'All this leaves no doubt in the mind that the Corân as we read it now contains the very

words delivered by the Prophet' (p. 40). He enumerates several methods for dating the suras, (p. 42) but in fact his own scheme depends on the Muslim history he recounts and also on medieval Muslim lists. He shows considerable confidence in the reliability of the Muslim sources he uses.

The charge that the Bible has been corrupted has been repeated by Muslims from the earliest times and is one of the most common accusations levelled against Jews and Christians. It was more or less taken as fact among Muslims in South Asia, so Muir's listing of qur'anic verses and passages that speak positively and respectfully about the *Tawrāt*, *Injīl* and *Zabūr* provided a much-needed service to Christian-Muslim relations in the region in the 19th century.

SIGNIFICANCE

This is not a book of polemic. Its argument is that the Qur'an, about which it speaks positively, recognises the continuing authority of the pre-Islamic scriptures, and its hope is that Muslims 'may perceive that the Old and New Testaments are never mentioned in the Corân otherwise than with profound veneration, and may thus have their attention drawn to their Divine origin, and the inestimable value of their teaching' (p. 69). Muir's comments on the qur'anic verses seem to come from common-sense observation, and his frequent quotations from Muslim commentaries show to Muslim readers that he is well qualified to say what he does. There is no special pleading and no attack on the text of the Qur'an, even though some of his interpretations may appear strange to Muslims. He makes an appeal as one person of faith to another (pp. 216-17). As a case for the authenticity of the Bible based solely on a fair understanding of the qur'anic material, it is still relevant and useful today.

The Corân. Its composition and teaching is an early example of description and analysis of qur'anic content by means of methodologies that were commonly used in biblical studies. Muir gathers together all the verses that contain a key term or are connected to a particular theme and uses them together to draw out meaning. He frequently quotes and discusses the literary contexts of the verses in order to dispose of implausible interpretations.

The quality of his analyses of Qur'an verses related to pre-Islamic scriptures, including the verses that sparked the harshest Muslim accusations, is remarkable for the time in which he was writing. Gustav Weil's *Historische-Kritische Einleitung in den Koran*, which Muir quotes, was published in 1844, and Theodore Nöldeke's *Geschichte des Qorâns* in 1860. But Moritz Steinschneider's *Polemische und apologetische Literatur in arabischer*

Sprache, the very first academic study of Muslim polemic, including the accusation of biblical falsification, was only published in 1877, and Ignaz Goldziher's famous essay 'Über muhammedanische Polemik gegen Ahl al-Kitâb' in 1878, the same year as Muir's *The Corân*, while nothing comparable had yet been published by any English-speaking author. So Muir appears to have been largely working alone.

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The Apology of Al Kindy

DATE 1882
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

Muir's *The Apology of Al Kindy, written at the court of Al Mâmûn (A.H. 215; A.D. 830), in defence of Christianity against Islam. With an essay on its age and authorship read before the Royal Asiatic Society* is a partial translation and discussion of two letters supposedly written between a Muslim, ʿAbd Allāh ibn Ismāʿīl al-Hāshimī, and a Christian, ʿAbd al-Masīḥ ibn Isḥāq al-Kindī, both members of the court of the ʿAbbāsid Caliph al-Maʾmūn (r. 813-33). The Muslim invites the Christian to convert to Islam and the Christian replies with a much longer criticism of Islam and Muḥammad

(L. Bottini, 'The apology of al-Kindī', *CMR* 1, 585-94). Muir's partial translation runs to 59 pages and is prefaced by an essay (pp. i-xviii) in which he discusses the date, provenance and manuscripts of the work. He argues that the two characters are in fact literary inventions and that the work was written by a single anonymous Christian in the earlier part of the 9th century. This assessment has been generally accepted (Bottini, 'Apology').

Muir wrote in his preface that he had made the effort to translate the *Risāla* so that the text could be used 'in the interests of the Christian faith' (p. i). Although he was writing in London, he was perhaps 'in spirit' back in South Asia, where this 9th-century Arabic work was relevant to 'the same controversy still being prosecuted in the East' (p. viii, cf. p. xviii). To detractors of evangelical Christian engagement with Muslims in India during the 19th century, Muir claimed that, though the figure of al-Kindī presented himself and his faith 'in a purely Asiatic dress and language', 'neither in form nor substance, nor in the reasoning by which it is supported, does the Christianity of Al Kindy materially differ [...] from that which is put forth by the Missionary of the present day' (pp. viii-ix). This is where Muir probably hoped his translation would have the greatest impact.

In the Arabic work (Muir had recently reviewed Anton Tien's Arabic edition in 'Apology of al Kindy, being a discussion between a Mohammedan and a Christian in the ninth century', *Indian Female Evangelist* 6 [April 1881] 49-58), al-Hāshimī's letter presents the main elements of Islam and appeals to the Christian to convert. In his much longer reply, al-Kindī first makes a substantial case for the doctrine of the Trinity and the Christian concept of God, and then, in another lengthy passage, raises questions about the basis of Islam's claim that Muḥammad was a prophet. He sets out his principle of three dispensations of law, 'First, the Divine; second, the Natural; and third, the Satanic', and moves on to a major examination of Muslim claims for the Qur'an as the word of God. He goes on to question the ordinances of Islam, including al-Hāshimī's call to fight 'in the way of Allah', and then outlines the Christian faith and makes a closing appeal to the Muslim to convert to Christianity.

In his *Apology*, Muir first briefly summarises al-Hāshimī's letter and al-Kindī's case for the Trinity and then lays out more fully al-Kindī's questions about the claims for Muḥammad's prophethood, with many translated passages (pp. 4-18). He presents the 'three dispensations' carefully (pp. 20-2) and translates much of al-Kindī's examination of the Muslim claims for the Qur'an (pp. 22-33). In al-Kindī's account of the ordinances of Islam, he gives special attention to what he calls 'the Saracenic crusade' (pp. 41-8). He summarises al-Kindī's account of Christianity less fully, though he includes translations of some passages of the letter (pp. 53-8).

His selective presentation of this 9th-century polemic perhaps reflects the interests of a scholar who knew the story of Muḥammad well from the earliest Muslim narratives and was fascinated to discover how a 9th-century Arab Christian presented it and evaluated it.

Muir shows particular interest in al-Kindī's long discussion of the Qur'an, which he describes to the Muslim as 'what thou regardest as thy stronghold' (p. 22). He gives a detailed translation and summary of al-Kindī's account of the origins of the Qur'an drawn largely from Muslim tradition but including intriguing references to the parts played in its formation by figures such as Ibn Masʿūd, Ubayy ibn Kaʿb and especially Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf (d. 714), governor of Iraq under the Umayyad Caliph ʿAbd al-Malik (r. 685-705; pp. 23-8). The interest of this section relates to Muir's thesis about the dating of the work to the year 830, which is earlier than the accounts of the Qur'an's origins in the canonical Hadith collections (pp. viii-xvi). Al-Kindī explains that everything he relates is drawn from Muslim authorities (p. 29) and claims that, as a member of the tribe of Kinda, who were 'distinguished for their eloquence and poetry', his knowledge of Arabic is as good as that of any Muslim scholar (p. 31). On this basis, he offers a series of straightforward judgements on the language, style, contents and coherence of the Qur'an (pp. 28-33).

In his prefatory essay (which was also published in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* in 1882), Muir argues that the *Risāla* was composed during the time in which it purports to have been written and that 'there is the strongest probability, amounting almost to a certainty, that it is the genuine production of a learned Christian, a man of distinction at the Court of al-Mâmûn, bearing the tribal title of al-Kinda' (p. xvi).

SIGNIFICANCE

The Apology of Al Kindy was the first translation of the *Risāla* into a modern European language (Bottini, 'Apology') and remains a handy way into the work for many scholars, including Muslims, to whom the Arabic original or the full English translation by Anton Tien (published by the Turkish Mission Aid Society and used among missionaries in the late 19th century; A. Newman, *The early Christian-Muslim dialogue*, Hatfield PA, 1993, p. 361 n. 6, dates this translation to somewhere between 1882 and 1885) are not familiar (see Musa, Yusoff and Ahmad, 'Assumed contradictions in the Qur'ān', pp. 324-8). Muir's translation was used until recently to illustrate what some authors characterise as a negative approach to the presentation

of Muḥammad (e.g. Bennett, 'Christian perceptions', pp. 164-5), seemingly imputing to the translator their judgements about the Arabic original.

The attached *Essay on its age and authorship* has been generally acknowledged as providing a sound argument for the date of the *Risāla* (Bottini, 'Apology'; Platti, 'Criteria', pp. 7, 22; Platti, 'Qur'ān', pp. 66-7), though some early reviews of it found Muir's thesis untenable (e.g. B. Halper, 'Review of *The Apology of al-Kindi* and *The Guide to the Right Path*', *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 9, New Series (1919) 485-8, pp. 486-8).

The reception of the *Risāla* itself in the West since its translation into English by Muir has been patchy. On the one hand, Sidney Griffith wrote 101 years after Muir recommended it for further study that, 'Unfortunately, thus far little scholarly attention has been paid to this valuable ninth century discussion' of the development of the Qur'an ('The Prophet Muḥammad, his scripture and his message according to Christian apologies in Arabic and Syriac from the first Abbasid century', in G. Monnot (ed.), *La vie du Prophète Mahomet. Colloque de Strasbourg* (*octobre 1980*), Paris, 1983, 99-146, p. 144), and on the other, scholars of Islamic origins and qur'anic studies have respectfully noted al-Kindī's writing on the history of the Qur'an (G. Nickel, '"Our friendly strife". Eastern Christianity engaging the Qur'an', in *CMR* 15, 255-79, p. 275). Griffith suggested that scholars who neglect the *Risāla* do so because they believe it has a 'polemical character' ('The Prophet Muḥammad', p. 144), a point with which Arthur Jeffery agreed, even though there is material in the *Risāla* that is otherwise supported by a variety of early Muslim sources ('Ghevond's text of the correspondence between 'Umar II and Leo III', *Harvard Theological Review* 37 [1944] 296-332, p. 298 n. 48).

A scholarly edition and translation of the *Risāla*, taking Muir's translation and essay into account, is a *desideratum*.

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The Mohammedan controversy

DATE 1897

ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

The Mohammedan controversy, Biographies of Mohammed, Sprenger on Tradition, the Indian liturgy, and the Psalter is a collection of articles that contains a description and evaluation of Christian-Muslim engagement in South Asia at the very time when it was developing in the middle of the 19th century. The articles date back to more than 50 years before the book's publication, when Karl Gottlieb Pfander's *Mīzān al-ḥaqq* was circulating in north India and was drawing a variety of responses from Muslim writers. The collection presents the thinking of a keen mind among the civil servants of the British administration in India: alive to the nuances of grassroots Christian-Muslim exchange; well informed about the latest progress

in academic scholarship on Islam; and committed to the advance of the Christian message while free to criticise weak arguments on both sides.

All five articles gathered in this publication had been published previously in the *Calcutta Review*. Three of them are of particular interest. The first, 'The Mahommedan controversy' (1845), explicitly addresses ongoing Christian-Muslim debate, while two others, about biographies of Muḥammad (1852) and the sources of Muslim tradition (1868) respectively, approach the engagement from other angles.

In 'The Mahommedan controversy', after a rapid survey of the effectiveness of twelve centuries of Christian engagement with Islam, Muir traces the progress of the 'great argument' in 'the dominion of Europeans in India' (p. 5). He describes 'Controversial tracts on Christianity and Mohammedanism' (1824) by Samuel Lee (1783-1852), Professor of Arabic at Cambridge University, which contains an account of the treatise on Christianity by Hieronymo (Jerome) Xavier (*CMR* 11, 84-91) that he presented to the Mughal Emperor Jahangir (r. 1605-27) in 1609, as well as a Muslim response to Xavier's book (*CMR* 10, pp. 536-43). The heart of Lee's work is three tracts in Persian written by Henry Martyn (*CMR* 20, 89-111 and pp. 91-101) and the replies from the Persian Muslim Mirza Ruza (presumably Muḥammad Riḍā Hamadānī, *CMR* 20, 187-97). Muir relays Lee's comments on Martyn's tracts and his replies to Mirza Ruza (which Muir recommends), and also offers his own views on the strengths and weaknesses in the arguments of both interlocutors.

Muir next introduces the German missionary Karl Gottlieb Pfander (*CMR* 24, 188-236) and describes his work *Mīzān al-ḥaqq* ('The balance of truth'), which he characterises as 'of extraordinary value' (p. 20). The third section of *Mīzān*, in which Pfander weighs Muslim claims for Muḥammad and the Qur'an, Muir evaluates as solid and even unanswerable in parts. Pfander's second book is *Miftāḥ al-asrār* ('Key to the mysteries'), an explanation of the divinity of Jesus and the Trinity, which Muir approves in general but criticises for certain of its arguments. In his third book, *Ṭarīq ul-ḥayāt* ('The way of life'), Pfander expands on the nature of sin, forgiveness and salvation. Muir judges it to be 'unrivalled as an exposition of Christian doctrine in the Persian language' (p. 29). Muir heaps considerable praise on the content of *Mīzān al-ḥaqq* and the language and style of *Ṭarīq ul-ḥayāt*, relating personal anecdotes about their reception in South Asia and quoting favourable comments from both Muslim and Christian publications (pp. 29-32).

At the same time, Muir presents descriptions of Pfander's correspondence in Urdu with several antagonists during the mid-1840s whom he names as Syud Rehmat Ali, Muḥammad Kāzim Ali and Maulvi Syud Ali Hassan (pp. 33-6, Sayyid Raḥmat ʿAlī, Muḥammad Kāzim ʿAlī, and Sayyid Āl-i Ḥasan). From the Muslim side, the correspondence could be extremely harsh, writes Muir, who reports it evenly and acknowledges ability and strength of argument where he finds it on both sides. Departing from Pfander, Muir continues his survey of Muslim works against Christianity with a description of *Saulat uz-zaigham* ('The lion's onset'), a book popular in the North-Western Provinces of India during the 1840s. He notes a reply to it by an American missionary, and then takes the opportunity to urge an improvement in the writing style and appearance of Christian publications intended for the Muslim reader. This leads him into a remarkable reflection on lessons to be learned from Christian-Muslim engagement as illustrated in the contemporary Muslim works he has described.

Writing openly as a Christian with a deep interest in – indeed a personal sense of participation in – the 'controversy', he earnestly calls for stronger attempts to understand the worldview of South Asian Muslims, respect for points at which they could be expected to take offence, and use of only the most compelling arguments, along with 'cautious advances, breathing kindness and love'. He notes the 'nationality of faith' within the Islamic *umma* (referring to the unity among Muslims that transcends nationality), which he says must never be wounded unnecessarily, and he acknowledges a 'religious nobility' among the Muslim *'ulamā'*. He also writes about the 'ignorance and bigotry' he experiences among some Muslims with the same frankness that he uses to describe the nominal and uninformed Christianity among the British in India (pp. 40-2).

This first 1845 article also includes a description of and response to Charles Forster's *Mahometanism unveiled* (London, 1829; *CMR* 17, 139-47), which Muir finds confusing and somewhat delusional in its thesis and unrelated to his experience of Christian-Muslim engagement in South Asia (pp. 42-9). He concludes the article with an appeal to Christians to support the printing of literature that would help correct some of the erroneous notions about the Christian faith held by Muslims in South Asia. Once more, he spotlights *Mīzān al-ḥaqq* and Pfander's other treatises in Urdu and Persian as eminently worthy of printing and distribution.

The Mohammedan controversy provides two supplemental updates to the writings of Pfander and the responses of his Muslim interlocutors, one here at the end of the first article and another at the end of the second article, on biographies of Muḥammad. Muir describes the responses to

Pfander published by Sayyid Āl-i Ḥasan of Lucknow. The main theme of the first, titled *Kashf al-astār li-kasri Miftāḥ al-asrār* ('The curtain drawn aside to show the "Key to mysteries" shattered'), which was actually written by Sayyid Āl-i Ḥasan's nephew Sayyid Muḥammad Hādī, was the declaration that the divinity of Jesus and the Trinity are both impossible according to human reason, and thus the presence of these affirmations in the New Testament only serves to show it has been corrupted. Muir acknowledges the 'subtilty and skill' of the argument but is unable to find any virtue in the contents other than that substantial passages from Pfander's *Miftāḥ* are quoted as Sayyid Muḥammad Hādī's way of setting up his rejoinders.

The second supplement reports on the release of a major Muslim response to *Mīzān al-ḥaqq* titled *Kitāb-i istifsār* ('Book of questions'), written by Sayyid Āl-i Ḥasan himself and published in 1845 after Muir's first article had been published. Muir describes the 18 'questions' in the work, ten of them attacks on the genuineness and authority of the Bible. He translates and cites several long excerpts from these for consideration. Other 'questions' in *Kitāb-i istifsār* are about the Trinity, the miracles of Muḥammad, and – notwithstanding the accusation that the Bible has been corrupted – the biblical passages alleged to be prophecies about the coming of Muḥammad.

Muir then updates the publications of Pfander with a description of the 1847 treatise *Ḥall ul-ishkāl* ('Solution of ambiguity'), a reply to both *Kashf al-astār* and *Kitāb-i istifsār*. *Ḥall ul-ishkāl* also includes Pfander's answers to ten questions put to him by Sayyid ʿAbdullāh Sabzvārī of Lucknow, and the full correspondence between Pfander and Sayyid Āl-i Ḥasan. Muir then presents a number of anecdotal accounts of the influence of Pfander's *Mīzān* in South Asia, which he considers examples of 'the intellectual inquiry and spiritual thought now at work among Hindoos and Mohammedans' (p. 99). Having come up to date on Pfander's writings, he closes the supplement with an exhortation to his readers to press on with the 'vocation' to draw the peoples of South Asia to the light of the Gospel. Muir claims that, at the time of writing (1852), '[a]t every point of contact with Islam, Christianity has the temporary ascendancy' (p. 100), though he doubts whether there is any significant spiritual influence coming from the churches of the European nations.

The second article in *The Mohammedan controversy* that is of interest here addresses the subject of 'Biographies of Mohammed for India' in 1852. The question that Muir pursues is whether Christians in India are taking advantage of the best and earliest Muslim primary sources on the life of Muḥammad that are available, and also the best of what he calls 'the

historical deductions of modern research' (p. 67) from European scholars. He reviews a series of publications with this question in mind, the first being Washington Irving's *Life of Mohammed* (1850; *CMR* 16, 166-73), an edition of which was published by the Bombay Tract Society in 1851. Irving comes in for criticism from Muir for his failure to make consistent use of 'authorities actually at his command' (p. 69), by which Muir means the academic writings of Gustav Weil, Aloys Sprenger, and Armand-Pierre Caussin de Perceval; and behind them the early Muslim narratives of Ibn Isḥāq (in Ibn Hishām's edited version), al-Wāqidī and al-Ṭabarī. Muir also faults the tendency to romanticise episodes through which 'truth is often sacrificed to effect' (p. 69), and the failure to distinguish material from the earliest narratives from stories of supernatural and miraculous events of a later time.

Muir also evaluates popular biographies of Muḥammad written in Urdu by Indian Muslim writers such as Ghulām Imām Shahīd. Again, his criterion is the account given in the earliest Muslim narratives, and by this standard he judges many traditions to be absurd legends. He translates extensively from Ghulām's *Mawlūd sharīf* ('The ennobled nativity') to illustrate the degree of veneration for Muḥammad evident in such writings, and concludes that this very popular book is the gauge of 'the religious mind of Moslem India' (p. 87). Muir laments the absence of 'the faculty of historical criticism' (p. 87) among even educated Muslims, and urges the production of biographies based on the original sources that have been brought to light by scholars such as Weil and Sprenger.

Although the third of these articles, 'Value of early Mahometan historical sources', was originally published in 1868, a considerable time after the first two, it still relates closely to his concern in 'Biographies of Mohammed'. He has in view Aloys Sprenger's work, *Das Leben und die Lehre des Mohammad* (1865), and in particular the essay affixed to the third volume of that work on 'The original traditional sources of Islam'. Muir traces Sprenger's review of the sources from Hadith collections through narratives about Muḥammad and commentaries on the Qur'an to genealogies and poets, and he engages most closely with Sprenger's estimation of the historical value of the 'biographies' or early narrative works of Ibn Isḥāq (in the edition of Ibn Hishām), al-Wāqidī, Ibn Saʿd, and al-Ṭabarī. Sprenger's view is that, apart from the *maghāzī*, or accounts of military raids, the early narratives are historically worthless and unreliable, and that the Hadith collections are more trustworthy. Muir takes issue with this degree of scepticism. He is prepared to accept much in the narratives as fact and, when something seems fanciful, to imagine an historical event behind it. He argues that it is possible, when reading the Muslim stories

of Islamic origins, 'to separate the grain of fact from the husk of overlying fiction' (p. 124).

Muir ends the essay with a curious reflection. Why is it, he asks, that educated Muslims in India seem to show so little interest in what he calls 'the early records of Islam' (p. 152) when British rule has created a climate in which 'the right of private judgment and of discussion is [...] as free as the air we breathe'. He suggests that Muslims need have no fear to inquire and think broadly, though he does add – as if to connect once more to the 'Mohammedan controversy' – that Christian missionaries 'might draw many a polished shaft' from the 'armoury' of the early Muslim sources.

Muir is not impartial in his judgements about the literature he reviews in these essays, and he does not pretend to be. He openly encourages the efforts of Christians to spread their faith in India, writes easily about the 'political ascendency' of European powers in India, and calls Christians to take up the opportunities provided by British rule for printing and distributing literature and for personal contact with Muslims. He combines a lively interest in 'the great argument between the Christian and the Muslim' (p. 6) with a notable familiarity with both the earliest Muslim narrative sources and the latest academic scholarship on these works. At one point, when expressing excitement about Sprenger's discovery in India of a manuscript of the *Kitāb ṭabaqāt al-kabīr* by Muḥammad ibn Saʿd (the 'secretary' of al-Wāqidī) he writes that '[t]he facilities for the study [of Islamic origins] are, probably, greater here than in any other part of the world' (p. 66).

As a scholar, Muir was open to what the earliest extant Muslim narratives reported about the origins of Islam and less sceptical than other scholars, as illustrated in his reaction to Sprenger noted above. This approach, of course, characterises his own writing on the life of Muḥammad in the books he began to publish in 1858. However, he was not open to what he considered later Muslim works containing fanciful teachings about Muḥammad that he found deeply ingrained in the minds of Indian Muslims. In addition to knowing these works, he was able to read and analyse works of polemic and apology in Persian and Urdu from within the context of the writers and sometimes at the very time when Christian-Muslim exchange was taking place, often translating substantial excerpts to illustrate content and style. He also showed that he was able to converse with Muslim religious leaders in their own languages about their responses to Christian works.

Muir was able to criticise the arguments of Christian authors he favoured and to acknowledge when Muslim authors made a stronger case than

their Christian interlocutors. He freely enumerated what he considered the more sensible arguments in Muslim polemic, and urged Christians never to use a weak argument but rather only 'the clear, unforced, unquestionable, deductions of reason' (p. 42). He judged both Christian and Muslim writings on Islam by the standard of the earliest Muslim primary sources and the 'investigations regarding the rise of Islam which have been prosecuted with such success in France, Germany, Austria, as well as here in India' (p. 67). His portrayal of opposing arguments is probably as fair as is to be found at the time from authors deeply committed to either Christianity or Islam.

Muir considered himself to be in the midst of a very important Christian-Muslim engagement and, in these essays, he is cheering on the Christian side. He had accepted the truth of the New Testament witness to Jesus and considered it a message that should be proclaimed in the territory opened to Christian witness in South Asia by British conquest and rule. He saw the freedom for Christian witness in India as part of a new 'grand era' of contact between Christianity and Islam, and the 'dominion of Europeans' in India as providing a favourable setting – to his mind perhaps for the first time in history – for the free exchange of public discourse about the truth of Christianity and Islam. To his mind, the fact of British military and political rule in India should also issue in the bestowal of the blessings of Christian truth from the British presence. He did not find his wish fulfilled by his fellow servants of the Empire, however, but rather in the life and writings of Pfander, the humble Pietist from Würtemberg.

SIGNIFICANCE

The Mohammedan controversy is probably the earliest description and analysis of writings on both sides of a significant Christian-Muslim engagement in South Asia from the context of the participants, out of the local Muslim languages of the exchange, and during the very time that it was taking place. Before any of the writings were available in Western languages, the book offered synopses and substantial passages of translation. It also located the South Asian experience within the larger history of Christian-Muslim relations. Muir listed the reasons why significant contact had not been sufficiently allowed or possible in earlier periods. He considered the British rule of India, especially in the 19th century, to have ushered in a new era of contact between Christianity and Islam, and found freedom there for the right of private judgement and public discussion (p. 152). He also hoped for an increase in 'intellectual inquiry and spiritual thought', and especially a 'more correct and extensive knowledge of Christianity' among Indian Muslims.

The Christian commitment Muir clearly displays in the book cannot be separated from the scholarly sophistication of the discussion within it of Islamic primary sources and the need for 'critical accuracy' (p. 68) highlighted by the most recent academic scholarship of the time. That discussion was also probably one of the first of its kind. Muir described Islam according to the earliest Muslim sources and used them to critique careless Christian, Muslim and secular portrayals. His descriptions are not repetitions of the medieval accusations against Muḥammad that had been volleyed over the parapets from a militarily separated Christendom, nor are they the later judgements from the ideological fashion of a different time and place. Muir chose to trust the early Muslim narratives and to treat them as the baseline for Christian evaluation of Islam. The scholarly disagreement about the factual truth of these sources between Sprenger and Muir continued throughout the 20th century and has not been settled, with advocates for both sides, and also with notable examples of the Romantic Western writing about Islamic origins that Muir so deplored in Washington Irving's *Life of Mohammed*.

One other important aspect of the book's approach, perhaps neglected by some portrayals, is the repeated encouragement of a gracious tone in Christian participation in the 'great controversy' (p. 5). He urges Christians to proceed with 'cautious advances, breathing kindness and love' (p. 40, see also p. 42). Avoid causing offence to the Islamic 'nationality of faith', he counsels. '[L]et there be no *unnecessary* wounding of the national feeling, no harsh epithets, no irritating insinuations' (p. 41). Rather, he writes, while never using a weak argument, speak the truth of the Gospel 'with prudence, with kindness, with love' (p. 42).

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Gordon Nickel

Samuel Knowles

DATE OF BIRTH 26 January 1832
PLACE OF BIRTH Bristol
DATE OF DEATH 29 March 1913
PLACE OF DEATH Bareilly

BIOGRAPHY

Samuel Knowles was born in Bristol in 1832. Nothing is known of his upbringing or his later life until he travelled to India in 1852 as a soldier in the British army. Two years later, he joined the Army Educational Department in Meerut, north-east of Delhi. He married the daughter of one of his commanding officers on 1 January 1856, and the couple had a large number of children, eight of whom survived to adulthood.

In 1857, Knowles volunteered with the Meerut Light Horse at the outbreak of the Indian Uprising, playing a part in the restoration of peace in Meerut and Bijnor (Knowles, *How we made our escape*).

It was at a church service in Meerut that Knowles first met the American missionary Dr William Butler (1818-99) and was influenced by him to consider Christian ministry (this connection is probably why Avril Powell identifies him as an American Methodist; see *Muslims and missionaries in pre-Mutiny India*, Richmond, 1993, p. 287 n. 69]). He joined the American Methodist Episcopal Church mission in August 1858 and was appointed to serve in Naini Tal (Reid, *Missions and missionary society*, vol. 2, p. 373, see also p. 391; Barclay, *History of Methodist missions*, p. 453 note). After some months of preparation, he was made assistant to the American missionary James Mills Thoburn (1836-1922) and, over the next six years, he travelled extensively around Naini Tal, Bareilly, Budaun, Moradabad and Lucknow to preach and support the work of the mission.

In 1864, Knowles was ordained by Bishop Edward Thompson (1810-70) of the American Methodist Episcopal Church during his visit to India (Reid, *Missions and missionary society*, vol. 3, p. 10). In 1865, he moved to Gonda, where he and his family spent a large part of their life. He participated in various construction projects and served as District Superintendent in Muradabad and Naini Tal.

In 1883, Knowles was a leader of the Mass Movement in the Tarai region when he began a vigorous evangelistic campaign in his district. This

resulted in large numbers of converts and church growth (Hurst, *History of Methodism*, pp. 427-8; Barclay, *History of Methodist missions*, pp. 187, 624-5). He also served as a member of the American Methodist Episcopal Church revision commission for the New Testament.

Knowles was fluent in Hindi, Arabic, Persian and Sanskrit. He was also an avid writer who composed captivating stories and accounts of his district mission trips. He died in Bareilly in 1913, leaving a lasting legacy of vernacular literature to the Indian Church.

MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION

S. Knowles, *How we made our escape in the mutiny of 1857*, [s.l.], [s.d]
Art., 'Knowles, Samuel', in B.H. Badley, *Indian missionary directory and memorial volume*, Lucknow, 1881, 202
J.M. Reid, *Missions and Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, revised J.T. Gracey, 3 vols, New York, 1895
J.F. Hurst, *The history of Methodism*, New York, 1904
J. West, 'Rev. Samuel Knowles', *Kaukab-i-Hind*, Jum'arat, 3 April 1913
N. Lory, 'The Rev. S. Knowles MA, A great itinerant', *The Indian Witness*, [s.d.], 285-6
N. Rockey, 'An unpursued success', *The Home Circle*, [s.l.], [s.d.]
M. Core, 'Mrs Knowles translated. A tribute', *The Indian Witness* (29 October 1924) 3
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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Writings for meetings with Muslims

DATE 1866-97
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Urdu

DESCRIPTION

Here, five works by Knowles on Islamic themes are discussed: *Misbah al-eman*, *Waiz nama*, *Hal-e mushkilat*, *Risala-e Miraj* and *Ayina Islam*. Other works that, from their titles, may also be on topics related to relations between Christians and Muslims are: *Bishwas deepak* ('The lamp of faith'), *Twald-e jadeed* ('New birth'), *Barham mazhab* ('Religious fanaticism'), *Ilahi brahin* ('Divine proofs') and *Sharah-e aqaid* ('Explanation of beliefs'). These await attention, though copies are difficult to find.

Misbah al-eman ('The lantern of faith') explores the profound love of God for humanity as it is demonstrated through the forgiveness of sins and the gift of God's only Son. Knowles delves into the concepts of faith and salvation, examining the type of faith that brings salvation and the nature of salvation sought through faith. He emphasises the omnipresence of God, who desires to be worshipped on earth, and he encourages readers to express gratitude for God's gracious providence and to treat fellow humans with dignity, love and affection.

Knowles also explores the attributes of God, who is the Alpha and Omega, one in many and many in one. He discusses punishment and reward, emphasising God's role as the eternal Judge who has control over everything. At the heart of his argument is the affirmation that Jesus is the Word of God and the Saviour, who became flesh to redeem humanity. He also underscores the significance of the Bible as the written Word of God, which was inspired by the Holy Spirit.

While there is nothing explicit about Muslim beliefs here, a number of themes, among them advice to love all humans not only those of one's own faith, Jesus as central in the relationship between God and humans and the Bible as an inspired revelation, pick up Muslim beliefs and give the Christian equivalent.

Waiz nama ('The preacher's guide'), published in July 1866, is 79 pages long. Its main topic is ways to make the proclamation of the Gospel effective. These mainly constitute effective preaching and appropriate methods in personal Bible study. The latter should be related to the preparation of structured sermons, which should comprise introduction, exposition of the theme and application. The personal Bible study method he proposes includes pinpointing the main idea or key thought of a passage, setting out the divine promises contained in it and determining the target audience.

Concerning effective sermon delivery, Knowles stresses the importance of using polite and calm language when explaining the Gospel to non-believers and of demonstrating genuine care and love towards listeners. He also advises the preacher to be cautious about using disrespectful language or making references to the holy books of Muslims and Hindus while speaking to them; the Bible alone should be referred to and, when speakers use it, they should be careful to keep a passage in its context. He recommends reading chapters or verses three times over in order to grasp the true idea within them. Furthermore, missionaries should read widely, seek guidance from the Holy Spirit, and use accurate accents and polite tones when preaching.

These basic guidelines were presumably intended for Indian preachers, advising them of ways to avoid confrontation and hostility.

Hal-e mushkilat ('The solution to problems'), which was published in 1869, addresses difficult verses in the Gospels relating to the life of Jesus. Knowles uses it to answer the objections of Muslims who deny the divinity of Christ, explaining that, in addition to narrating the human life of Jesus, the New Testament also testifies to His divinity. To support this claim, he cites Matthew 1:23, 'God with us', and 1 Timothy 3:16, 'God became flesh'. These verses clarify that it is blasphemous to suggest that God had a physical relationship with a woman or that God was married.

Knowles argues that human wisdom alone cannot comprehend the divine nature of Jesus Christ, for this requires inspiration from the Holy Spirit. He refers to Isaiah 7:14, which prophesies the virgin birth of Jesus, and Luke 1:34, which describes Mary's question about conceiving a child without a man. He proposes that the way Jesus's birth is described in the Bible demonstrates His nature as divine. Adam, who was created from earth, can be considered a son of God, but Jesus is repeatedly referred to as the Son of God. Moreover, his existence predated His birth, as is stated in John 1:1, which describes Jesus as the eternal Word of God. Knowles also cites John 10:34-5, where Jesus claims to be the Son of God, and Matthew 3:17, where God affirms Jesus as His beloved Son. Knowles argues that these verses establish Jesus's divine nature unequivocally.

It is curious that about 15 years after the debate in Agra between Karl Pfander and Raḥmatullāh Kairānavī had been halted when the Muslims would not admit the Bible as an authority because it was corrupted, Knowles does just that in this brief work. He is presumably confident that the readers of this work, if they are indeed intended as Muslims, will accept the premises of his arguments.

Risala-e Miraj ('The treatise on the Mi'rāj'), published in 1878, is 48 pages long. It is a careful translation of passages from authoritative Islamic works, incorporating detailed opinions from Muslim scholars on the *Mi'rāj*, Muḥammad's journey from Mecca to Jerusalem and up to heaven and his return in a single night. Knowles describes the event in detail, quoting the exact words attributed to the Prophet and offering reasoned views from Muslim scholars.

In the work, Knowles reassures Muslim scholars that Jesus is approved as the Spirit of God (*Rūḥ Allāh*) in the Qur'an (see Q 4:171), and that the Injeel (Gospel) is a path to God. He takes issue with Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān's (*CMR* 24, 424-47) interpretations of Islam because they distort its true meaning, and he argues that Muslim scholars have long been at fault

for failing to distinguish between *rūḥ* (the soul of any living being) and *Rūḥ Allāh* (the Holy Spirit). He contends that the Holy Spirit, who is worshipped by Christians, is the Alpha and Omega, and that it purifies the human spiritually, mentally, internally and externally. He quotes Hadiths and includes comments by Muslim scholars on the relevant Qur'an verses, followed by his own Christian perspective. He argues that humans cannot attain eternal truth through their own wisdom, but rather through revelation from God. He describes the transformative power of the Holy Spirit, which can lead individuals to a new life and spiritual awakening. The work concludes with a description of the Prophet's journey from the fifth to the seventh heaven. The point Knowles makes is that Muḥammad's ascent to the presence of God was limited and exclusive in its nature while the Holy Spirit as embodied in Jesus offers an unlimited and universal path to God that is available to all believers.

Ayina Islam (*Ā'īnah-i Islām*, 'The mirror of Islam'), published in 1897, is a 64-page book which Knowles wrote together with the Revd Rajab Ali, who had converted from Islam sometime earlier. It addresses the criticism raised by the Muslim scholars Raḥmatullāh Kaīrānavī (*CMR* 24, 253-60) and Wazīr Khān (*CMR* 24, 237-45) that Christianity is comprised of multiple sects, making it difficult to determine which of them is true. Knowles and Rajab Ali's answer to this is that, while Christian sects may differ in their practices, they share a common fundamental belief in one God, the incarnation of Jesus Christ and his atoning death and resurrection. They contend that Muslim scholars often point out differences between Christian sects but without providing authentic evidence. In contrast, here the authors provide evidence to support the claim that the various Christian missions and churches, despite their differences in practice, are united in their faith and doctrine. Just as Muslims in different regions share a common faith despite variations in practice, Christian churches in different locations are not separate sects, but rather different expressions of the same faith.

The book concludes with a list of 150 well-known Islamic sects described in some detail, and references to many more. The authors affirm that, despite differences between schools of thought, all branches within Islam and within Christianity respectively hold fundamental doctrines in common: in Islam, the oneness of God, the prophethood of Muḥammad and the authority of the Qur'an; in Christianity, the belief in one God, the incarnation of Jesus Christ, His crucifixion, resurrection and second coming.

In these works, Knowles appears to assume that right-minded Muslims will respect and appreciate the integrity of the points he makes even

though they conflict with Islamic beliefs. This includes acknowledging the divinity of Jesus and the inspiration of the Bible. As Elwood Wherry says of *Ayina Islam*:

> The author lays great stress upon our being unprejudiced if we desire to learn the truth. Muslim bigotry is animadverted on, and a call is made upon Muslims to lay aside what is, at best, a worship of intellect rather than a worship of God. (*Muslim controversy*, p. 102)

The same seems to apply to his approach in the other works, where he gives the impression of believing that if only the Christian message is set out clearly it will compel acceptance, and conversion, by its own power and truthfulness.

SIGNIFICANCE

Knowles exhibits considerable confidence in the arguments he constructs in these works stemming from what appears to be an ingenuous conviction that Christianity contains the summation of truth. It only needs to be set out for it to be grasped and appreciated. He does not show much awareness of the complexities of interfaith debates and of their purpose often being to defeat the opposition rather than arrive at truth.

Wherry was lukewarm in his appreciation of *Ayina Islām* and *Risala-e Miraj* (*Muslim controversy*, pp. 104-5); he thought that the latter 'is likely to disappear altogether'. They and Knowles's other short works may have served a limited purpose in encouraging fellow-Christians to be more confident in their speaking to Muslims, but there are no signs that they served any lasting purpose.

PUBLICATIONS

Samuel Knowles, *Misbah al-eman*, Bareilly, 1865
Samuel Knowles, *Waiz nama*, Gonda, 1866
Samuel Knowles, *Hal-i mushkilat*, Bareilly, 1869
Samuel Knowles, *Risala-e Miraj*, Amritsar, 1878
Samuel Knowles and Ali Rajab, *Ayina-i Islam*, Lucknow, 1897

STUDIES

E.M. Wherry, *The Muslim controversy, being a review of Christian literature written in the Urdu language for the propagation of the Christian religion and the refutation of Islam*, London, 1905, pp. 102-7 (discussions of *Ayina-i Islam* and *Risala-e Miraj*, summarised in E.M. Wherry, C.G. Mylrea and S. Zwemer [eds], *Islam and missions. Being papers read at the Second Missionary Conference on behalf of the Mohammedan world at Lucknow, January 23-28, 1911*, Madras, 1911, p. 145)

S. Brush, 'Presbyterians and Islam in India', *Journal of Presbyterian History (1962-1985)* 62/3 (1984) 215-22 (on the American Presbyterian Ludhiana Mission and its main luminaries, with no reference to Knowles)

Urfa Naseer John

Ṭhākur Dās

G.L. Thakur Dass

DATE OF BIRTH 1852
PLACE OF BIRTH Ludhiana
DATE OF DEATH 21 January 1910
PLACE OF DEATH Lahore

BIOGRAPHY

Ṭhākur Dās was born in Ludhiana, to the east of Lahore, in 1852, the son of Devī Bhajan, a Brahman officer in the East India Company army who was killed in the 1857 Uprising. The consequent loss of position and possessions, compounded by the drought of 1860, forced the family to leave their home and they eventually reached Sialkot, north of Lahore, where they found shelter in the orphanage of the United Presbyterian Mission. This led to Dās's mother and her two children being baptised.

Dās studied at the mission school and passed the entrance examination for the University of Calcutta in 1870 but, instead of taking his place, he decided to stay with his mother and family and prepare for ministry. He was duly ordained in 1877 and appointed mission superintendent in Pasrūr, where he wrote his first books. After several years there and also in Jhangbar and Gujranwala, he obtained a post as lecturer in Church History and Greek at Sialkot Theological Seminary. Later, he moved back to Gujranwala, where he lived and ministered for about 26 years. While there, he published a journal, *Christian Advocate*, devoted to debates with other religions. He was instrumental in opening up the United Presbyterian Mission to work to encourage conversion to Christianity among the lower castes in Punjab. He provided training seminars for church workers in these communities and was perceived as showing acceptance of them and respect towards them, despite his status as a Brahman.

Dās left the mission and the work in Gujranwala because of disagreements and, after a brief period with the Reformed Presbyterian Mission in Ferozepur, south of Lahore, he joined the missionary Elwood Morris Wherry (1843-1927; *CMR* 16, 371-84) in Ludhiana, where he became editor of the Urdu Christian weekly newspaper *Nūr Afshān*. In 1904, the American Presbyterian Mission in Lahore invited him to begin new work in Sharqpūr, just to the west of Lahore. where he established a church. He

continued to work there, and also in the slums (*basti*) of Lahore, until his death in 1910.

Dās was known to take a softer tone than other apologists of his day. Rajab ʿAlī, writing in the preface of *Iẓhār-i ʿĪsavī*, one of Dās's most significant works, contrasts him with ʿImāduddīn Lāhiz, whose books ʿAlī regards as too polemical, and says that Dās seeks simply to demonstrate the veracity of the Bible and its divine inspiration. Wherry concurs: 'He ever strives to point out the mistakes of his adversary and at the same time to lead him to the truth. At times his statements are severe, but only because of the plainness of the truth he utters' ('Literature for Muslim readers', p. 142).

MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Primary

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T. Das, *Khudāwand masīḥ ke nauratn*, Lahore, 1930, pp. 68-79 (by an author with a similar name to Dās himself)

Secondary

D. Becht, *The Book and the Prophet. The contribution of Indian Christians to the Muslim-Christian debate of the 19th century*, Tübingen, 2018, pp. 247-9; https://www.deutsche-digitale-bibliothek.de/item/RGG2QYZPDGGVYGXDAGNN2CSCAFQJQIY5

WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Apologetic and polemical works

DATE 1882-97
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Urdu

DESCRIPTION

Ṭhākur Dās wrote most of the works for which he is known in his years with the United Presbyterian Mission. Many of them are detailed responses to claims made by Muslim apologists, though he also challenged Ghulām Aḥmad (1835-1908), the founder of the Aḥmadiyya, who was active in the Punjab from the late 1880s. There are signs that Dās was not thoroughly acquainted with the Qur'an and Muslim teachings, which is not entirely

surprising in someone brought up as a Hindu, though it would appear that, in the region where he served in his mature years, the necessity to respond to claims made by Muslims against Christianity was acutely felt.

ʿAdam-ẓarūrat-i Qurʾān ('The dispensability of the Qur'an'), published in 1882 (this is the publication date given in Wherry, *Muslim controversy*, p. 79; Becht, *The Book and the Prophet*, p. 253, gives 1886) and 135 pages long, is the earliest of these writings. It comprises an Introduction and eight chapters (Wherry, *Muslim controversy*, pp. 82-3). Dās wrote it to show that the Qur'an is not needed because complete revelation is found in the Bible. In the Preface, he explains that the Qur'an is actually a forgery because it introduces no new teachings and all the great religious truths are already contained in earlier scriptures. He continues in the Introduction by arguing that anyone claiming to be a prophet must fulfil certain requirements and must bring teachings that are needed. The Qur'an was not needed and was not brought by anyone qualified to be a prophet.

In the body of the work, he substantiates these arguments by showing that the Qur'an is deficient in its religious and moral teaching (ch. 1), its practical requirements (ch. 2), and its directions about attaining salvation (ch. 3); it is false in relating mere stories as actual history (ch. 4), in mixing truth with falsehood (ch. 5), and in making false promises about the afterlife (ch. 6). In ch. 7, he replies to a Muslim tract and, in ch. 8, he discusses Muslim claims that there are predictions of Muḥammad in Deuteronomy 18:15, 18 and the Paraclete verses in John 14, 15 and 16. In all this, he uses the Bible as his authority.

Izhār-i ʿĪsavī ('Christian unveiling'), 432 pages long, was published in 1883 as a response to Raḥmatullāh Kairānavī and Muḥammad Wazīr Khān's *Iʿjāz-i ʿĪsavī*, published 30 years earlier in 1854 or 1855, which was largely a reply to Karl Gottlieb Pfander's *Mīzān al-ḥaqq*. Dās explains that he is writing this response even though ʿImāduddīn Lāhiz's (1830-1900; *CMR* 24, 506-41) *Hidāyat al-Muslimīn* (1868) has already appeared, because that work is unnecessarily offensive.

As may be expected of a response to *Iʿjāz-i ʿĪsavī*, the main thrust of *Izhār-i ʿĪsavī* concerns the Muslim accusation of corruption of the Bible. In the introduction, Dās makes the two points: that while there may have been incidental mistakes in copying the text, these do not amount to serious misrepresentations, and that differences in translations do not affect the inspired status of the original. In the first volume, Dās deals with accusations of corruption in the Old Testament, and in the second with alleged corruption in the New Testament.

A feature of the book worth mentioning is Dās's apparent unawareness of some of the contents of the Qur'an. This is revealed in his detailed response to attacks on the anthropomorphisms in the Bible, where he fails to note that these also occur in the Qur'an, and in his response to rationalist rejections of the virginity of Mary, where he says nothing about this being a shared Christian and Muslim belief (Becht, *The Book and the Prophet*, p. 252). Here, his lack of acquaintance with Muslim teachings is evident.

The short, 48-page *Sīrat-i Masīḥ wa 'l Muḥammad* ('Life of Christ and Muḥammad') had run into four editions by 1886, according to Wherry (*Muslim controversy*, p. 79; Becht, *The Book and the Prophet*, p. 443, dates it to 1897). Its argument is that the holder of any position must possess the appropriate qualifications. In considering the qualifications of Christ and Muḥammad, it is important to keep in mind that humankind is sinful and needing reconciliation with God. With this in mind, the following main issues should be considered. First, human beings inherit sin: were Christ and Muḥammad sinful by nature? All other objects of worship can be ruled out in answering that Christ alone was sinless. Second, Christ was born untainted by inherited sin but Muḥammad inherited a sinful nature. Third, Christ fulfilled God's moral law but Muḥammad, in his licentiousness, selfishness and deceitfulness, failed. Commenting on this work, Wherry makes the point that the fact it has run through four editions shows its merit and the importance of its subject (*Muslim controversy*, p. 88).

The even shorter 33-page *Muḥammad be-karāmat* ('Muḥammad was without miracles') appeared in 1895 (Becht, *The Book and the Prophet*, p. 256 gives 1890) in response to a pamphlet published by a certain Maulvī Ghulām Nabī in 1894 entitled *Muʿjizāt-i Muḥammadiyya az-Qur'ān* ('Miracles of Muḥammad from the Qur'an'). Here, Dās determines that the author does not satisfactorily prove that Muḥammad performed any miracles and also that the Qur'an declares that he did not. He methodically examines the miracles identified in the Qur'an by the *maulvī*, including references to natural phenomena that anticipate discoveries of modern science, miracles mentioned indirectly and directly and predictions of future events. None of these can convincingly be affirmed as a true miracle.

Writing in 1905 (*Muslim controversy*, pp. 83-4), Wherry mentioned a work that Dās was preparing to replace *ʿAdam-ẓarūrat-i Qur'ān*. He called it *The Bible and the Qur'an*. Five years later, in 1910, Wherry mentioned among Dās's works one with the title *Baibal yā Qur'ān* ('Bible or Qur'an';

Wherry, 'Literature for Muslim readers', p. 142; Becht, *The Book and the Prophet*, p. 443, gives this as *Injīl yā Qur'ān*), indicating that by this time the book had appeared. Wherry's long account of it when it was still being written suggests not only that he may have encouraged Dās to produce it as a more satisfactory treatment of the contention that there is no need for the Qur'an than *'Adam-ẓarūrat-i Qur'ān*, but also that he himself had a hand in it; as he says, 'In this work the author will act upon the suggestion we have just made' (*Muslim controversy*, p. 84). He goes on to explain that, since the Qur'an was originally presented as a confirmation of former scriptures (Q 10:94), Christians have a right and duty to test the claim that Muḥammad was a prophet and the Qur'an the word of God. Some verses in the Qur'an indicate that the Bible is equal in authority to the Qur'an, while others indicate that Muslims should follow the Qur'an alone. If Jews and Christians had departed from the teachings of the Bible, 'why should not a reformation based on Bible teaching, like that of Luther, have been sufficient' without need for a new scripture?

Wherry clearly felt strongly about the issue of whether the Qur'an was needed because he rounds off this prescription for the new book with a short table of contents in which he details seven possible chapters, and he looks forward to the work as Dās's *magnum opus* (pp. 85-6). In the event, Dās does not appear to have proceeded as comprehensively and incisively as Wherry expected. In his 1910 account of Dās's works ('Literature for Muslim readers', p. 143), he mentions it together with *'Adam-ẓarūrat-i Qur'ān* as exemplifying the principle he had set out earlier, 'whatever in [the Qur'an] is true is not new and what is new is not true' (*Muslim controversy*, p. 84), but there is no sign of satisfaction at a job well done. The reason may be, as Becht points out, because *Baibal yā Qur'ān* only differs from the earlier book in its more abundant and more detailed citations of Western authors (*The Book and the Prophet*, p. 255).

Dās also wrote the 58-page *Infiṣāl-i wilādat-i Masīḥ* ('Verdict on the birth of Christ'), a proof from the miraculous nature of Jesus's birth that Jesus was the promised Saviour, and also accounts of debates with Aḥmadīs. These included a review of *Barāhīn-i Aḥmadiyya*, Ghulām Aḥmad's major presentation of himself as Messiah, and *Izālat li-mazāri Qādiānī* ('The greatest discovery exploded'), a refutation of Ghulām Aḥmad's claim that Jesus survived his crucifixion and eventually died and was buried in India (Wherry, *Muslim controversy*, pp. 93-4).

SIGNIFICANCE

Dās's many writings in defence of Christianity at the expense of Islam show how a keen and prolific an apologist he was. Wherry and others note

his competence, though they also deplore his over-concern with details at the cost of the larger issues that were debated between Christians and Muslims in India at this time. His works have value in showing how direct and pointed opponents could be in their disagreements and how they sought to outwit one another with little apparent concern to reach understanding or agreement except on their own terms.

PUBLICATIONS

Many of these pieces appeared as articles in *Nūr Afshān*.

Ṭhākur Dās, *ʿAdam-ẓarūrat-i Qurʾān*, Ludhiana, 1882

Ṭhākur Dās, *ʿAdam-ẓarūrat-i Qurʾān*, Ludhiana, 1886[2] (see Becht, *The Book and the Prophet*, p. 442)

Ṭhākur Dās, *Izhār-i ʿĪsavī*, 2 vols, American United Presbyterian Mission, Punjab, 1883

Ṭhākur Dās, *Izhār-i ʿĪsavī*, 2 vols, Amritsar, 1889[2] (see Becht, *The Book and the Prophet*, p. 443)

Ṭhākur Dās, *Muḥammad be-karāmat*, Lahore, 1890 (see Becht, *The Book and the Prophet*, p. 256)

Ṭhākur Dās, *Muḥammad be-karāmat*, Lahore, 1895[2] (see Wherry, *Muslim controversy*, pp. 79-80)

Ṭhākur Dās, *Sīrat-i Masīḥ wa ʾl Muḥammad*, Lahore, 1886[4] (details of earlier editions are unknown; see Wherry, *Muslim controversy*, p. 79)

Ṭhākur Dās, *Sīrat-i Masīḥ wa ʾl Muḥammad*, Amritsar, 1897 (see Becht, *The Book and the Prophet*, p. 443)

Ṭhākur Dās, *Infiṣāl-i wilādat-i Masīḥ*, Ludhiana, [n.d.] before 1905 (see Wherry, *Muslim controversy*, p. 93)

Ṭhākur Dās, *Izālat li-mazāri Qādiānī*, Ludhiana: American Tract Society, [n.d.]. before 1905 (see Wherry, *Muslim controversy*, p. 94)

Ṭhākur Dās, *Baibal yā Qurʾān*, Ludhiana, ?1910 (Becht, *The Book and the Prophet*, p. 443, lists the title as *Injīl yā Qurʾān*)

STUDIES

Becht, *The Book and the Prophet*, pp. 247-56, 442-3

Wherry, 'Literature for Muslim readers', pp. 142-4

E.M. Wherry, *The Muslim controversy. Being a review of Christian literature written in the Urdu language for the propagation of the Christian religion and the refutation of Islam*, Madras, 1905, pp. 79-94

Naseer John

George Henry Rouse

DATE OF BIRTH 13 November 1838
PLACE OF BIRTH Melton, Suffolk
DATE OF DEATH 2 April 1909
PLACE OF DEATH Worthing, Sussex

BIOGRAPHY

George Henry Rouse was born in Melton, Suffolk, on 13 November 1838 and was baptised at St Mary's, Great Bealings, on 13 August 1839. As a teenager, he joined a Baptist Church and was baptised by full immersion in 1854. In 1855, after a time of private tuition, he entered Regent's Park Baptist College, part of London University, where he trained for the Baptist ministry. He won several prizes, including the gold medal and a scholarship for mathematics and natural philosophy, and another for biblical languages, and he achieved first class passes in most of his examinations. He was one of the most academically accomplished Baptists of his time.

Accepted for service in India by the Baptist Missionary Society (BMS), Rouse was commissioned at Denmark Place Baptist Chapel on 5 August 1861. On 17 September that year he married Lydia Miriam Denham, who had spent her early years in India, where her father, William Henry Denham, was president of Serampore College. The couple set out for India on 2 October 1861, arriving in Calcutta on 8 February 1862. They were initially stationed at Suri in what is now West Bengal, where Rouse began to learn Bengali.

Soon after his arrival, the mission baptised an elderly Muslim woman (*Missionary Herald*, 1 October 1862, p. 157). This may have roused in him an interest in Christian outreach to Muslims, which Baptists had not prioritised until then. He was soon transferred to Calcutta, where he assisted Dr John Wenger (d. 1880) in revising the Bengali Bible and in other translation projects. In 1863, his health deteriorated and he was advised to return to England. In 1866, after initially teaching at Regent's Park College, he became a tutor at Haverfordwest Baptist College in Wales, and remained there until 1872. During this time, he mentored Timothy Richard (d. 1919), who went to China with the BMS and pioneered an approach to mission that regarded Chinese culture, which he embraced, as a preparation for the Gospel. Richard thus sought to establish a self-supporting Chinese Christian community.

In 1872, Rouse was able to resume his work in India. Serving as India secretary for the BMS, he focused on translation and literary work. For some time, he was in charge of the Baptist Mission Press and interim pastor at various churches. By the time of his retirement in 1908, he was the senior Baptist missionary.

In 1881, Rouse published *Plain sermons on Christian doctrine* in Bengali and English and, in 1885, a memoir of his wife's work among soldiers and sailors in Calcutta and as superintendent of the Zenana Mission, *Work while it is day. Memoir of Lydia Miriam Rouse* (Calcutta and London). He took part in translating several books of the Bible into Muslim Bengali and in revising the Bengali Bible. His *Tracts for Muhammadans* appeared in 1893, followed by *Short papers for Muslims* in 1897. Rouse originally wrote and published the tracts in Bengali. Translations followed into Urdu, Tamil, Telugu, Persian and Arabic. Other publications included *Indian and Singhalese missionary pictures* (1894) and *Old Testament criticism in New Testament light* (1903).

Several reports in the Baptist press refer to Rouse's work among Muslims. He presented a paper on mission to Muslims in Bengal at the Fourth Decennial Mission Conference, Madras (11-18 December 1902), where he spoke of how the 1871 census showed that 'nearly half the population' of Bengal were Muslim, but they had been 'much neglected by Christian missionaries' (Rouse, 'Religious movements', p. 336). He had served as secretary and editor for the Second Decennial Conference and was invited to the Fourth as a 'member on the ground of long service'. Rouse retired in 1908 after a retreat to Darjeeling failed to restore his declining health ('Veteran toiler', p. 948). He died in Worthing, Sussex, on 2 April 1909.

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Tracts written for Muslims

DATE 1893-7
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Bengali

DESCRIPTION

Between 1893 and 1897, Rouse wrote a series of tracts for use in evangelising Muslims. Originally in Bengali, most of them were published in English translation in London and Madras by the Christian Literature Society for India as *Tracts for Muhammadans* in 1893. The remainder appeared in 1897 as *Short papers for Muslims* along with a second edition of *Tracts.* The 1893 publication comprises an Introduction (pp. v-xi) and 17 tracts (pp. 1-155), while the 1897 *Papers* comprises eight shorter tracts of two pages each. There is some overlap in content between the two publications.

In his Introduction to the 1897 *Tracts*, Rouse says that he has produced these in English partly to facilitate translation into other languages, and partly so that English readers may learn more about the essential tenets of Islam. Of all 'non-Christian religions it contains the largest amount of truth', yet Muslims are less easy to win 'for Christ' than followers of other religions (p. v). Rouse notes that Muammad (the form of the name he uses) is no longer routinely depicted by Christians as a 'vile impostor' but, for many years, has been regarded as a 'sincere enquirer after the truth' whom Christians might see as a 'brother preaching the same God' (p. vi). Muḥammad rejected the Christianity of his day, which worshipped Mary and 'bowed down to images' (presumably references to the veneration of Mary, including an allusion to Q 5:116, and the veneration of icons in Eastern churches), though after he gained power his character deteriorated, so that he plundered, killed his enemies and added to his 'harem those who pleased his eye' (p. vii).

After these introductory explanations, Rouse introduces each of the tracts. Tract 1, 'The integrity of the Gospel', counters the charge that the Gospels have been corrupted by referring to countless manuscripts that are consistent in their wording. Even rival Christian 'sects' have not accused

one another of meddling with the Gospel texts. Muslims misunderstand the statement that Jesus is God's Son by assuming that this involves Jesus being born like a human (p. 8), but there are Qur'an passages that affirm Jesus was 'from God' (p. 9).

Tract 2, 'Jesus or Muammad, on whom will you rely?', invites Muslims to consider whether they should rely on Jesus or Muḥammad and concludes that Jesus is the only one who can forgive sins and reconcile men and women with God. The Qur'an and the *Injīl* agree on the miraculous nature of Jesus's birth while Muḥammad 'was born like other men' (p. 14). Rouse argues that Muhammad sinned because Q 40:56 [55] directs him to 'Praise thy God, and seek pardon from me', while Jesus was sinless (p. 14). Nowhere does the Qur'an attribute sin to Jesus. Jesus worked miracles while Muḥammad did not, although unreliable accounts written a hundred years after his death describe many (p. 15). Everyone knows that Muḥammad died and is buried in Medina but even the Qur'an refers to Jesus being taken into heaven without dying. In fact, says Rouse, Jesus did die but rose again, while Muḥammad died and remained dead. Jesus died as a sinless ransom for human sins (p. 18), which qualifies Jesus, and not Muḥammad, to intercede with God on our behalf (p. 20).

Tract 3, 'The sinless prophet', develops further the argument that Muḥammad and all the great Hebrew prophets sinned and Jesus did not. He cites a tradition that describes Muḥammad asking God to forgive his sins (p. 24). Again, citing qur'anic passages on Jesus, Rouse argues that, in the Qur'an, while other prophets are only honoured, Jesus is called 'word' and 'spirit' of God (p. 25, alluding to Q 4:171). Only Jesus could pay the debt for human sin (p. 27). When Jesus returns, those who trusted in Muḥammad or in 'any other person will suffer terrible punishment' (p. 30).

Tract 4, 'Jesus Christ', summarises the Gospel narrative of Jesus, while Tract 5 focuses on Jesus's death and resurrection and Tract 6 lays out prophecies of him in the Hebrew Bible, including God's promise to Abraham (Genesis 26:4; Isaiah 35:4-6) and the suffering servant passage (Isaiah 53).

Tract 7, 'Muammad', examines the life of the Prophet. Rouse's account lacks any negative references until he describes Muḥammad's experience in the cave outside Mecca, where Rouse suggests he may have had some 'sort of dream' (p. 65) as opposed to receiving the first revelation of the Qur'an. After beginning to preach, Muḥammad attracted a handful of followers and endured persecution. Rouse describes the first pledge of 'Aqaba, when six people from Medina 'received his message', followed by the second pledge when another group from Medina did the same (p. 65), and his migration to Medina. Rouse argues that Muḥammad's new-found

power in Medina corrupted him and made him 'selfish and oppressive' (p. 66). After this, he plundered caravans and fought with the Meccans. Although he 'hated idolatry' and 'proclaimed the unity of God' (p. 67), by retaining the Black Stone in Mecca he 'did not entirely break from idolatry' (p. 68). He was very cruel towards Jews and pagans, and he took 'many wives', breaking his own law, and 'was under the power of passion' (p. 69). Jesus was without sin, was never captive to passion, never killed anyone, and performed miracles, all points on which Muḥammad fails by comparison. Furthermore, Jesus atoned for human sin, while Muḥammad did not.

Tract 8 is titled 'The true Islam'. Here, Rouse argues that there is only one true religion which fulfils the requirement of obedience to God as set by Islam, and this is Christianity. The pillars of Christianity are that God is one, that humans are sinful and need to be made holy, that salvation is only available through a great saviour, that there is no salvation without atonement, and that salvation is by faith.

Tract 9 examines the rivalry between Isaac and Ishmael (whom Rouse, following tradition, takes as the ancestors of Christians and Muslims), arguing that God's providential purposes were worked out through the heirs of the former, whose birth was miraculous while Ishmael's was not.

Tract 10, 'The Koran', argues that the Qur'an cannot be the word of God because it contradicts the Bible. It offers a different path to salvation and permits divorce, which Jesus allowed only in instances of immorality. Muḥammad offered no proof that his book was revealed from God and it is mistaken in denying the crucifixion of Jesus.

Tract 11, '*Fatiha*', examines *Sūrat al-Fātiḥa*, the first chapter of the Qur'an. Rouse sees much that is good in this prayer but argues that it fails to reconcile a forgiving God with one who demands justice because it lacks any recognition that forgiveness is only available through Jesus.

Tract 12, 'The names of God', examines the names given to God in Islam and argues that, without recognition of Jesus's atoning death, names such as Merciful, Advocate, Enricher and Strengthener are cancelled out by those such as Just and Avenger (of sin).

Tract 13, '*Namaz*', finds fault with the five daily prayers having to be recited in Arabic, a language that Indian Muslims do not speak, and it represents Muslim prayer as no more than a 'matter of form' (p. 122). It is, Rouse claims, often linked with ostentation (p. 123), while the need to turn towards Mecca is limiting since God is everywhere. Assuming that Muslim prayer is insincere and routine, Rouse also questions its adequacy because it is not offered through Christ (p. 128). We can pray to God, says Rouse, at

any time or place without restricting ourselves to set times (apparently unaware that Muslims do pray at other times spontaneously when offering intercessory petitions or acts of praise). Rouse cites the Lord's Prayer as the 'most beautiful' (p. 131), even though it does not end with Jesus's name.

Tract 14, 'Fasting', argues that Muslims mistakenly rely on this and on good works to earn salvation, though this is only available as a free gift through Jesus.

Tract 15, 'The Paraclete', refutes the claim that Jesus predicted Muḥammad when he spoke of the coming of the Paraclete in John's Gospel. The Paraclete is a Spirit not a man, and Muḥammad did not comfort people as the promised Spirit does.

Tract 16, 'The Christian *din* [Arabic *dīn,* 'religion']', argues that Christianity is less overbearing than Islam, with fewer rules about the conduct of prayer, pilgrimage, fasting and other external aspects of religion such as the proportion of wealth Christians must give away. Jesus's two great commandments are to love God and our neighbours. This leads into the final tract, 'God's Ten Commandments' (pp. 144-55), in which Rouse presents the Ten Commandments from Exodus. He also comments that, in some Bengal villages, Muslims worship Barakat Bibi (presumably a local deity that became purified during the process of the cultural adaptation of Islam in the Ganges delta area, as described by Asim Roy in *The Islamic syncretistic tradition in Bengal*, Princeton NJ, 1983), which Rouse sees as idolatry. Muslims, he says, pray in the name not only of *pir*s (Sufi holy men) but also of Hindu gods (p. 147). They break the Sabbath because they do not really rest from worldly things on Friday (p. 150). The tract ends with the invitation to Muslims to take refuge in Jesus as the only way to be saved.

The eight shorter tracts are entitled 'Duty of searching the right way', 'What the Koran says of the Injil', 'Ask pardon for thy sins', 'The sinless prophet', 'Jesus Christ', 'Jesus or Muammad?', 'Our Father in heaven' and 'The true way to heaven'. Throughout these and the longer tracts, Rouse uses many Islamic terms which would have been more familiar to Muslim than to non-Muslim readers, especially in the Muslim Bengali original.

SIGNIFICANCE

Distributing tracts was a major missionary activity. In his *Indian and Singhalese missionary pictures* (1894), Rouse describes distributing thousands of them (p. 206), often at *mela*s (festivals). He also describes Muslims distributing tracts that allege the corruption of the Bible, and offering the Gospel of Barnabas as the original gospel (p. 115). He describes some of

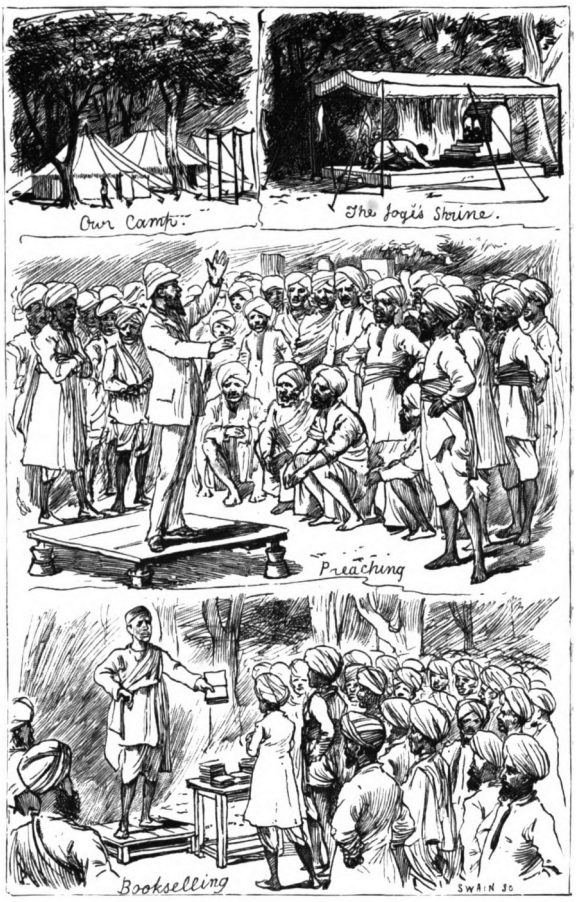


Illustration 19. Sketch of mission work at a *mela*

these Muslim preachers as 'Wahabi, a sort of reformed puritan party'. They denounced the reading of any book other than the Qur'an (p. 116). Some Europeans had converted to Islam 'in order', Rouse writes, 'to get something to eat' (p 117). Writing about his own tracts, Rouse referred to several Muslims who became Christian after reading them (*Baptist Missionary Herald*, December 1893, p. 487).

W.T. Whitely called for the training of Indian evangelists since it was only rare Englishmen such as Rouse who could 'get inside the native mind' in his tracts which, translated into several languages, had 'circulated even up the Nile to be greedily read by Moslems of all races' (*Baptist*

Missionary Herald, August 1904, p. 391). On the other hand, Muslims in Egypt petitioned Lord Cromer to place one of Rouse's tracts on the *Index Expurgatorius* (*Missionary Review of the World* 31 [1908] p. 948). L.B. Jones (d. 1960) wrote that one Egyptian Muslim 'demanded' Rouse's 'blood' (*The people of the mosque*, London, 1930, p. 298). E.M. Wherry (d. 1927) considered Rouse's tracts to be an 'ideal' gift to Muslim neighbours and commended Rouse for seeking to 'establish the Christian faith in the hearts of his Muslim readers without controversy' and ending each tract 'with an earnest exhortation to the readers'. He also noted that, in comparing Islam and Christianity, Rouse disparaged the former (Wherry, *Muslim controversy*, p. 116). Speaking at the Lucknow Conference of Missionaries to Muslims in 1911, Wherry said that 'no series of tracts' had been 'more influential' than Rouse's (E.M. Wherry, C.G. Mylrea, and S. Zwemer (eds), *Lucknow 1911. Being papers read and discussions on the training of missionaries, and literature for Muslims at the General Conference on Missions to Muslims held at Lucknow, January 23-28, 1911*, London, 1911, p. 155). Jones thought that Rouse and other earlier missionary writers had made life easier for his own generation because they could approach Muslims without needing to cover the ground that their predecessors had covered (*The people of the mosque*, p. 297). However, he thought that their tendency to pour scorn on the 'cherished beliefs and practices of millions of orthodox Muslims' was counter-productive (p. 296) and he called for a different approach that 'presents Christianity as a faith to live by' rather than as a superior system of belief (p. 299). Instead of convincing Muslims about the truth of specific Christian doctrines, Jones wanted them to experience God's love in their hearts.

What is most significant about Rouse's tracts is that, while in them he did not succeed in approaching Muslims with the respect and courtesy he intended, they represent a half-way position between the hard-hitting, confrontational approach of Karl Pfander (d. 1865), William Aikman (d. 1903) and others, and the more conciliatory approach of L.B. Jones and M.T. Titus (d. 1964) in India, where they founded the Henry Martyn School of Islamic Studies to train personnel in this field (Bennett, *Victorian images*, p. 171).

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Clinton Bennett

Irene H. Barnes

DATE OF BIRTH mid-19th century
PLACE OF BIRTH unknown
DATE OF DEATH early to mid-20th century
PLACE OF DEATH unknown

BIOGRAPHY

Little about the life of Irene H. Barnes is known, almost certainly because she did not wish to claim personal recognition for her activities but rather to dedicate herself selflessly to the mission society that employed her and to God. This is suggested by the note at the beginning of her work *In Salisbury Square*:

> It is in no spirit of adulation of a Society, its workers or its work, that this little book has been written. From the oldest to the youngest member of the C.M.S. staff the heartfelt desire in reference to any success which may have been vouchsafed to them is *Non nobis, Domine*, and that they personally should remain hidden behind their Master and His work. (p. vi)

Barnes was a prolific author, writing books on diverse topics for over 20 years from the mid-1890s, all published by the Church Missionary Society (CMS) and related agencies, especially the Church of England Zenana Mission Society (CEZMS). This Society was founded in 1880, when it separated from the interdenominational Indian Female Normal School Society, which had been founded in 1852. The CEZMS worked closely with the CMS and was structured along similar lines, in a series of committees, whose secretaries served as heads of departments at society headquarters. From 1902 to 1905, Barnes was editor and superintendent of the CEZMS publication department and secretary to the publication committee.

Her principal works were *Behind the Great Wall. The story of the C.E.Z.M.S. work and workers in China* (1896, with editions in English and Swedish, drawing on letters from missionaries in China); *Behind the pardah. The story of C.E.Z.M.S. work in India* (1897); and *Between life and death. The story of C.E.Z.M.S. medical missions in India, China, and Ceylon* (1901). She also wrote several books for children and adolescents.

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I.H. Barnes, *In Salisbury Square*, London, 1906

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Behind the pardah. The story of C.E.Z.M.S. work in India

DATE 1897
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

Behind the pardah appeared in 1897 in London and New York, with several subsequent reprints. Barnes appears to have written it in England using records and correspondence supplied to her by the CEZMS and from its workers, both male and female, in India. While covering the whole of the subcontinent (which includes what is now Pakistan, India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka), the work is not geographically organised, so one sentence may refer to work in south India, the next to work in Hazara (now Pakistan) or somewhere in Bengal (now Bangladesh). As was the custom at the time, Barnes uses the word Muhammadan or Musalman when referring to people from a Muslim background.

The book was written essentially to call for more mission workers and to encourage financial support for missionary women (some of whom died in the field) and their work among the women of the subcontinent by highlighting the conditions under which the *pardah* (or *purdah*) confined women in India. Interestingly, while women's roles in England were still limited, these women missionaries identified the need for women under *pardah* to receive medical care, education and training as well as to be given value and dignity. They were also at the forefront in enabling Indian women to take significant roles in economically productive activities, mainly education and medical care. They also believed that the future of the Christian Church in India depended upon the training of Indian women.

Behind the pardah comprises some 264 pages and includes numerous sketches and photographs as well as a glossary and an index. The book is divided into two sections. The first (pp. 1-232) is divided into 14 chapters and deals with the interactions of the women missionaries of the CEZMS with Indian women, especially those who were living behind *pardah*, whether Hindu or Muslim. The *pardah* section of the house was also known as the *zenana*, to which only women or close male relatives were given access. To the women missionaries of the CEZMS, these *pardah* conditions were physically, emotionally and spiritually much worse than the challenging conditions they themselves experienced in choosing to live and work in India. The second section, an appendix, consists of some 30 odd pages. It is a chronological overview of 17 years of CEZMS work in the Indian subcontinent, including Ceylon (now Sri Lanka). References to Islam are descriptive and illustrative rather than theological or apologetic.

The book describes simply but often in detail the work of both the women missionaries and the Indian 'Bible women' they were able to train. It reports on the successes: reaching women in *pardah*, opening schools, bringing medical help to individuals and establishing clinics and hospitals, caring for children orphaned by the plagues that swept the country, and developing economically profitable activities. On the other hand, it also reports disappointments: the opposition, the rejection and the suffering faced by those who decided to follow Christ, whether Hindu or Muslim.

While Barnes is not averse to highlighting the degrading customs and the pitiful (to English eyes) conditions of these Indian women, using expressions such as 'sullen cry of hopeless submission', 'blighting error', 'bigoted' and 'fanatic' (pp. 34, 145, 92, 93, 213), she is also aware that, with the arrival of Westerners, so too was there a growth in 'scepticism, vices and sin' (p. 38). It must also be remembered that she was basically repeating the experiences and 'words' of missionaries working in India. Regarding *pardah* conditions, Barnes quotes one missionary, Isabella Bishop, who wrote:

> I have lived in Zenanas, and have seen the daily life of the secluded women, and I can speak from bitter experience of what their lives are – the intellect dwarfed, so that a woman of twenty or thirty years of age is more like a child of eight, intellectually; while all the worst passions of human nature are stimulated and developed in a fearful degree: jealousy, envy, murderous hate, intrigue, running to such an extent that in some countries I have hardly ever been in a woman's house without being asked for drugs with which to disfigure the favourite wife, or to take away the life of the favourite wife's infant son. (p. 51)

In the two chapters entitled 'Villages and their visitors' (pp. 81-117), Barnes provides excerpts from an account by an English missionary, one Miss Owles, and an Indian Bible woman who visit the Muslim section of a village. As they seek to enter a house, '[T]he man advances to enquire our business. We explain, and he, having assured us that the women are like cows and have no understanding, sullenly gives us leave to visit them' (p. 91). The Muslim women, on hearing 'the story of Redemption', ask, 'Does He love us? We are only like the animals! This religion must be for you, not for us' (p. 92). Even so, the women beg the missionary and the Bible woman to return. However, the 'reception … [is] … not always so cordial, for occasionally the men will object to their wives being taught, or one or two bigoted women may argue loudly and hinder others who long to listen …' (pp. 92-3).

References to Islam occur throughout the work, though at times it is not clear whether the women mentioned are of Hindu (including Bráhman) or Muslim backgrounds. Being a descriptive work, cultural practices are frequently referred to and details such as weddings and funerals, dress and the appearance of the kitchens with their pots, are given. In the case of Muslim weddings, it is noted that 'the actual "Nikah," or marriage, with the Muhammadans takes more of a legal than a religious form, and is a transaction between the male relatives and lawyers' (p. 66). The impact of Islamic teaching about *Qismet*, or fate, is mentioned early in the work and is evident through the rest of it as seen in the lives of the Muslim women who feature.

Of the 14 chapters, only ch. 12, 'Daughters of Islam', focuses specifically on Muslim women. It records many of the challenges that missionary women encountered in their work. For example, one sick Muslim woman said to the missionary who was telling her of Jesus, 'They will not bury me when I die, if they think I like listening to you' (p. 211). Commenting on the situation within the *zenana*s, Barnes writes: 'The awful wickedness of Muhammadan homes is, perhaps, realised only by the missionary worker among the daughters of Islam.' She then quotes a missionary, Miss Hewlett, who wrote of Amritsar:

> Some people will talk [...] of the beauty of the creed of Islam. I can only say that I have to shield the young workers under my care from knowing the wickedness of the Muhammadans amongst whom they are longing to go and work. The evils that abound remind us who are older that we dwell where Satan's seat is. It is the Muhammadan religion which maintains the *pardah*, and the *pardah* does not protect the women, but hides from the public outside the wickedness of the Muhammadan homes. (p. 223)

Barnes also quotes a certain Miss Phillips, based in Peshawar, who wrote: 'The Kabuli women often pray that we may become Muhammadans. [...] It is not an uncommon thing for the family Mullah to pray, or to read the Koran in an outside room during the whole of one's visit, hoping thereby to avert all evil consequences!' (p. 223).

Barnes's book records how education and vocational (industrial) training became a focus of the endeavours of the missionary women and had a lasting impact. While this emphasis was originally rejected by Muslims, gradually many among them began to see its wisdom and allowed their daughters to go to school and receive training, in some cases even developing schools for the girls themselves, purposely to oppose the work of the Christian missionaries. In other instances, the girls were deliberately prevented from receiving an education.

The book details the experiences of a number of Muslim women who, in spite of their situations, including persecution they faced from their relatives and associates, chose to 'break' with Islam and become Christians. Of their number, many also chose to become Bible women in order to explain the Christian message not only to other Muslim women but also to Hindus. Some of these women and girls were killed as a consequence. The book also records, generally briefly and without comment, the various forms of opposition that the women missionaries faced. In some cases, it was simply a refusal to be allowed to meet with women in the *zenana*, sometimes by women within the *zenana* itself, in an attempt to prevent others from hearing what the missionaries had to say. On occasions, they were publicly insulted. When schools were set up for Muslim girls, some families insisted that the school should provide *pardah* conditions for the girls to get to school, and countless other difficulties could be created when attempts were made to obtain land on which to build a school or hospital.

Since the book is about the conditions experienced by the women whom the missionaries met, there are only passing references to Islamic teaching. In consequence, there is little about theological arguments, though there are a number of mentions of Islamic religious practices, including the following:

> Muhammadan women are compelled by their religion to read the Koran; and because it is unlawful that it should be translated from the original Arabic, Muhammadan children have to commit to memory that most difficult character. Yet, since a woman may not have the Koran explained to her, she does not understand the meaning of one word, but reads it only as a sort of charm or an act of merit. But still, many of these women, brought up

> strictly in the Moslem faith from babyhood, are able to defend their religion and to argue in a way that is at first very surprising, although, of course, their arguments are often childish in the extreme. (p. 214)

Another Muslim woman, on hearing the Christian message, commented, 'There is no comfort found in our religion. [...] Our book tells us to fast, pray, give alms, that we may obtain salvation. When we do all this, it is still put down as sin' (p. 229).

While in principle the *zenana* existed to give women protection and security, it was, from the missionary women's perspective, a place not only of 'awful wickedness' and fractured social relationships, but also of mental and medical deprivation as well as physical impoverishment. This work from the late 1800s recounts the endeavours of Christian women to improve the lot of Indian women, especially Muslim women, living in seclusion. In bringing them better health they changed many of these women's lives, and in providing education for them they opened opportunities for them to function meaningfully within society.

SIGNIFICANCE

The significance of this work lies in its detailing of the conditions experienced by Indian women, both Muslim and Hindu, living in *pardah* during the late 1800s as personally witnessed and experienced by Christian women, most from England, who went to live among them. Certainly, the missionaries' evaluations were measured in contrast to the lives they had lived in England, but much of what they saw and experienced made them long for better conditions for these Indian women, many of whom were described as and treated as animals.

An additional point of significance that emerges from these accounts is that, while the missionary women imparted the message of Christianity, it was more their loving care for Indian women that had a lasting impact. In contrast to being spoken of and treated (and considering themselves) as animals, the Indian women and girls encountered by the Christian women were shown dignity and value, as well as receiving kindness and loving care. It was this love and care especially, as demonstrated through the hospitals, that broke down barriers of hostility. Care and security were what the *pardah* system was theoretically supposed to ensure. In reality, not only did the system fail to protect the women or give them security but, according to the account of Barnes and her informants, it also devalued and abused them.

The book suggests that, as might be expected, Irene Barnes regarded the form of Islam she witnessed as inferior to her own Christian faith. It

also hints, if only indirectly, that she thought Islam was wanting as both a form of teaching and a way of life.

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Ruth J. Nicholls

Robert Needham Cust

DATE OF BIRTH 24 February 1821
PLACE OF BIRTH Cockayne Hatley, Bedfordshire
DATE OF DEATH 28 October 1909
PLACE OF DEATH London

BIOGRAPHY

As a prodigious young linguist, Robert Needham Cust diverged from his family's original law intentions and instead took up a posting with the Indian Civil Service. First educated at Haileybury College, Hertfordshire, where administrators of the East India Company were trained, he completed his training at Fort William College, Calcutta, with honours, in 1843. He served as personal assistant to Major George Broadfoot during the First Anglo-Sikh War and participated in the battles that took place on the Satlaj in 1845: Mūdki, Ferozshahr, and Sobrāon. Major Broadfoot died at Ferozshahr and, although Cust was still a junior officer, he became the temporary Under-Secretary in the Foreign Office for the North-West frontier (Thornton, 'Cust, Robert Needham', p. 458) until Broadfoot's replacement arrived. According to his own account, he was commended in the Governor-General's report for two elements in his performance: he had done his best at only 24 years of age, and had exhibited a noteworthy ability to engage in political, tribal and managerial affairs in the local language (Cust, 'A chapter', p. 1041). In recognition of this, he was commissioned to head Hoshiārpur district in the newly formed Punjab province (Thornton, 'Cust, Robert Needham', p. 458). Young and inexperienced as he was, he set about establishing a legal system there, based on 'firmness and kindness', holding court under the mango trees in the presence of hundreds of people and living amongst the local population without police or military protection (Thornton, 'Robert Needham Cust', p. 257). It was here, asserts an obituary writer, that he 'developed that intense love for India and its people, and profound acquaintance with their customs and feelings, which formed a marked feature of his character' (Thornton, 'Robert Needham Cust', p. 257).

Through his 24-year career in India, Cust accepted successive promotions as he continued demonstrating an aptitude for languages, organisation and management, serving overall as a political officer, administrator,

judge and legislator. However, distraught at the death of his second wife in childbirth (his first wife also died young), he chose early retirement and returned to England, nine months short of earning his full pension.

Of his first year of retirement, Cust says he felt 'like a man crushed' (Thornton, 'Robert Needham Cust', p. 259). Eventually, however, he revived, began studying Hebrew, resumed writing and studying, and married his third wife. By 1869, he had found energy and capacity to embark upon 'a new career of usefulness' (Thornton, 'Robert Needham Cust', p. 259), which included language and religious studies as well as two volumes of poetry (Cust published over 60 works between 1870 and 1909), extensive travel, and participation in numerous boards and societies, including the Royal Asiatic Society, the Royal Geographical Society, the Church Missionary Society and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. Despite declining eyesight from 1904, he continued writing until the year of his death, 1909.

MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Primary

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Secondary

C. Berends, 'Literary insight into mission leading up to the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference of 1910', Columbia SC, 2025 (PhD Diss. Columbia International University)

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Linguistic and Oriental essays

DATE 1898
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

Linguistic and Oriental essays, fifth series written from 1840 to 1897, in two volumes, is one of seven 'series' of essays by Cust. The essays, which reflect the huge variety of his interests, were written over more than 60 years and were originally published in a number of different journals and newspapers. Cust brought them together and published them in the seven series between 1880 and 1904. The fifth series, published in 1898, comprises two volumes, the second of which includes six short essays on topics connected with Christian-Muslim relations, together reaching a total of 42 pages. Cust divides the volume into two parts: Religion (Part III, pp. 475-715) and Miscellaneous (Part IV, pp. 719-1075), continuing the structure and order of the first volume. In the Religion division, the essays are grouped into sections on non-Christian religions (pp. 475-544), Judaism (pp. 545-65), the 'Romish' Church (pp. 566-72), and the Protestant Churches (pp. 573-715). The six essays in which Islam is discussed all appear in the first section, on non-Christian religions, and bear the following titles: 'Modern religious conceptions' (pp. 475-92), 'The religions of India' (pp. 496-506), 'A dictionary of Islam' (pp. 522-33), 'Islam in Africa' (pp. 534-7), 'Islam in India' (p. 537), and 'Reliques of Mahomet in India' (p. 538). They were originally published between 1860 and 1897.

In these essays, Cust frequently engages in social and theological evaluations of Islam and Christianity, and reviews other Christian writers on Islam. He repeatedly defends Muslims as peaceful and law-abiding citizens (particularly in India), arguing that, after spending so many years in close acquaintance with Indian Muslims, he has found them to be upstanding, genuine and moderate. In particular, he describes Muslims as 'civilizing' and deferentially states, 'The Arab merchant carried [Islam] backward and forward, and still to this day carries it, over the deserts of Africa, giving it to black races as the first germs of Civilization'; he continues, '…the Malay pirate carried it to the cannibals and head-hunters of the Indian Archipelago, telling them of the natural equality of man before God, the abolition of priestcraft, and the certainty of a day of Judgment, and everlasting happiness or torment' (Cust, *Linguistic and Oriental essays*, vol. 2, 1898, p. 523). He does, however, castigate Muslims who observe the rites of Islam 'and yet sack villages, ravish women, kill infants, and carry helpless Negroes into captivity, and sell them as slaves' (p. 536). In addition, he orders races in hierarchies, particularly Indian Muslims – 'a proud, wealthy, and powerful population' - and African Muslims – 'mere savages' – although he does single out some African communities as exemplary (p. 535).

On Islam as a religion, Cust often praises the simplicity and comprehensiveness of the principle, 'There is no God but one God', and argues that this is responsible for Islam's success as a 'Propagandist' religion (pp. 502, 522, 523, 532).

He also discusses the difference between the approaches to sin in Islam and Christianity, and asserts that it is Christianity's doctrine of sin, along with its worship in the vernacular language of the participants (their 'Heart-voice'), that edges Christianity above Islam (pp. 524, 535).

Among his reviews of Christian writers is one of T.P. Hughes's *A dictionary of Islam* (Cust mistakenly calls him T.H. Hughes; see *CMR* 16, 311-19) and also a response to an article by Joseph Thomson entitled 'Islam in Africa', which appeared in 1886. In his review of Hughes's dictionary, Cust directs his praise mostly towards Islam itself and, with regard to the book, he asserts that, while Hughes's knowledge of Islam comes first-hand from living among Muslims for many years, it is limited to Muslims of Afghanistan, whom he himself regards as 'thorough ruffians and totally uneducated' (p. 526). The tendency to list races in hierarchies is detectable in both Thomson's essay and Cust's review but, within this essay, also occur much of Cust's social and theological comparisons between Islam and Christianity.

Cust's essays on Islam in this volume epitomise his major interests: India and Africa, theology and missiology, travel and culture, and linguistics. More widely, his essays not only respond to what fellow Christian scholars have written out of their personal experience among Muslims, but the essays on Islam themselves – and, indeed, Cust's whole body of work – are also an example of this writing. Despite this, however, his essays on Islam have hardly been studied for their own sake, and references to his volumes of essays generally appear only in footnotes.

To British Christian readers in 1880, Cust advocates Christian respect for Muslims and recognition of the peaceful spread of Islam and its 'civilizing' force. He acknowledges that his position is unusual for his time, context and readership when he warns at the beginning of his review of *A dictionary of Islam*: 'If the reader expects to find in this review a blind and wholesale abuse of Mahomet and his doctrines, and an uncritical disregard of the great fact, that 175 millions at this moment adhere to this persuasion, he is mistaken' (p. 522). Following this warning, he engages in a fierce defence of the character, work ethic and peacefulness of those Muslims whom he has known as servants, colleagues and friends (pp. 522, 537).

In addition to his arguments for respecting Muslims and Islamic doctrine, Cust also addresses the popular tendency to associate violence with the spread of Islam. Admitting that Islam reached India 'accompanied by the sword', he asserts that 'the sword has long been sheathed' and its spread currently extends peacefully (pp. 496, 502, 523). Significantly for his time and for Christian-Muslim relations, throughout his discourse he also emphasises the spread of Islam by trade and by spiritual appeal (pp. 502, 523, 532). Just as unusually, he insists that Islam – not just Christianity – is a 'civilizing' force in its spread across continents and island nations (p. 523), though he does caution against misattributing evidence of civilisation to the effects of Islam in some specific instances (p. 536).

SIGNIFICANCE

Through its call for respect for Muslims and for more positive attitudes towards Islam, Cust here aligned himself with Christian authors who engaged in and advocated a dialogical, rather than polemical, attitude in Christian-Muslim relations. At times, his passion alienated his Christian readers and colleagues (Thornton, 'Robert Needham Cust', p. 262; Frykenberg, 'Reviewed work', p. 258-9; Anderson, 'Cust'), although he approached any disagreements he held with Islamic doctrine or with Muslim behaviour with the same 'judicial calmness' he urged his readers to employ when examining Islamic history and current contexts (p. 522).

There is little evidence that what Cust wrote about Islam in *Linguistic and Oriental essays* attracted much scholarly attention. With respect to their relevance to present-day relations between Christians and Muslims, the essays serve as a record of a 19th-century scholar who recognised the importance of trade and belief in Islam's historical growth and who credited Islam as a civilising force.

PUBLICATIONS

Details of the original publications of the six essays are given in *Linguistic and Oriental essays, fifth series*, vol. 2, London, 1898.

R.N. Cust, 'Reliques of Mahomet in India', *Lahore Chronicle* 1860 (*Linguistic and Oriental essays*, p. 538); lhcr1860 (digitised version available through East View Global Press Archive)

R.N. Cust, 'The religions of India', *Calcutta Review* 66 (1878) 190-226 (*Linguistic and Oriental essays*, pp. 496-506); 000530730 (digitised version available through Hathi Trust)

R.N. Cust, 'A dictionary of Islam', *Record* 1885 (*Linguistic and Oriental essays*, pp. 522-33)

R.N. Cust, 'Islam in Africa', *Record*, 24 December 1886 (*Linguistic and Oriental essays*, pp. 534-7)

R.N. Cust, 'Islam in India', *Record* 1888 (*Linguistic and Oriental essays*, p. 537)

R.N. Cust, *Linguistic and Oriental essays, fifth series written from the year 1840 to 1897*, vol. 2, London, 1898, repr. [s.l.], 2020; 000981685 (digitised version available through Hathi Trust)

R.N. Cust, 'Modern religious conceptions, which have come into existence in all parts of the world since the great anno domini', paper given at the Paris International Oriental Congress, 21 April 1897 (*Linguistic and Oriental essays*, pp. 475-92; French trans. pp. 827-46)

Candis Berends

Saleni Armstrong-Hopkins

Saleni Armstrong

DATE OF BIRTH 21 January 1855
PLACE OF BIRTH London, Canada
DATE OF DEATH After 1918
PLACE OF DEATH Unknown

BIOGRAPHY

Saleni Armstrong-Hopkins was a Christian medical missionary, author and lecturer attached to the Methodist Episcopal Church, who spent seven years in pre-partition British India. Her work led to interactions with Muslims in various regions, which she recounted mainly to American audiences both in published writings and in speaking engagements after her return to the United States.

Armstrong-Hopkins was born Saleni Armstrong in Canada in 1855 and lived until at least 1918, but no record of the date or place of her death has been found. She was brought up in Michigan and Nebraska and recalled being a Christian from childhood, later writing that she could not remember a time when she 'did not love the Lord Jesus Christ' (*Divine call*, p. 12). As a young woman, she studied at a number of institutions, including Northwestern University, Woman's Medical College of Pennsylvania, and Mount Vernon Institute of Elocution and Languages, eventually becoming a medical doctor. She then helped found an orphanage in York, Nebraska.

It was to the foreign mission field, however, that Armstrong felt called. She wrote about finally relinquishing her own plans, choosing to obey God's call and telling the Lord, 'I will go to the very ends of the earth if Thou requirest it!' (*Divine call*, p. 21). She specifically felt called to work where the fewest Christian missionaries were willing to go, much depending on two specific Bible verses as comfort and motivation, Acts 7:35 and 1 Corinthians 1:27 (*Divine call*, pp. 24-7). In 1886, this motivation took her to India, where she served in various places such as Lahore, Hyderabad and Bombay. While in India, she served as a medical missionary and worked in hospitals as well as travelling to patients in their homes. In 1893, she married a Methodist minister, George Franklin Hopkins, after which they both used the surname Armstrong-Hopkins (Beauchamp, *Past and present*, p. 694).

Armstrong-Hopkins travelled back and forth from India to the United States, where she lectured and continued her missionary work. She also published multiple books, some recounting and reflecting on her experiences in India, often emphasising the spiritual and physical suffering of women. She argued that the efforts of the British government to establish great hospitals throughout India was of 'little avail' and could not meet the needs of the people (*Within the purdah*, pp. 8-9). Rather, she argued that only the Gospel of Jesus Christ was the remedy. Beyond her personal observations as a missionary she wrote a number of other works, including *A divine call to foreign missionary service*, a personal account of her calling to the mission field.

MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION

S. Armstrong-Hopkins, *Within the purdah; also, In the Zenana homes of Indian princes; and, Heroes and heroines of Zion. Being the personal observations of a medical missionary in India*, New York, 1898

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W.M. Beauchamp, *Past and present of Syracuse and Onondaga County, New York: From prehistoric times to the beginning of 1908*, vol. 2, Madison WI, 1908

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Within the purdah

DATE 1898
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

In the original 1898 edition of *Within the purdah, also In the zenana homes of Indian princes, and Heroes and heroines of Zion, being the personal observations of a medical missionary in India*, which totals 256 pages, Saleni Armstrong-Hopkins's analysis of her interactions with Muslims occupies about 40 interspersed pages. She describes topics such as the treatment of women and children under Islam, her interactions with wealthy Muslim royals and the character of the primarily Islamic city of Hyderabad, Sindh. (though she is also called to attend a case in Hyderabad, Deccan). The

book was written and published after her return from India, where she had served as a medical missionary for seven years. She plainly states her purpose for writing in the preface, which was to stir the Christian hearts of her people in North America to help share the Christian gospel with Indians who were, in her view, 'in the depths of dark places where women and children, in utter helplessness, crouch in pain and woe' (p. 8). The work is divided into three 'books', the first of which is titled 'Within the purdah', the second, 'In the zenana homes of Indian princes' and the third, 'Heroes and heroines of Zion'.

The work describes Armstrong-Hopkins's service as family physician to wealthy Muslims such as the Nawab (Muslim prince) Khurshed Jah and the family of the Dewan Luchman Dass, and includes the time she helped, at no cost, the daughter of a 'Mohammedan saint' (p. 153). While serving as a Christian medical missionary in Bombay, Armstrong-Hopkins wrote about how she helped the poor as well as the 'lowest-caste people' for no payment or obligation (p. 104). However, she details how she would charge a 'rich native' a 'handsome fee' (p. 104), including charging one nawab 75 rupees per visit. In addition, she details her time spent working in a hospital in Hyderabad, which she calls the 'historical capital of Sindh', covering the north-western part of pre-partition India (p. 27). She describes her time in the hospital, where she saw 'Mohammedan' patients as well as patients who considered themselves either Hindu or Eurasian. Armstrong-Hopkins also wrote about her time in charge at Lady Atchison Hospital in Lahore.

Armstrong-Hopkins provides her most direct, general characterisation of Islam and Muslims in her description of the city of Hyderabad, Deccan, where she is called to attend the nawab's wife. She introduces it as a 'characteristic native Mohammedan city', which occupies the 'deccan, or central plateau of Southern India' (p. 111) and notes that it is one of the 'principal strongholds of Mohammedanism in India' with numerous mosques and a population consisting primarily of 'Mohammedans' (p. 111). She describes the Muslims in Hyderabad as having a 'war-like spirit', highlighting that 'nearly every man, woman, and child' is 'armed with swords, knives, and daggers' (p. 111), and goes on to note that she has heard it does not take much offence for 'Mohammedans' to 'thrust a dagger into the heart of a friend or neighbour' (pp. 111-12) and that it is even more dangerous for foreigners to be found within the city as they are 'liable to be murdered for the sake of a gold or silver ornament [...] or a few rupees in his pocket' (p. 112). She laments the city's lawlessness, adding

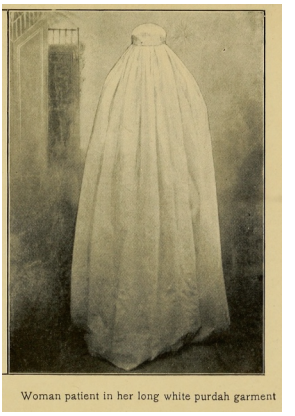


Illustration 20. A woman patient in a white purdah garment

that '[M]urder is a common occurrence in Hyderabad, and the guilty are rarely brought to justice' (p. 112). Finally, she warns foreigners – 'English, European, American, Hindu, or non-Mohammedan' – not to pass into Hyderabad unless accompanied by armed soldiers in the uniform of well-known and respected Muslim princes (p. 112).

Her accounts frequently emphasise the detrimental effects of religious and cultural traditions on women and children. She recounts a story from her time working in the Hyderabad hospital in which a Muslim woman came to see her whose 'entire person [was] wholly concealed' with fabric. When Armstrong-Hopkins's interpreter tries to persuade the woman, whom Armstrong refers to as a 'child-mother', to remove the heavy garment, she resists. When she is sure that no males are present, she finally removes them to reveal a little infant (pp. 36-7) who had what Armstrong-Hopkins describes as a 'crushed' back of the head that was flattened and inflamed with an open sore. This condition, she explains, was caused by a practice common among 'heathen parents' in which they lay their infants on solid stone beds and members of the family press the baby's head against the stone with the palm of their hands 'every two or three hours' during the day (p. 37).

While Armstrong-Hopkins had some good things to write about the households of powerful Indians, she did not like the seclusion in which the women lived there. She observed wealthy households firsthand when she was invited to work within them. Beginning in November 1887, she

served as family physician to Nawab Khurshed Jah, a 'Mohammedan prince of great influence'. In this position, she was asked to attend to the prince's favourite wife, called the 'Mad Begam' (p. 111). She recounts that when she was taken to the palace to work she was accompanied by the nawab's soldiers ahead, behind and alongside her carriage (p. 113) and when she arrived she was given a 'European palace' for herself and numerous personal servants. She was quite impressed with the nawab's great wealth and writes at length about the grounds, the qur'anic verses on the buildings, the portraits and the bodyguards. She describes the important Muslim prince himself as someone with 'intelligent eyes' and 'true refinement and strength of character' (p. 116). He tells her that he will 'gladly spend all his fortune for the sake of seeing [his favourite wife] restored to health' (p. 116). She describes the Mad Begam as being about 40 years old, with an attractive face and long black hair as 'fine as silk' (p. 122). She concludes that the woman's illness is not due to any disease but rather to living in seclusion and lacking exercise and sunshine. She mentions that the Nawab has a 100 concubines in addition to his four wives, who stay in 'padlocked' rooms (p. 124).

Armstrong-Hopkins also served as physician to the wives of the Dewan Luchman Dass, a rich government official. Interestingly, one of his four wives was a 'European begum [...] of pure English blood', and the daughter of his private secretary, who had been 'bought for a price' to be a part of this royal harem (p. 143). In line with Armstrong-Hopkins's missionary efforts, she writes that the Dewan credited her for his conversion to Christianity. He tells her that he had

> lost faith in all religions, and neither believed in the Mohammedan, the Hindu, nor the Christian faith; but since his conversations with [Armstrong-Hopkins] and his acquaintance with [her] life he had come to believe in the Christian religion and to have faith in God and in the Lord Jesus Christ, assuring [her] that now he often prayed to God, in Jesus's names, asking for guidance, help, and blessing, as he had seen her enjoy in her own Christian life. (p. 148)

The theme of the superiority of Christianity over Islam and Hinduism is prevalent throughout *Within the purdah*. Despite her position as a medical professional, Armstrong-Hopkins argues that efforts to build great hospitals throughout India will be of 'little avail', since the people's spiritual needs are greater than their physical needs and can only be remedied by the Christian gospel message. She also states that, although there may be stereotypical assumptions that non-Christian religions are better able to foster kindness in adherents, she has found the reverse to be true. In

considering her time as a missionary, she writes, '[W]e, as Christians, were taught at our mother's knee' the truth that

> [c]harity, kindness, unselfishness, thoughtful consideration for others, love, and tenderness, emanate in large measure from God, and from him only, and those who live nearest to him and walk most closely in the footsteps of our Lord Jesus Christ do most fully exemplify these characteristics. (p. 104)

While she is impressed with many of the Muslims she has met, she ultimately views their beliefs as false and Christianity as true. Armstrong-Hopkins travelled to India with a missionary mindset, and it is through this lens that she depicts the Muslim people she encounters there.

SIGNIFICANCE

Within the purdah offers a rare account of a female Christian missionary's interactions with Muslims, both men and women, rich and poor. It also provides an unusual personal view of the secluded harems of rich Muslim royals that were at the time quite mysterious to Christians in America. Armstrong-Hopkins was asked to speak at a number of events in various states on her experiences as a missionary among Muslims, indicating that her work appeared to be well received by many Christians in the United States.

The book was related to a contemporary debate between progressive and conservative Christians regarding the correct aim for Christians when interacting with various types of Muslims. Many traditional evangelical Christians of the time, such as the missionary Samuel Zwemer (1867-1952), maintained that converting Muslims to Christianity should be the primary objective of Christian-Muslim relations, while progressive Christians, such as the missionary Cyrus Hamlin (1811-1900), favoured a social gospel approach that prioritised meeting physical needs and ending perceived societal injustices. As an evangelical Christian, Armstrong-Hopkins believed Christianity was true and Islam false, and that only the gospel of Jesus, not hospitals, could truly help Muslims. Thus, *Within the purdah* is more connected to traditional evangelical impulses than to the more modern social gospel impulses that were simultaneously evident in Islamic lands.

The debate among Christians about how best to approach Muslims continues and this work offers much for modern Christians to grapple with. Progressive Christians would look on it as an example of the superior attitudes towards Islam that Christians had in the past and that they believe should be avoided in order to have better Christian-Muslim relations. Conservative Christians would also look on it and find support of

the central importance of the gospel's power to meet spiritual needs, or as a portrayal of a woman following the call to mission and sharing her faith naturally in the context of her profession.

PUBLICATIONS

S. Armstrong-Hopkins, *Within the purdah; also, In the zenana homes of Indian princes; and, Heroes and heroines of Zion. Being the personal observations of a medical missionary in India*, New York, 1898, repr. Norderstedt, 2017; 000237026 (digitised version available through Hathi Trust)

STUDIES

While *Within the purdah* is briefly referred to in a number of works, such as T. Aftab, *Inscribing South Asian Muslim women. An annotated bibliography & research guide*, Leiden, 2008, p. 91, a full study of the ways it was used remains to be carried out.

Ashlee Quosigk

John Campbell Oman

DATE OF BIRTH 1841
PLACE OF BIRTH Calcutta
DATE OF DEATH 31 May 1911
PLACE OF DEATH Edmonton, London

BIOGRAPHY

John Campbell Oman was born into what he described as a comfortable Anglo-Indian household in Calcutta. His father, also named John Oman, was a planter. Little is known about his personal life beyond that he married in 1866 and had five children. One son, William Campbell Oman, illustrated some of his books.

From 1866 to 1877, Oman was employed in the Indian Public Works Department. Then, from 1877 to 1897, he was professor of natural sciences at Government College, Lahore, and, from 1898 to 1899, he was principal of Khalsa College, Amritsar. He moved to England in his latter years and died in Edmonton, London, in 1911.

As a scholar, Oman wrote about aspects of the religions he observed in India, mainly Hinduism but also Islam. His major works in this area are: *The mystics, ascetics, and saints of India* (1903), which includes references to Sufis and the close relationships between them and Hindu holy men; *The Brahmans, theists and Muslims of India* (1907), which in its third part gives details of the Shīʿī commemoration of 'Āshūrā', including dramatic enactments of the passion of Ḥusayn, and also discusses 'faquirs'; and *Cults, customs and superstitions of India* (1908), a revised and enlarged edition of *Indian life, religious and social* (1889), which gives accounts of Muslim festivals and holy men.

A fuller treatment of Muslims and Christians in India is found in Oman's novel *Where three creeds meet. A tale of modern Indian life*. He wrote this in 1898, earlier than these scholarly works.

MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Art., 'Oman, John Campbell', in *Who was who*, vol. 1. *1897-1915*, London, 1953[4], 537
K. Karttunen, art. 'Oman, John', in K. Karttunen, *Persons of Indian studies*, 2017, online; https://whowaswho-indology.info/4474

WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Where three creeds meet. A tale of modern Indian life

DATE 1898
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION
This novel of 225 pages depicts the complex relationships among the inhabitants of Mozung, a Muslim village near Lahore. The main characters are the Muslim girl Lateefun and her cousin, the Muslim youth Abdulla, who attends a missionary school where he has become interested in Christianity. He wishes to marry Lateefun, who is widowed after her husband died of cholera before the marriage could be consummated. Another Muslim, Mahir Din, has feelings for both Lateefun and Moradun, a girl who has converted to Islam from Hinduism. Abdulla is allowed to give Lateefun lessons in English and other subjects, and eventually declares his love for her. With the help of Abdulla's missionary teacher, they both convert to Christianity and marry, realising that they will have to run away. For his part, the missionary exults over the two conversions, not thinking of the possible consequences when their Muslim family and neighbours come to hear of what has happened.

Abdulla arranges to travel ahead to prepare the way to their new home and Lateefun is to follow, but she is killed just as she is leaving the village. Moradun is accused of committing this crime out of jealousy because Mahir Din loved Lateefun. She is taken before a judge, but a Hindu barrister brought in by the Englishman Mr Baxter, who is indebted to Moradun for saving his daughter's life, proves that Lateefun was killed by a Muslim who was incensed by her conversion to Christianity. When Moradun is freed, she decides to abandon Islam and makes off towards a Hindu temple to pray to the gods. There, she is accosted by a young Hindu priest and runs away. Mahir Din, who realises he has always loved her, searches for her but quite unexpectedly she turns up at his home where his mother is waiting. The two women exchange harsh words about gold bangles that Moradun is wearing. Moradun refuses to explain how she acquired them and she leaves.

The story moves to the missionary responsible for the conversion of Lateefun and Abdulla. He is in his room writing an account of what has happened when a fellow missionary comes in to talk. The two are interrupted by a fellow-student of Abdulla, who, in an argument with the

missionaries, holds that reason is superior to all kinds of religion. When the student leaves, the two missionaries agree that individuals such as him impede their work and are strengthened in this by irreligious literature that is sent to them from Europe. The missionary then goes to preach in the market, where he and a Muslim preacher have to listen to a Hindu preacher declaring that all who worship their own god in reality worship Krishna. At the same time, an ascetic is telling a young disciple that all religions are prisons and that the goal of life is to rise above them.

The story moves on to the grave of Lateefun, where her mother and her servant are mourning her. An old priest reminds them to accept that death is the common lot. They acknowledge this and, on their way home from the graveyard, they pass a lighted tomb, which turns out to be that of Lateefun's murderer, and the servant tells her mistress that Abdulla has become a wandering Sufi and may have gone to Mecca.

Back with Moradun, in her wanderings after escaping from the Hindu priest, she encounters an ascetic in a cave. When he recognises her, he reminds her that she had come to the cave before and he had given her his daughter's bangles, making her swear to tell no one about their meeting. He then releases her from this oath and she is free to go and tell Mahir Din and his mother the truth. Meanwhile, Mahir realises the depth of his love for her and determines to find her and make her his own. Moradun herself, knowing that she can now explain what has happened to her, goes to Mahir's mother, but she does not accept her story and bans her from the house.

In the concluding episode, Moradun lies asleep in the afternoon heat cradling the son she has given birth to after making love with Mahir, although he does not know about the child. As she sleeps, a woman creeps in and takes the baby away. She is the wife of the barrister who defended Moradun in court and, in her distress at not being able to bear him a child herself, she takes the baby and sacrifices it to the goddess Kali. At this moment, Moradun wakes and hears the music of Mahir's wedding party passing in the street as she realises her child has disappeared.

As a work of literature, this novel leaves much to be desired. Too eager to convey his moral and religious themes, Oman strains the story beyond credibility and in the process abandons rounded characterisation and realististic motivation. Nevertheless, it does make some useful religious points, most strikingly that all religions can oppress, corrupt and lead to immorality and crime. This is demonstrated most horribly at the end when the barrister's Hindu wife sacrifices Moradun's baby in the hope of having a child of her own.

Relations between Christianity and Islam mainly feature on the margins of the intricate plot. While the conversions to Christianity of Lateefun and Abdulla function as a central device to propel the action, in the wider context of Hindu beliefs and social norms they make little impression because Christianity is a foreign religion. Any Muslim who converts to Christianity must not only move into a different culture but must leave home and everything familiar and face persecution and death, so few take the risk. Further, in their hostility towards each other the two faiths demonstrate the same narrow concern to set boundaries, as is hinted at in the Christian missionary's concern with conversion above all else (p. 32) and the rage of Lateefun's Muslim murderer at her becoming a Christian (pp. 153-4). The Hindu priest's sermon in the marketplace (pp. 195-6) suggests that Hinduism contains the potential to be superior to both in the elements of universalism within it.

SIGNIFICANCE

In a note at the end of the novel (p. 225), Oman states that he has tried to present something of the complexity of life in India. In pursuit of this, Europeans appear 'only fitfully in the story' because they count for little in the Indian social system. In the same way, he represents Christianity as the religion of the foreigner, which has not made much impression on Muslim and Hindu society. Although it is fiction, this may be one of the truest accounts of European efforts to spread their Christianity in an alien environment, and a warning against the consequences of their incomprehension of what can happen when individuals attempt to move from one religious environment to another.

There are no signs that the novel was ever reissued in the decades following its publication, or of any reviews. Maybe the artificiality of the plot prevented its religious message from being appreciated.

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Ruth J. Nicholls

Mohammad Meherullah

DATE OF BIRTH 24 December 1861
PLACE OF BIRTH Jessore, present day Bangladesh
DATE OF DEATH 7 June 1907
PLACE OF DEATH Jessore

BIOGRAPHY

Munshī Mohammad Meherullah, an anti-Christian apologist who 'defanged the poisonous Christian missionaries and *padris*' (Jamiruddin, *Meher Charit ba Meherul Islam*, p. 9), was born in Jessore district in what is present-day Bangladesh on 24 December 1861. He was from the Muslim peasantry of eastern Bengal.

Meherullah's father, Warisuddin, died before Meherullah finished primary schooling, which took the family into poverty and caused a break in Meherullah's formal education. His mother encouraged him to pursue Islamic studies, hoping that this would lead to a profitable occupation. Accordingly, he learned Arabic and Persian, and memorised the Qur'an and selections from the Persian poet Saʿdī's *Golestān* and *Bustān*. He also picked up a smattering of Urdu. At the same time, as he was pursuing this education he also trained as a tailor, working for the British civilians in Jessore town.

Among the mostly illiterate Bengali Muslim peasantry, who relied on this literate and personable man to interpret their religion in language they could understand, Meherullah's erudition ensured his prominence as a guide in Muslim piety and living. His exceptional powers of oratory also helped him to appeal to illiterate peasant Muslim communities in the remote rural areas of the delta region of Bengal, who would gather in their thousands to hear him speak at the *waz-mahfils* ('assemblies in which sermons were given') or engage Christian missionaries in debate in deeply antagonistic but entertaining disputations.

The pamphlets written by Meherullah that survive often seem to be elaborations of his speeches. He wrote numerous pamphlets between 1886 and his death in 1907 and came to be known through these as well as through his activities as a member of Islam Dharmottejika Anjuman ('Conference for the Revival of Islam').

Sources on Meherullah's life stress the importance of the exchange of articles between him and the Revd John Jamiruddin Vidyabinod, who reverted to Islam as a result and became Meherullah's disciple. Meherullah first became aware of Jamiruddin Vidyabinod in 1892, when the latter published an article entitled 'Asal Koran kothai?' ('Where is the real Qur'an?') in the Bengali periodical *Khristian Bandhab* ('Friend of Christians'). Meherullah responded in a series of five articles in the periodical *Sudhakar* ('Moon'), also in 1892, and convinced Jamiruddin of his errors. Jamirruddin returned to Islam, which was both a personal and political landmark in Meherullah's efforts to curb the influence of Christian missionaries and Christianity in eastern Bengal, an event that further raised public estimation of the effectiveness of his social reform programme and of his own personal charisma.

Meherullah was committed to charity, especially the welfare of orphans, and also the expansion of education, including schools for Muslim boys. In addition, he campaigned for the removal of Hindu elements in the religious practices of Bengal's Muslims, such as untouchability and the prohibition of the remarriage of widows.

Meherullah died in his home village of Chatiantala aged only 45 on 7 June 1907, from complications related to untreated pneumonia. He was mourned by Muslims across Bengal, and many periodicals, including *Sudhakar*, *Islam Suhrid*, *Islam Pracharak* and *Soltan*, referred to his death as a great disaster. As one periodical lamented, 'The Christian *padris* shook in fear when they heard him defend Islam. His advice brought many Christian converts back into the fold' (Abū Tāliba, *Munaśī Mohāmmada Meheraullāha*, pp. 204-5).

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Two pamphlets by Meherullah

DATE 1898
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Bengali

DESCRIPTION
Meherullah published nothing longer than pamphlets, which by their nature would be directed to particular issues and readerships. Two of these illustrate his dexterity in argument and unrelenting hostility towards Christian missionaries.

Radde Kristian o dalilula Isalama, ba, Khrstana dharmera asarata

Meherullah began his writing career in 1886 with a booklet 24 pages long entitled *Khristiya dharm'er asarata* ('The worthlessness of Christianity'). At this time, he also started to work as a contributor to the Calcutta periodical *Sudhakar*, usually writing about public debates, or *bahas*, between Christian missionaries and Muslim apologists in rural eastern Bengal, often debates in which he himself participated against British and Indian evangelicals. The tract that cemented his fame, *Radde Kristian o dalilula Isalama, ba, Khrstana dharmera asarata* ('Refutation of Christianity and evidence of Islam, or, the worthlessness of Christianity'), published in 1898

and 114 pages long, was an improved and expanded version of *Khristiya dharm'er asarata*. In this later pamphlet, he makes a point of criticising not only Christian evangelistic activities but also the listlessness of *atrap* ('low-born' or 'peasant') Bengali Muslims and the moribund nature of their social life, which is bereft of any desire for progress.

Jawabunnesara

Jawabunnesara ('Exchanges of questions and answers with Christians'), also written in 1898 and 32 pages long, is in the form of a dialogue between a Christian missionary and himself. One of the questions raised by the Christian concerns the lack of readily available Bengali translations of the Qur'an, making it fruitless to read the text by rote in a language that the *namazi* (a devout Muslim, one who offers the *namaz* prayers) cannot hope to comprehend. Although this serves as a direct attack on the nature of Muslim piety in Bengal, Meherullah's answer uses the rhetoric of practical common sense. He points out that along the rivers in eastern Bengal many hundreds of men and women buy boat and steamer tickets that are printed in English. They do not know the language on the tickets or what it means for their journey, but still they have faith that they will reach their destinations. Is it not evident that Allāh and the religious leaders will steer devout Muslims on the path of piety, even if they cannot read the Qur'an in Arabic?

The work contains numerous such parables, based on the realities of the everyday piety of rural eastern Bengali Muslims. This reinforces the impression that the target audience of Meherullah's anti-Christian apologetics is really the peasant communities of his homeland, whose faith he shores up with his quickwitted, witty, erudite exposition of the superiority of Islam over Christianity.

The humour evident in *Jawabunnesara* in its confident resistance to Christian missionaries' assertions is striking. This was not a complicated theological debate on the minutiae of the Qur'an or the Bible in their respective portrayals of Muḥammad and Jesus in the tradition of the north Indian *munāẓarah* (religious debate or disputation) but rather quick-witted repartee. Meherullah's impertinent use of laughter derails the seriousness of the missionary endeavour entirely.

Jawabunnesara received wide attention. *Islam Pracharak* was one of the first periodicals to take notice of Meherullah's activities, while Abu Bakr, the influential *pir* of Furfura Sharif, also took interest in them, and was influenced by them in his opinion that the politics of the Hindus

could not be the politics of the poor Muslim peasantry (Anisujjamana, *Musalimamānasa o bāṃlā sāhitya*, p. 354).

Meherullah remained attuned to the habits and dispositions of the subaltern rural Bengali peasant milieu he was part of, using in both his widely admired speeches and his written works the characteristic dialect of *dobashi-Bengali* (Bengali inflected with Arabic or Persian words) and the *puthi* genre (Muslim-Bengali literature dealing with religious or fantastic themes) to bring sophisticated commentary on Islam to Bengali Muslims.

At every stage of his career, his rhetorical stance was to approach religion as a part of the lived daily life of the rural Bengali-Muslim community. However, his theological acuity can be gauged by his sophisticated counters to the finer points of theological debates about Islam by Christian missionaries.

SIGNIFICANCE

The clue to the significance of his works lies not only in their widespread use and reception, but also in the way the death of Meherullah was so widely marked, evidently by Muslims who were encouraged and challenged by what he wrote to resist pressures from Christians (Abū Tāliba, *Munaśī Mohāmmada Meheraullāha*, pp. 204-5).

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Anisujjamana, *Musalimamānasa O Bāṃlā Sāhitya*

Mou Banerjee

Mīrzā Ghulām Aḥmad

DATE OF BIRTH 13 February 1835
PLACE OF BIRTH Qadian, Punjab
DATE OF DEATH 26 May 1908
PLACE OF DEATH Lahore

BIOGRAPHY

Mīrzā Ghulām Aḥmad was born on 13 February 1835 in Qadian, a town in the Punjab ('the term *mīrzā*', which denotes high or noble rank, is a title of respect used by his followers). His father was a medical doctor. Privately educated, he learned Arabic and Persian and also studied medicine. While working as a clerk in Sialkot for the government of India between 1864 and 1868, he encountered Christian missionaries and began his long involvement in debates with Christians on religious matters. After returning to Qadian to help manage his family's estate, he initially spent much time in solitary study but later resumed his debates with missionaries in public as well as privately. He invited Christians to verbal contests. He also debated with members of the Hindu Arya Samaj.

In 1889, Aḥmad declared that God had given him permission to receive oaths of allegiance from disciples. The Aḥmadiyya movement dates its origin to 23 March 1889. He made a number of claims about his mission, including that he was the promised Mahdī (saviour), the Hindu avatar Krishna, Jesus Christ, a reappearance of Muḥammad and a reformer (*mujaddid*) of Islam. While he was a source of controversy among Muslims, Aḥmad said that his prophethood was subordinate to that of Muḥammad and was not law-bearing. He continued debating with Christian missionaries, often challenging them to religious debates. He made various predictions to support his claims and challenged several individuals who made similar claims about their status, such as John Alexander Dowie (d. 1907), who styled himself the forerunner of Christ's second coming, and John Hugh Smyth-Piggot (d. 1927), who proclaimed that he was the Messiah.

Aḥmad died on 26 May 1908 in Lahore. He had promoted the peaceful propagation of Islam and anticipated that its renewal would take place in the West, where his movement had a missionary presence. His numerous publications include *Masīḥ Hindustān men* (1908, translated as *Jesus*



Illustration 21. Mīrzā Ghulām Aḥmad

in India. Being an account of Jesus' escape from death on the cross and of his journey to India, 1944), in which he claimed that Jesus survived the crucifixion and later died and was buried in Kashmir. While this differs from the widespread belief among Muslims that Jesus was not crucified but taken up into heaven, it of course also contradicts Christian convictions about Jesus's atoning death and resurrection. In 1914, a split occurred within the Aḥmadiyya, between the majority who regarded Aḥmad as a prophet and the Qadian branch for whom he was a reformer and a *muḥaddath* (one to whom God speaks).

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Masīḥ Hindustān men
'Jesus in India'

DATE 1899
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Urdu

DESCRIPTION

Mīrzā Ghulām Aḥmad wrote *Masīḥ Hindustān men* in 1899. Portions appeared in his magazine, *Review of Religions*, between 1902 and 1903 and the complete text was published in Urdu (114 pages) soon after his death in 1908. The first complete English translation of 143 pages, by Qāzī ʿAbdulḥamīd, was printed in 1944. In 2003, Chauḍhrī Muḥammad ʿAlī produced a revision of this, preserving the original as it was, including misprints, and giving corrections in footnotes. Multiple editions and reprints have been published by the Aḥmadiyya press in India and in Europe. There have been translations into five languages, including Arabic and Spanish.

In the most recent English translation, entitled *Jesus in India. Jesus' deliverance from the cross and journey to India* (2003), the Introduction (pp. 1-16; references that follow are to this translation) is followed by four chapters, an appendix (added by Ali) and an index. The chapters cover evidence from the Gospels, the Qur'an and Hadith, together with medical literature and historical records, to support the claim that Jesus died in India. Ch. 4 (pp. 77-122) is divided into three sections covering Islamic sources, Buddhist sources and other historical records. Also included is a map of Jesus's probable route to India (p. 78) and a list of the 24 Afghan tribes (p. 114).

Aḥmad's thesis is that Jesus survived the crucifixion by the use of healing salves, which he calls *marham-i ʿĪsā* (p. 77), that were brought to him in his tomb. In proposing this theory, Aḥmad takes aim at Christian beliefs, at traditional Muslim beliefs about God taking Jesus up into heaven before what appeared to be his crucifixion (Q 4:157-8), and also at Nicolas Notovich's *La vie inconnue de Jésus Christ* (1894). Aḥmad argues that Jesus was nailed to the cross but only hung there for two hours and that he was still alive when he was taken down.

Notovich helped to popularise the claim that Jesus spent his hidden years before he started his public ministry in India, where he studied with Buddhist and Hindu teachers. Some New Testament scholars have supposed that Buddhist missionaries, who visited the Middle East, influenced Jesus's teaching, but Aḥmad reverses this theory, positing that Jesus

influenced Buddhism, not vice versa. For Aḥmad, the resurrection appearances were sightings of Jesus's resuscitated body. Gospel accounts of Jesus eating and drinking, Aḥmad writes, support his theory that Jesus 'met his disciples in his mortal, physical body' (p. 28). The ascension did not happen but, after returning to Galilee, Jesus travelled to India to preach to the lost tribes of Israel, which had long ago settled in Afghanistan. This fulfilled Jesus's commission to preach to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (p. 18). It was in India and possibly in Tibet (p. 93) that Buddhists learned about Jesus and incorporated into their writings some aspects of his teaching, such as the Buddha's temptation by 'Satan' (Mara), and gave the Buddha similar titles to those of Jesus (p. 84) and his prediction that another Buddha would appear (Aḥmad claimed to be this Buddha). Jesus died at the age of 120 and was buried in Srinagar at a place known as *Sri* ('skull') (pp. 61-2). He was known as Yus Asaf. Specifically, Aḥmad identifies the Roza Bal shrine in the Khanyar district as Jesus's tomb.

Most Muslims believe that Jesus's death is a future event that will take place in the end times after his return from heaven, when he will marry, destroy crosses, kill pigs, die and then rise again with all the dead on the Day of Judgement. Aḥmad claims that he himself is the Messiah or Jesus reborn and that his commission is to proclaim the truth peacefully, with a pen, not with a sword, which Muslims believe Jesus and the Mahdī will wield when they appear; 'I have come without a sword or a gun; God has commanded me that with meek and gentle humility and peace I should invite people to God' (p. 12). He rejects belief in the 'coming of a bloodthirsty Mahdi and Messiah', which he calls 'absurd'.

The appendix in the 2003 revision of the 1944 translation (pp. 135-48) reproduces short excerpts from 22 sources that Aḥmad cites in the original, including works by the English scholar of Pali and Buddhism T.W. Rhys Davids (d. 1922), and travel accounts and material on Afghan tribes, which Aḥmad believed were descended from the ten tribes of Israel that were dispersed after the Assyrian conquest of Israel in 733 BCE.

Although Mīrzā Ghulām Aḥmad's claims about being a prophet, albeit a subordinate one, and Jesus reborn resulted in many Muslims denouncing him during his lifetime, Indian Muslims widely recognised him as a staunch defender of Islam who responded vigorously to missionary attacks against their religion. The issue of whether Jesus died on the Cross, which Muslims denied in debate with Christians, was a popular theme. Aḥmad also denied the resurrection, and that Jesus's death could have had any redemptive value for the remission of human sin. Many popular Muslim beliefs about what did happen at the crucifixion and about what will happen when Jesus returns – or even that Jesus will return – are derived either

from sayings of Muḥammad or from interpretations of the Qur'an rather than the sparse references in the text itself.

In asserting that Jesus did not die on the cross, Aḥmad agreed with most Muslims. Where he differed was in claiming that Jesus went to India and died and was buried there. Aḥmad's thesis about Jesus's death in India was part of his response to debates with Christian missionaries; this 'negated their claims to the superiority of the living Christ and [...] even more importantly, it supported his claim that he was the Messiah' (Beck, 'Rupture', p. 216). Aḥmad also believed that his thesis honoured Muḥammad since otherwise Jesus, who was less important than him in the hierarchy of prophets, was alive while Muḥammad was dead.

SIGNIFICANCE

Christian missionaries in India found that they had to respond differently to the teachings put forward by Aḥmad from the way they responded to traditional Muslim views of Jesus. Some saw the Aḥmadiyya view as a distraction, but the movement grew rapidly and sent missionaries to Europe and North America, where it also gained converts, so it could not be ignored. Aḥmad believed that Christian missionaries slandered Muḥammad and Islam and he aimed to defend against this. In doing so, he returned insult for insult in his exchanges with Christians. The Baptist missionary L.B. Jones (d. 1960) engaged with a number of Aḥmadiyya critiques of Christianity in his writings and suggested that Christian carelessness in the ways they presented 'various articles of Christian belief' resulted in Muslims becoming confused and in allowing them to make 'great capital out of unguarded and incompatible statements'. Jones cautioned Christians to be more careful in their choice of words, 'to speak within the facts and [...] avoid all appearances of exaggeration' (*The people of the mosque*, p. 281). On the other hand, W.C. Smith (d. 2000) wrote that 'the most important fact about the Ahmadiyyah Movement in Indian Islam is that the Ahmadiyyah Movement is not important in Indian Islam' (Smith, *Modern Islam*, p. 324).

Aware that Aḥmad put forward his claim about Jesus dying in India in reaction to what Christian missionaries were circulating, Jones suggested that the hard-hitting missionary writing that continually attacked Muḥammad's integrity and character, against which Aḥmad reacted, should be regarded as 'chiefly a guide to something better' (*The people of the mosque*, p. 239). He called on Christians 'when dealing with Islam and Muslims [...] to discover and fulfil, not to destroy and supplant' (p. 244) and to recognise 'that there is something of real worth to the kingdom of God at the heart of Islam' (p. 245). Maybe the most significant aspect

of Aḥmad's thesis for Christian-Muslim relations lies in the way that Christian carelessness contributed to its formulation.

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Clinton Bennett

The Anjuman-i Himāyat-i Islām and Christian missionaries, 1884-1925

BIOGRAPHY

The Anjuman-i Himāyat-i Islām ('Society for the defence of Islam', AHI) was founded as a Muslim voluntary association (from Persian and Urdu *anjuman*) in 1884 in Lahore, the capital of the Punjab province of British India. It was one of the most important of the many such Muslim associations established during the colonial period and represents a prime example of a Muslim modernist organisation, often presenting itself as a local alternative to the Aligarh movement, which had been founded by Sayyid Aḥmad Khān (*CMR* 24, 424-47) to bring new life to Indian Islam and established the first college exclusively dedicated to the Muslim community of the Subcontinent in 1875. Over the course of its history, the AHI drew a large and diverse membership from a wide range of ethnic, social and geographical backgrounds. It also counted Hindus among its members, though in much smaller numbers than Muslims. The AHI's annual meetings, held regularly with few interruptions from 1886 in Lahore, were a major public event for the Muslim community of north India and significantly shaped its communal outlook, in addition to contributing to the hardening of communal boundaries with Hindus and Sikhs in the 1920s and 1930s. From the turn of the 19th century, these meetings attracted thousands of participants and offered a platform for many Muslim writers, intellectuals and politicians to introduce themselves and their work to a wider audience.

Many prominent South Asian Muslims came to be associated with the AHI over the course of its history, first and foremost among them the poet and philosopher Muḥammad Iqbāl (d. 1938), who became a member as a young college lecturer in 1899 and served in various roles on the AHI's committees and sub-committees throughout his lifetime, including as the association's president from 1934 to 1937. Other prominent members and associates included Abdullah Yusuf Ali (d. 1953), Muḥammad ʿAbdullāh Tonkī (d. 1920), Fazl-i Husain (d. 1936), Sir Abdul Qadir (d. 1950), Lady Abdul Qadir, Mian Shah Dīn (d. 1918), Sir Mian Muhammad Shafi (d. 1932), Jahan Ara Shahnawaz (d. 1979), and Saifuddin Kitchlew (d. 1963), to give their names in the versions in which they were best known.

By late 1885, the AHI had become active in girls' education and was running several schools in the walled city of Lahore to counter the influence of educational initiatives by Christian missionaries. These institutions for Muslim girls were followed by a network of schools for Muslim boys, most prominent among them the Madrasat al-Muslimīn, founded in 1886 near Shairanwala Gate in the Walled City, which later developed into a high school and became the largest community-run school in Lahore. In addition, the AHI set up schools for Muslim boys in the surrounding districts.

Along with its educational institutions in the city of Lahore and the wider district, the AHI founded several other institutions, including two orphanages, one for boys and one for girls, a publishing house, and a printing press in the same city. In 1892, it established Islamia College for Men (ICM), the second college in north India specifically dedicated to the Muslim community after the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College at Aligarh. ICM's counterpart, Islamia College for Women Lahore (ICW), was only founded much later, in 1939, despite the AHI's early focus on women's education. Although the AHI was inspired by the Aligarh movement and had personal connections with it, it differed in important ways from it, for example by including artisans, craftsmen and traders in its membership and by allotting a prominent place to religion, including religious education, both within the association itself and at ICM and ICW Lahore. In addition, members and leaders of the nascent Aḥmadiyya movement, including its founder, Mīrzā Ghulām Aḥmad (*CMR* 24, 748-53), and his first successor as leader of the movement, Ḥakīm Nūruddīn (*CMR* 24, 552-9), played a central role in the AHI throughout the colonial period.

The sectarian contestations within Sunnī Islam that so often marked the general religious atmosphere in South Asia during the late colonial period played out at the AHI as well and put it at the centre of disputes over religious identity, religious authority and community representation. During the late 1940s, many of the AHI's members and a large part of ICM's and ICW's student body supported the Pakistan movement, participating in election campaigns as well as in street protests, which often turned into violent clashes with the police. The Muslim National Guard, a paramilitary organisation affiliated with the All India Muslim League, also drew membership from ICM. A number of female ICW academic staff and students participated in street protests as well. At the time of Partition, the compounds of both colleges were turned into refugee camps housing Muslims who had fled from newly-created India, with many students and AHI members serving as volunteers and supporting relief efforts. Female associates and members of the AHI were again at the forefront of relief

efforts in this period. The AHI continues to be present in the educational and welfare landscape of present-day Pakistan, with its headquarters located on Multan Road, Lahore. The nearby intersection, Chowk Yateem Khana, is named after its boys' orphanage (Urdu *yatīm khāna*), which is still located in the same compound, in addition to a public school, the Tibbiya College, and a large mosque, all founded and run by the AHI.

Like other voluntary associations in the Middle East and parts of Africa and Central Asia, the AHI emerged out of local Muslims' opposition to Christian missionaries. From the late 1830s, various European and American mission organisations became active in the Punjab region, targeting healthcare, community welfare and education, particularly women's education, which in turn also became the focus of the AHI's activities. The AHI became a rallying point for local communities, cutting across religious and caste boundaries at least in the first 20 years of its existence, in coordinating efforts to resist what they regarded as the intrusion of missionaries into their way of life. Early in its history, AHI members organised neighbourhood meetings in Muslim-majority areas of Lahore's walled city as well as in the city's Bādshāhī Mosque in which it advised local residents to prevent female Christian *zenana* (women's quarters) teachers from entering their homes, and to abstain from enrolling their daughters in mission schools.

In addition to countering missionaries in the fields of education and welfare, the AHI also intervened in intellectual debates about Islam and Christianity by publishing apologetic and polemical works and participating in public religious controversies (*munāẓarah*s) and debates (*mubāḥasah*s). With regard to countering the work of Christian missionaries, the AHI closely collaborated with followers of Mīrzā Ghulām Aḥmad, particularly his first successor, Ḥakīm Nūruddīn, and also retained direct ties with representatives of both streams of the Aḥmadiyya until the late 1930s.

From the mid-1880s, in an effort to counter the 'bazaar preaching' of local converts and foreign missionaries publicly, and as a means of proselytising, the AHI also appointed itinerant preachers. These paid representatives travelled through cities, small towns and villages in the Punjab and addressed crowds in public places with the aim of refuting polemical attacks against Islam made by foreign missionaries and local Christian converts, and often also participated in religious debates. Among these preachers were several converts, most prominently 'Sufi' Ghulām Muḥyīuddīn, originally named Diwan Sarup, who belonged to the family of a former Sikh governor of Multan, Mulraj Chopra (d. 1861). One major

result of these preachers' activities was the 'reconversion' of a number of Muslims who had previously become Christians, including often high-profile converts from elite families.

In 1889, the AHI established a 'New Muslim Fund' for the support of converts who had become financially dependent on their missionary employers or had fallen into debt with a mission organisation. From this fund, the AHI also provided stipends for converts to attend Islamia College. Over the course of these encounters with the religious 'other', the AHI often became embroiled in court cases in which it managed to establish itself as an official 'guardian' or representative of Muslim interests to the provincial colonial government. These bids to community representation, which were centred on the defence of widows and orphans, eventually led to the AHI being recognised by the provincial colonial government as the official spokesperson of the Punjab's Muslim community in matters of welfare and education.

The first of such court cases occurred in 1886, when a Muslim widow converted to Christianity after one of her children was treated at the American Presbyterian mission hospital in Ludhiana. She converted back to Islam after hearing a sermon by a Muslim scholar but was unable to obtain guardianship of her children, who were kept in missionary custody. Local Muslims filed a guardianship case on her behalf and, when it was rejected, she appealed against the decision. The case was referred to the Lahore chief court, where the AHI took over the financial support of the widow's appeal, gathering funds to cover her legal fees. Eventually, custody of two of her children was returned to the widow, but the Presbyterian missionaries still retained custody of one child. The AHI brought the woman and her other children to Lahore in 1887, renting a house for them and providing for their sustenance. This was the origin of its orphanage, where the association employed the widow as a cook and caregiver for the children as a means of giving her an income.

One year later, in 1888, the AHI played a central role in a similar case involving a *sayyid* (indicating descent from the Prophet Muhammad's family as well as a high-caste background) woman from Hoshiarpur who had converted to Christianity together with her two children. The woman reconverted to Islam after her contact with the AHI and then became the manager of one of the AHI's girls' schools and its newly founded orphanage for girls.

Over time, the AHI's orientation and interests shifted from countering missionary work towards preparing young Muslims for jobs in the colonial service and building community welfare structures. By the mid-1920s, few

traces of its former apologetic and polemical orientation remained, and it came instead to play a central role in community building and community representation, eventually leading to many of its functionaries, staff and students participating in the Pakistan movement, as mentioned earlier.

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Publications of the Anjuman-i Himāyat-i Islām Lahore on Christians and Christianity

DATE 1880s and 1890s
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Urdu

DESCRIPTION

In 1885, the Anjuman-i Himāyat-i Islām Lahore (AHI) began to circulate *Akhbār Himāyat-i Islām* ('The Defence of Islam Newspaper'), a monthly publication aimed at proselytisation and countering criticism and polemics against Islam. In 1926, this became a weekly publication. The association's other monthly publication, the *Māhwārī Risālah* ('Monthly Newsletter'), also published criticism of missionary work as well as apologetic and polemical articles. In addition, the AHI issued pamphlets and books from its printing press in Lahore, which was set up for the purpose of countering the output of mission presses, particularly the Punjab Religious Book Society, which was located in the same city and, in 1884 alone (the year of the AHI's founding), published more than 230,000 vernacular books and tracts. In the 1880s and early 1890s, the AHI's publications mainly focused on polemical works, though it later moved to the production of textbooks for Muslim schools. These were intended to be an alternative to government teaching materials, which the AHI regarded as biased against Islam and either indirectly or openly intended to promote Christianity. The AHI's range of educational publications included grammars, primers and readers for the teaching of Urdu, Arabic, Persian and English, including the *Muhammadan English primer*, as well as textbooks for the teaching of *dīniyyāt* (religious studies) in Muslim community-run schools. The AHI's textbooks became popular across India, reaching a circulation of up to 20,000 copies each, and quickly establishing themselves as standard teaching material in Muslim schools.

Among its apologetic works, in the 1880s the AHI published *Taḥrīf-i Qur'ān kā javāb* ('An answer to "The corruption of the Qur'an"') by Faqīr Muḥammad Abū ʿAbdurraḥmān Ghulām Dastgīr Hāshimī Siddīqī Qaṣūrī, known as Ghulām Dastgīr Qaṣūrī (d. 1897), in 1884 (12 pages). He was a well-known Naqshbandi Sufi religious scholar, and his book was written in reply to *Taḥrīf-i Qur'ān* ('The corruption of the Qur'an', Delhi, 1877) by Ramchandra (d. 1880; *CMR* 24, 379-86), a high-caste Hindu convert to Christianity who was a science lecturer at the Delhi College. This collaboration with Dastgīr, who was an early opponent of Mīrzā Ghulām Aḥmad, the founder of the Aḥmadiyya movement, is significant given that the AHI became closely involved with followers of Mīrzā Ghulām Aḥmad shortly afterwards. *Taḥrīf-i Qur'ān kā javāb* was an intervention in a long debate about the Qur'an and the person of Muḥammad between Ramchandra and various Muslim scholars from the north Indian region. Ramchandra had first entered public debates about religion in Delhi as an agnostic and free thinker before converting to Christianity in 1852. After his baptism, he targeted various Muslim beliefs in his works *Iʿjāz-i Qur'ān* (1870) and *Taḥrīf-i Qur'ān*. In the latter, he replied to Muslim accusations that the Christian scriptures had been altered by in turn accusing Muslims of having altered theirs. He based his argument on the fact that different readings of the Qur'an existed and inferred from this that the text could not be trusted. Citing various *tafāsīr*, he argued that ongoing Sunnī-Shīʿa controversies served to confirm his point because each group claimed that the other had corrupted the text. Ramchandra further stated that the Islamic doctrine of the abrogation of qur'anic passages on divine authority was baseless as it was not supported by the Qur'an itself.

In his short reply to Ramchandra's book, Ghulām Dastgīr Qaṣūrī drew on evidence from the Qur'an itself, as well as the Islamic tradition and Islamic history, to prove the integrity and reliability of the text. He argued that the absence of diacritical marks, which allowed for different readings to exist side by side, before a standardisation of the text was attempted, did not fundamentally alter its meaning because, if it was read in context, the text of the Qur'an did not contradict its own teachings (the principle of interpretation of the Qur'an by the Qur'an). Further, Dastgīr argued that, even after the Prophet died, enough of his Companions who had committed parts or the entirety of the Qur'an to memory were still alive to ensure the reliability of its transmission. He also cited a Hadith from the collection of Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj to underline that Muḥammad himself had tolerated the existence of multiple readings side by side, thereby demonstrating that a diversity of readings did not present any doctrinal

problems. Finally, Dastgīr argued, the fact that, for centuries, Muslim scholars and believers alike had raised no doubts about the integrity of the text indicated its reliability. Given the central role of Dastgīr in early opposition to Mīrzā Ghulām Aḥmad, the publication of this pamphlet also meant that the AHI's founders, who were still running the association at that time, took a clear stance in these controversies and supported opposition to Ghulām Aḥmad's preaching.

Five years later, in 1889, the AHI's position towards Mīrzā Ghulām Aḥmad and his followers had already shifted significantly from staunch opposition to close collaboration (the reasons for which can be found in Pruss, *Rethinking Islamic modernism*, ch. 1, 'The Anjuman-i Himayat-i Islam, Islamic modernism, and intra-Muslim debates, 1884-1924'). In that year, the AHI published three apologetic works that emerged from its collaboration with Mīrzā Ghulām Aḥmad and some of his closest allies.

The first of these publications was *Aik ʿĪsāʾī kē tīn savāl aur un kē javābāt* ('Answers to three questions by a Christian'), co-authored by Mīrzā Ghulām Aḥmad, Ḥakīm Nūruddīn, his successor as leader of the Ahmadiyya movement, and Ghulām Nabī of Amritsar, one of his followers. Fearing criticism of open collaboration with the already controversial Mīrzā Ghulām Aḥmad, and perhaps as a concession to people in its own ranks who opposed being publicly associated with him, the AHI simply stated that the work was written by three unnamed supporters. In contrast, the Lahore Jamāʿat, a group that split away from the main Aḥmadiyya movement in 1914, retained the references to the authors in its publications.

Aik ʿĪsāʾī was a response to a letter by ʿAbdullāh James, a convert to Christianity, who had sent the AHI three questions concerning Muḥammad, though these were actually statements that reflected broader polemical debates of the time about Muḥammad's prophethood, his ability to perform miracles and his knowledge of supernatural phenomena. In their reply, Mīrzā Ghulām Aḥmad and his companions not only argued for a contextual reading of the Qur'an passages that James had cited but also attacked Christian teachings about Jesus as inconsistent by employing biblical exegesis as well as European historical-critical scholarship on the Bible, adopting similar tactics to those used by Raḥmatullāh Kairānavī (*CMR* 24, 253-60) in his debate with Karl Pfander (*CMR* 24, 188-236) in Agra half a century earlier.

The second apologetic work published by the AHI in 1889 was titled *Muʿjizāt-i Muḥammadiyyah az Qurʾān* ('The miracles of Muḥammad based on the Qur'an'), by Ghulām Nabī of Amritsar (one of Ghulām Aḥmad's co-authors mentioned above). Copies of this work are difficult to obtain,

making it impossible to outline its contents in detail. However, it is likely to have followed earlier examples of defences of Muḥammad's prophethood in the context of contemporary debates about miracles. It elicited a reply by G.L. Ṭhākur Dās (author of *Iẓhār-i ʿĪsavī*; *CMR* 24, 704-9), published under the title *Muḥammad be-karāmat* ('Muḥammad was without miracles', Lahore, 1895). Ṭhākur Dās was a Hindu convert to Christianity who was connected with the American Presbyterian Mission at Ludhiana and actively participated in debates between members of the Aḥmadiyya and Christian missionaries in the Punjab throughout the 1880s and 1890s.

The third apologetic book published in 1889 in collaboration with the Aḥmadiyya was *Iʿjāz al-tanzīl* ('The miracle of the revelation [of the Qur'an]') by Khalīfa Sayyid Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān, prime minister of the state of Patiala, who was also a supporter of Mīrzā Ghulām Aḥmad. *Iʿjāz al-tanzīl* is a 500-page treatise that speaks to all the issues mentioned above, including the integrity of the Qur'an, the validity of Muḥammad's prophethood and the question of miracles in connection with Islam. In addition to quoting the Qur'an and the Bible, Khān relies heavily on publications by European Orientalists to make his case, among them Edward Gibbon's *The decline and fall of the Roman Empire* (1776-89), Thomas Carlyle's *On heroes, hero-worship and the heroic in history* (1841), Aloys Sprenger's *The life of Mohammad* (1851), John Medows Rodwell's translation of the Qur'an (1861), William Muir's *Life of Mahomet* (1861), and Reginald Bosworth Smith's *Mohammed and Mohammedanism* (1874). Khān emphatically defends the revealed nature of the Qur'an, Muḥammad's personal and prophetic integrity, the veracity of his message, the beneficial impact of his reforms on Arabian society, and the superiority of Islam over all other religions. It is clear that he was well-versed in English and accessed most of the works he cites in the original, which sets him apart from other writers of apologetic works at the time, including Sayyid Aḥmad Khān, founder of the Aligarh movement (*CMR* 24, 424-47), whom he calls his 'close friend' in the preface, and also Ghulām Dastgīr Qaṣūrī, the author of the first apologetic work published by the AHI. Although he refers to the writings of European Orientalists, Khān rejects their portrayals of the Prophet's life and contrasts them with Islamic sources such as Ibn Isḥāq's *Sīra*, the earliest and for Muslims the most authoritative account. His book went through several editions and continued to be advertised in the AHI's monthly newsletters until the turn of the century, when the association's publishing focus shifted away from polemics and apologetics towards textbooks.

As these works attest, in its attempts to counter the efforts of Christian missionaries and local converts, the AHI closely collaborated with followers of Mīrzā Ghulām Aḥmad, particularly his successor, Ḥakīm Nūruddīn. It retained ties with representatives of both streams of the Aḥmadiyya until the late 1930s, when Muḥammad Iqbāl placed himself at the helm of anti-Aḥmadī activities in the Punjab province and compelled the AHI to adopt a resolution that excluded followers of the Aḥmadiyya from membership.

SIGNIFICANCE

The AHI's intervention in polemical and apologetic debates with Christian missionaries in the late 1880s and 1890s marks a decided shift in intra-Muslim discourses with regard to contestations over religious authority. Instead of leaving the defence of Islam to the *ʿulamāʾ*, who were still central in the Agra debate of 1854 and later encounters, Muslim laypeople of a modernist persuasion increasingly began to claim that role in the mid to late 1880s. In addition to arguing for the integrity of the Qur'an and the validity of the Islamic tradition by citing Muslim sources, these lay authors also relied heavily on the works of European scholars and writers. Responding directly to local Christian converts from Islam, authors from the nascent Aḥmadiyya movement were at the forefront of this development in the Punjab and north India more widely, thereby emphasising the movement's claims to represent and lead the community, not least in dealings with the British colonial government. By publishing and promoting Aḥmadī writers and their works, the AHI amplified the Aḥmadiyya's leadership claims and provided a public platform for promoting their message. The AHI continued tacitly to support the movement until well into the 1930s, demonstrating the key importance of Aḥmadī ideas in connection with definitions of Muslim religious identity and community during that time.

The publications reviewed here should be read within the larger context of ongoing debates between Christian missionaries and local Muslims concerning not only the Qur'an but also the question of miracles. European missionaries, among them Henry Martyn (d. 1812) in his arguments with Muslim *ʿulamāʾ* in Shiraz, and Karl Pfander (d. 1865) in his 1854 debate with Raḥmatullāh Kairānavī and his collaborators, emphasised the performance of miracles as confirmation of the content of any religious message. Indian converts to Christianity also made this theme a central point of their polemics: among them, Ramchandra challenged

the qur'anic evidence for Muḥammad's claimed miracle of the splitting of the moon. In response, Muslim modernist writers, including those belonging to the Aḥmadiyya, often claimed that the elegance and eloquence of the language of the Qur'an, together with its origin in the Arabian desert, an environment portrayed as largely devoid of cultural and intellectual influences, constituted a miracle in itself. Such a 'rational' and 'linguistic' approach was inspired, among other things, by close engagement with European Orientalist writings on Islam. At their core, these debates became platforms on which intra-Islamic contestations over religious authority and community leadership were fought out.

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Maria-Magdalena Pruss

Ṣafdar ʿAlī

DATE OF BIRTH 1830
PLACE OF BIRTH Dholpur, Rajasthan
DATE OF DEATH 1899
PLACE OF DEATH Unknown

BIOGRAPHY

Ṣafdar ʿAlī was a well-known civil servant, writer, historian and Urdu literary critic, an educationist and Christian reformer of pre-Partition India. He is known as Ṣafdar of Jabalpur (Jubbulpore), though he was not originally from that town. His letter to an official of the Church Missionary Society in Salisbury reports that his father was a *qāẓī* at Dholpur, Rajasthan, but for some reason he resigned and moved to live in Agra ('From Safdar Ali', p. 216). The preface of his *Niyāz nāmah* also confirms Dholpur as his ancestral village.

He studied at Agra College for 14 years and became proficient in Arabic, Persian, Hindi and Sanskrit. After completing his studies, he was appointed professor of Persian at the college and also taught philosophy. He dedicated the early years of his career to Eastern languages and Islamic disciplines such as *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence). In 1856, the Ministry of Education appointed him deputy inspector of schools for Western Punjab (present-day Pakistan). He was stationed at Rawalpindi and later in Peshawar, Jhelum and Multan. During his service in Multan, which was known as *madīnat ul-awliyā'* ('city of saints'), he used to visit shrines there and in Muzaffargarh in search of spiritual peace. In 1860, the education department transferred him to Jabalpur, where for a few years he also served as extra assistant commissioner of the Central Provinces of United India (Justin, 'Contribution of Christian writers', pp. 159-60). His stay in Jabalpur led him towards Christianity.

As a Muslim, Ṣafdar believed in God and the Day of Judgement, but he realised that he never seemed to have peace in his heart. From his early teens he was a seeker, questioning which religion was true and what would happen after death (Harrison Qurban, *Urdu ke Masīhī shuaʿrā'*, p. 81). In Jabalpur he continued to seek the truth which he had not found in the shrines of Multan and Muzaffargarh. Then, while he was preparing to perform the pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina, he heard about

Nehemiah Goreh (Neil Kanth Shastri), a Christian convert from a Hindu background. He contacted Goreh and invited him to Jabalpur, where Goreh, although he was not an educated man, was able to persuade him to meditate on the Psalms. Doing this gave Ṣafdar the spiritual peace he was looking for, and he wrote to his fellow Sufis saying that he had found the true *murshid* ('spiritual guide'; Andrews, *North India*, pp. 72-3, 120-2). C.E. Gardner suggests that this *murshid* was Jesus ('Conversion of Maulvi Safdar Ali', p. 127). Before he met Goreh, Ṣafdar had already studied Karl Gottlieb Pfander's *Mīzān ul-ḥaqq* on the way back to Jabalpur from his home town (together with his fellow student at Agra College, ʿImāduddīn Lāhiz, he had attended the famous debate between Karl Gottlieb Pfander and Raḥmatullāh Kairānavī (*CMR* 24, 188-236 and 253-60) in Agra in April 1854 [ʿImāduddīn, *Wāqiʿāt-i ʿImādiyya*, pp. 12-15]).

In November 1861, he entered a period of concentrated study of the Qur'an, the Bible and 'controversial and polemical treatises' by both Christians and Muslims. As a result, he 'clearly perceived that neither the Koran nor the Hadis was of divine origin, and that Mohammed was not the prophet of God', though he was still not ready to accept Christianity as the only truth ('From Safdar Ali', p. 218). Taking Goreh as his mentor changed his views on Christianity, and his inclination towards the Christian faith was such that his family and friends started calling him *ʿĪsāʾī* (follower of ʿĪsā). In that particular cultural context, this showed the worst degree of hatred (see 'The two converts', p. 48). Although his relatives tried to take his wife away from him, he continued his research with devotion and fasting, so much so that lack of food and sleep affected his health through the last ten years of his life. With the help of Goreh, he studied Christianity for three years, from November 1861 to December 1864, before making a decision to convert (Edwardes, *Memorials*, p. 414).

Ṣafdar was baptised in Jabalpur on Christmas Day 1864 (Gardner, 'Conversion of Maulvi Safdar Ali', pp. 124-32), when he was in his thirties. His close friend Qāsim ʿAlī (Revd Quasim Khan Nehemiah, CMS Amritsar) was baptised together with him and, a few weeks later, his close friend Karīm Bakhsh followed suit. The news of this drew the anger of his family and friends, but even though he had to give up his wife and child ('What our missionaries have done', p. 322), he remained true to his conviction.

Ṣafdar's literary output began with his *Niyāz nāmah* (1867), an appeal to his family and friends to understand why he had accepted Christianity. In *Ghizā-i rūḥ* (1875), he collected the Urdu poetry of contemporary Christian poets, along with his own. The longest of his own poems,

Faryād-i muntaẓar, was published in a separate volume dated around 1887. Several other works have not survived. E.M. Wherry wrote sorrowfully in 1905, 'This gifted writer was the victim of one of those sore disappointments and irreparable losses somewhat characteristic of India. The literary labours of eleven of the most mature years of his life were entirely destroyed by white ants' (*Muslim controversy*, p. 95).

Ṣafdar died on 20 September 1899. News of his death was circulated in Christian periodicals throughout the country with expressions of grief and sorrow. Kedar Nath Mannat, Qāsim ʿAlī Shāh and Aḥmad Shāh Shaiq all wrote obituaries and poetic laments (*Nūr Afshān*, 1899, p. 5).

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Waseem Raza

WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Niyāz nāmah
'Humble petition'

DATE 1867
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Urdu

DESCRIPTION

Niyāz nāmah is the best known and best preserved of Ṣafdar ʿAlī's works. It was written in response to the letters he received from his family and friends who were anxious to know the reasons for his conversion from

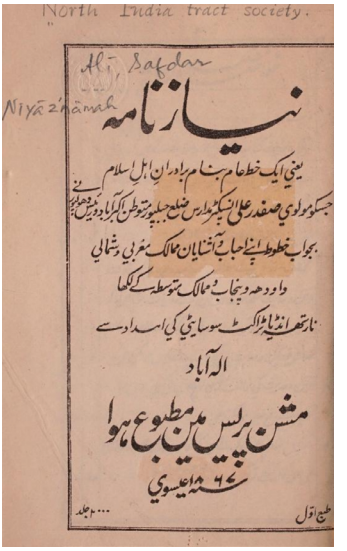


Illustration 22. *Niyāz nāmah*, title page

Islam to Christianity. The title is an idiomatic way of referring to a letter written with due respect to someone who is superior to the correspondent; it can be roughly translated as 'humble petition'. The North India Tract Society published *Niyāz* in 1867 at the Allahabad Mission Press in both Roman Urdu and Persian Urdu scripts. The Persian Urdu original runs to 304 pages, followed by four pages of corrections. Some 2,000 copies of the Persian Urdu version were printed, a large quantity at the time.

E.M. Wherry wrote that *Niyāz nāmah* began as a series of letters that were later published together (*Muslim controversy*, p. 95), though Dieter Becht queries this account on the grounds that 'the book can only be conceived as a whole' (*The book and the prophet*, p. 361 n. 1; cf. Powell, *Muslims*, p. 289 n. 73). In any case, it may be divided into four related yet distinct main sections. After a brief preface (*dībācha*), the introduction of 71 pages contains an open challenge to Muslim friends and family about the Qur'an and Muslim tradition being contradictory (*barkhilāf*) to the teaching of the Bible ('Holy Book'). The second main section is an investigation of the allegation (*daʿwā*) of *taḥrīf* (pp. 78-116 in the original 1867 publication). Ṣafdar then explains the testimony (*gavāhī*) that the Qur'an and Hadith bear to the Bible (pp. 116-205). The third section contains Ṣafdar's proof of the genuineness (*ṣiḥḥat*) and authenticity (*aṣliyyat*) of the Bible (pp. 205-38), and the fourth investigates the claim of abrogation (pp. 239-302),

followed by a two page conclusion (*khātimah*). One subsection that is of particular importance for the history of Christian-Muslim engagement in India is Ṣafdar's answer to a list of arguments that he calls the current 'bigotries' (*taṣṣubāt*) and the resistance of Muslim scholars to Christianity (pp. 160-205).

Ṣafdar's introduction (pp. 6-77) poses a kind of dilemma to Muslim readers. The Qur'an and the Hadith, he writes, attest to the Torah and Gospel as the Word of God. But the Qur'an and Hadith in their own teachings contradict the content of the Torah and Gospel. As examples, he gives the Gospel teaching about the divinity and divine Sonship of Jesus, the teaching that God is one in three persons and the teaching that God in love made a way of salvation for humanity through the atoning death and resurrection of Jesus. The Bible teaches a moral and spiritual law rather than a ritual and external law, and the propagation of the faith is permitted only by peaceful means. In each case, Ṣafdar argues that the Qur'an and Hadith contradict biblical teachings, listing a number of points at which they contradict the biblical accounts of prophets. These are facts that cannot be avoided. To this point, Ṣafdar writes, he does not yet wish to say that the Bible is from God but wants simply to demonstrate that, by the flow of their own logic, the Qur'an and Hadith cannot be from God. In an effort to find a way out of this dilemma, he suggests, Muslims have seized on two accusations: that the Bible has been abrogated by the Qur'an, and that Jews and Christians allowed their scriptures to become corrupt or actively falsified them.

The book then moves into investigations (*taḥqīqāt*) of Muslim accusations of scriptural alteration (pp. 78-116) made particularly in *Iʿjāz-i ʿĪsavī* (Agra, 1854-5) by Raḥmatullāh Kairānavī and Muḥammad Wazīr Khān (*CMR* 24, 237-45). Ṣafdar raises the issue of scribal errors creating differences between biblical manuscripts, then appeals to Muslim familiarity with historical accounts of the various readings or recitations of the Qur'an at the time of the third Caliph ʿUthmān (r. 644-56) and asks whether the variants resulting from differences between qur'anic recitations cause Muslims to regard the Qur'an as unreliable. On a positive note, he describes the ability of the science of textual criticism to determine the original biblical text by comparing many manuscripts, and vouches for the honesty of biblical scholars who openly acknowledge scribal mistakes alongside the corrected text.

The third main section (pp. 116-60) of *Niyāz* advances a large number of quotations from both the Qur'an and the Hadith with the purpose of demonstrating their positive and respectful witness to the Bible. Not

a single verse in the Qur'an containing the words *Tawrāt*, *Zabūr* or *Injīl* accuses these pre-Islamic scriptures of being corrupted, notes Ṣafdar. He also asserts that the Bible that exists in 1867 is the same Bible that existed and was widely known at the time of Muḥammad. At the end of this section, Ṣafdar answers particular points that Muslim polemicists have made in their attack on the Bible (pp. 160-205). By the references he gives, he was thinking mainly of Kairānavī and his books *Iʿjāz-i ʿĪsavī* and *Izālat al-awhām* (1852-3), but he also mentions *Kitāb-i istifsār* (1846) by Āl-i Ḥasan and *Baḥs-i sharīʿah*. The 19 examples cited and answered exemplify the kinds of attacks that Indian Christians had to parry in the middle of the century and also show lively ingenuity in Ṣafdar's responses. Many of these concern Moses and the Torah, including assertions of differences between the Samaritan Pentateuch and the Septuagint and accusations of the complete destruction of the Torah by Nebuchadnezzar.

Accusations against the New Testament include the assertions that the Gospel according to Matthew was originally written in Hebrew, that the 'Roman Emperor Antiochus' (possibly a reference to Antiochus IV Epiphanes [r. 175-64 BCE], the Seleucid ruler of Syria, though he lived in pre-Christian times) destroyed the Christian books, and that the pope imposed the Latin Vulgate. Perhaps most interesting, but somehow also representative, are the accusations that the Bible must be corrupted because many heretics and atheists have found certain Christian teachings repugnant, and because it contradicts the Qur'an and Hadith – the direct opposite of Ṣafdar's opening challenge in the preface. In his responses, Ṣafdar repeatedly notes that these Islamic polemical points are moot for Muslims if the Qur'an attests to the Bible as it was in the 7th century. He also draws attention to the frequency with which Muslim polemical points do not actually prove anything related to the accusation of textual corruption. Ṣafdar supplies such information about history and manuscripts as was available to him, and also appeals to the Muslim reader to consider similar situations with the Qur'an and to apply criteria for judging evenly. He continues this style of presentation in his section on the correctness and authenticity of the Bible (pp. 205-38), where he offers historical information on the development and canonisation of the Bible and statistics about New Testament manuscripts.

In the fourth and final section of the book (pp. 239-302) Ṣafdar provides an extensive response to the Muslim claim that the Bible is abrogated by the Qur'an because, he writes, this is a widespread charge in India. He explores seven issues, ranging from technical Muslim meanings of *naskh* to the particular Muslim assertion that the Qur'an abrogates the Gospel.

Ṣafdar writes that, for Muslims, the abrogation of the Bible means a prohibition against reading the Bible or acting according to its teachings – which Muslims choose to declare void. He argues, however, that no such assertion of the abrogation of the Bible can be found in the Qur'an or Hadith. He cites Q 6:156, in which the Qur'an is conceived of as sharing the same content as the Book sent down previously 'on two groups before us'. Rather, Ṣafdar suggests, when the scholars of Islam discovered that the contents of the Qur'an did not match the teaching of the Bible in certain areas, they invented the doctrine of the abrogation of the Bible, basing it instead on a claim of the unanimous decision of the Muslim community (*ijmāʿ*).

Interestingly, Ṣafdar notes that when Karl Gottlieb Pfander referred to this Muslim doctrine of the abrogation of the Bible during the 1854 Agra debate, Kairānavī claimed there was no such doctrine, accusing Pfander of ignorance (pp. 261-6; cf. Powell, *Muslims*, p. 246, and the discussion below). Ṣafdar, however, comments that Kairānavī's claim contradicts the books dealing with the principles of *fiqh*.

Beyond presenting facts and arguments from the scriptures and from Islamic jurisprudence, much of Ṣafdar's case on abrogation adopts a style of appealing to the reader's common sense with illustrations and questions. Can God reveal the true path to eternal salvation and then reject it? If the external commandments of the Torah are fulfilled and perfected in the Gospel, would God then return to the external in a third book? Ṣafdar gives examples related to fornication, divorce and loving one's neighbour. In the Gospel, the neighbour is no longer restricted to fellow Jews, he writes, suggesting that the Qur'an and Hadith slip back from the Gospel's high standard. Is it conceivable that God first revealed the Gospel's perfect and complete commandments, but then repented and abrogated them? Ṣafdar asks similar questions related to ritual and ceremony, the inner and outer law, physical and spiritual cleansing, the Temple and the Kaʿba, circumcision and animal sacrifice. According to the Gospel, the system of atonement in the Torah is fulfilled in the true sacrifice of Jesus Christ. In contrast, writes Ṣafdar, Islamic Law again requires animal sacrifice, while the atonement of Jesus is not mentioned at all. Ṣafdar repeatedly asks the reader to consider whether God, after revealing the Torah and later in line with it also the Gospel, would then abrogate the Gospel and revert back to earlier understandings in the Qur'an.

SIGNIFICANCE

Niyāz nāmah was the first Indian contextualised writing to make a case for the reliability and authenticity of the Bible in Muslim idiom. Ṣafdar

brought to the encounter between Muslims and Christians the knowledge gained from a thorough traditional Islamic education, and was able to demonstrate in *Niyāz* how and why Muslim accusations against the Bible remained a central impediment to Christian-Muslim relations in India through the 1860s and beyond. On its publication, *Niyāz* received significant attention from both Christians and Muslims in the subcontinent. It became so popular that, within a few years, it also caught the attention of European readers. Garcin de Tassy wrote of it, 'Cet ouvrage, qui traite de la religion chrétienne et du mahométisme, est considéré comme très-important et destiné à produire beaucoup d'effet chez les musulmans' (*Histoire de la littérature hindouie et hindoustanie*, 1870-1, vol. 3, pp. 19-20). In a letter to Robert Clark in 1875, General Lake of the Church Missionary Society wrote that he had heard a recommendation that *Niyāz*, 'one of the best books' on the 'Muhammadan controversy', should be translated into English so that missionaries in the Ottoman Empire and Africa could also benefit from it (*Conference on Urdu*, p. 8). In 1905, Wherry recommended the book as 'specially suited for a presentation volume to be given to serious-minded Muhammadans' (*Muslim controversy*, p. 97).

Niyāz was published in three Urdu editions, the latest in 1898. Muslims understandably found it controversial. Several Muslim scholars wrote refutations, including Nāṣiruddīn Muḥammad Abūlmanṣūr Dihlavī in *Raqīmat ul-wadād* (1878), and Muḥammad ʿAlī Mūngerī (*CMR* 24, 542-51) in *Āʾīnah-i Islām* and *Paighām-i Muḥammadī* (1884), combined with a response to a work by Ṭhākur Dās. Muslim responses to *Niyāz* were aggressive and produced a response of correspondingly aggressive works from Indian Christians, even as late as 1947. *Niyāz* itself, however, does not add aggression to controversy. Because of the nature of normal Muslim-Christian disagreement, the book is necessarily apologetic and even polemical in parts, but with respect and politeness. In his writing, Ṣafdar tends to characterise his responses to Muslim *daʿwā* ('allegation') as *tanqīḥ* ('checking' or 're-examination'). Wherry wrote,

> The general tone of the book is delightful. It is wanting in the acrid and stinging element of some writings on this subject. The author addressed his dear friends and used the persuasive tone born of love and a strong desire to bring them to a knowledge of the Saviour of men. (*Muslim controversy*, p. 97)

Ṣafdar set himself to deal with a very difficult subject – the efforts of Muslims to keep the Bible out of Muslim-Christian engagement over the course of more than a millennium (see Powell, *Muslims*, p. 248). *Niyāz* models a way for Christians to make a strong case for the Bible to Muslims without disrespect or confrontation. Ṣafdar wanted to explain his decision

to become a Christian and to engage Muslims in a healthy discussion in the spirit of 'O friends, dear ones, and respected elders' (p. 302). The style and content of his 77-page preface and introduction therefore become very significant. He appeals to what he understands to be the general Muslim belief that the Torah and Gospel are the word of God. He notes that the Qur'an claims to be a confirmation (*muṣaddiq*) of them. He then presents a dilemma to the reader: if the Qur'an differs in its content from these pre-Islamic scriptures rather than confirming their content, how can it then also be called the word of God? Ṣafdar begins with the fact of differences between the Qur'an and the Bible but poses a fundamentally Muslim question.

Niyāz is actually a continuation of a Christian effort to engage Indian Muslims through written works in discussion and debate that had been initiated by Pfander in 1839. Pfander left India in 1858 and Ṣafdar was the first to replace him. This raises the interesting question of how a native Indian of Muslim background would compare with a foreign missionary in dealing with the 'controversy' between Islam and the Gospel (Avril Powell does this with 'Imāduddīn Lāhiz in '"Pillar of a new faith"', pp. 236-44). *Niyāz* does indeed treat a number of themes and points also found in the first section of Pfander's *Mīzān ul-ḥaqq* (Calcutta, 1839): the Qur'an's respectful testimony to the Torah and Gospel; the claim that the present Torah and Gospel are the same as those that existed in the 7th century; and the evidence of existing biblical manuscripts and the quotations of the Church Fathers. *Niyāz*, however, greatly expands on Pfander's brief treatment of abrogation (*Mīzān*, pp. 18-31).

Pfander understood from his personal encounters in Karabagh and Persia that Muslims regard the Gospel as being abrogated by the Qur'an, and responded to this accusation verbally on 10 April 1854 in Agra ('Movements among Mahommedans', *Church Missionary Intelligencer* 5 [1854] 251-8, p. 255). According to Powell, Kairānavī then charged Pfander with misrepresenting the qur'anic understanding of abrogation in *Mīzān* (*Muslims*, pp. 246-8). Some 13 years later, however, Ṣafdar wrote in *Niyāz* that the accusation that the Qur'an abrogates the Bible is in fact widespread among Muslims in India (p. 239-41), found it to be one of the main ways in which Muslims nullify the Gospel, and made his response to this accusation one of the main sections of his book.

Ṣafdar knew from his thorough traditional Islamic education that the Qur'an does not claim to abrogate the Torah and Gospel. He also knew that, in the Qur'an, the Arabic root *nasakha* relates to contradictory verses within the Qur'an itself. He states both these points clearly in the

final section of *Niyāz* (pp. 243-5, 249-56). But he also says explicitly that Kairānavī's denial of the Muslim doctrine of the abrogation of the Bible by the Qur'an (pp. 261-6) was false according to Islamic works dealing with the principles of *fiqh* (p. 266). Ṣafdar did not know Pfander, and at the time of the 1854 Agra debate he was part of the Muslim contingent opposing the missionary. Pfander left India in 1858 and Ṣafdar's conversion came some six years later, influenced more by the Indian Christian Nehemiah Goreh than by any expatriate. Ṣafdar would later urge Indian Christians to make the positive affirmation of the Gospel their priority ('Preaching to Muhammadans', pp. 55-6). However, in order to explain his conversion to the Muslims in his family and community who opposed it, he considered it essential to deal first of all with the Muslim accusations that he knew prevented Muslims from hearing these affirmations: that the Bible is corrupt and that it is abrogated by the Qur'an. For this, he returned to the first part of Pfander's *Mīzān* ('From Safdar Ali', p. 220) and the verbal case that Pfander and his second, Thomas Valpy French (*CMR* 24, 338-44), made during the 1854 Agra debate, and then considerably strengthened the Christian response to the accusation of the abrogation of the Bible.

As a native Christian of Muslim background, Ṣafdar had his finger on the pulse of Muslim society and was able to diagnose the exact reasons for resistance to Christianity: the Muslim accusations of corruption and abrogation of the Bible. The effectiveness of *Niyāz* is indicated by a series of Muslim refutations stretching over five decades. ʿImāduddīn Lāhiz (*CMR* 24, 506-41), Ṣafdar's contemporary and similarly an Indian convert from Islam (1866), shared the task of supporting Pfander's legacy and extending it out of deep knowledge of Muslim tradition, especially in his *Hidāyat al-Muslimīn* (1868). Powell writes that Ṣafdar and ʿImād were able to use 'inside knowledge' of the arguments of Pfander's opponents to 'reformulate' Pfander's writings. She comments that '[t]hese Christian statements made little impact on the rest of the *ʿulamā*, who continued to affirm that the *tahrīf* issue was central to their objections to Christianity' ('Muslim-Christian confrontation', p. 89). This is not, however, the same as saying that Ṣafdar's diagnosis was not correct, or that Pfander's prescription was mistaken.

Niyāz was published in the same year as Kairānavī's *Iẓhār al-ḥaqq*, but the difference in the reputation and circulation of the two books could hardly be greater. *Niyāz* actually answers many of the claims and accusations contained in *Iẓhār*, because much of that material came straight from Kairānavī and Muḥammad Wazīr Khān's *Iʿjāz-i ʿĪsavī* (Powell, *Muslims*, pp. 294-5; Becht, *The book and the prophet*, p. 114) – with which Ṣafdar did

indeed contend (see above). Though Ṣafdar worked in education for the British administration, the Raj did not, and by policy could not, publish *Niyāz*, which was instead printed at private mission presses. Meanwhile, the Ottoman Empire not only invited and encouraged Kairānavī to write and publish the Arabic *Iẓhār* in Istanbul (1864-8), but in 1880 Sultan Abdulhamid II (r. 1876-1909) also ordered the book to be translated into Turkish (Powell, *Muslims*, p. 295). Despite the recommendation of some missionaries, *Niyāz* was not translated into English and has never been widely known beyond Urdu readers in India.

PUBLICATIONS

Ṣafdar ʿAlī, *Niyāz nāmah*, Allahabad, 1867; 93984255 (digitised version available through the Library of Congress)

STUDIES

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Powell, '"Pillar of a new faith"'
Powell, *Muslims and missionaries*
Powell, 'Muslim-Christian confrontation'
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Conference on Urdu and Hindi Christian literature, held at Allahabad, 24th and 25th February 1875, Madras, 1875
Ṣafdar ʿAlī, 'Preaching to Muhammadans', pp. 55-8

Rare or lost works of Ṣafdar ʿAlī

DATE 1875-99
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Urdu

DESCRIPTION

Among Ṣafdar 'Alī's other works, the one that is most in line with *Niyāz* is *Khullat nāmah*, written shortly before his death in 1899. But his most influential work was *Ghizā-i rūḥ*, a collection of poetry published in two

editions in 1875 and 1889; the Urdu text of the 1889 edition was also published in Roman script in 1893. Though this work is increasingly hard to find, the British Library has a copy of the 1875 edition, and copies of the 1889 and 1892 editions are housed in the library of the Henry Martyn Institute in Hyderabad, India. A second work of poetry titled *Faryād-i muntaẓar* was published in 1928.

Ghizā-i rūḥ ('Nourishment for the soul', from the Arabic *ghidhā'*) is a collection of poems in Urdu by Indian Christian poets, including Ṣafdar ʿAlī himself, and edited by him. The second edition of 1889 runs to 373 pages. In the introductory section Ṣafdar ʿAlī lists the 16 subjects under which the poems are organised (pp. 2-3), the first being 'Praise to God most high'. He then lists the poems alphabetically according to the first letter of the first word of each, giving the name of the poet and the page number (pp. 4-24). This is followed by the *dībācha* (preface, pp. 27-34). The poems themselves occupy the heart of the edition (pp. 1-296, paginated separately), and biographical information about 54 participating poets follows in an alphabetical appendix (pp. 297-339). The 1893 Roman Urdu edition does not contain this appendix but adds a fascinating glossary of poetic key terms from a range of Middle Eastern and South Asian languages (pp. 211-27). *Ghizā* belongs to the genre of *tazkira*, which in Urdu literature is a collection of biographical sketches of poets together with their signature or most famous poems. E.M. Wherry describes its main contents as hymns and sacred songs: 'Many of these songs are from his own pen and are set to the native airs known among Muslims' (*Muslim controversy*, p. 95). In the second edition, Ṣafdar ʿAlī provides an account of his conversion to Christianity on pp. 320-9 (Becht, *The book and the prophet*, p. 167).

In 1887, Ṣafdar ʿAlī wrote that compiling the second edition of *Ghizā* had been a lengthy and time-consuming task ('A suggestion to increase the publication and subscription of *Nūr Afshān*', *Nūr Afshān* 15 [1887] 4-5) and he was particularly exhausted by having to keep on writing to request introductions from some poets. At this point, he had been trying to add to the first edition for more than ten years, an effort that finally bore fruit in the publication of the second edition in 1889. However, the work remained little-known until 1982, when A. Harrison Qurban found a copy, mostly eaten by worms (*Urdu ke Masīḥī shuʿarā'*, pp. 78-82) – as Wherry says, the tragic fate of many of Ṣafdar ʿAlī's writings.

The collection is devoted to poems composed in praise of Jesus, God and moral values. The language is idiomatic, and Urdu literary devices are employed throughout. In some places, biblical names have been modified

in line with the metre, for example *Pilatus* (Pilate) to *Pelat* and *Patras* (Peter) to *Patar*. The poets included seem filled with passion to preach the good news and love of Christ to their fellow Indians.

Study of *Ghizā-i rūḥ* shows how Christian poets made use of key religious terms to communicate their message. Since most of them were new converts from Islam to Christianity, they expressed important Christological concepts in typically Muslim ways, with sensitivity towards Muslim perceptions. For example, in his *Christmas ghazal* Ṣafdar ʿAlī refers to Christ as *shāh-i shahīdan* ('king of the martyrs'), though when it comes to the divine sonship of Jesus, he understands that *Ibn Ullāh* ('Son of Allāh') might be too provocative for his audience, so he crafts compounds from non-Arabic words such as *pisar-i Īzad* ('son of God') and *ibn-i Parwardigār* ('son of the Sustainer'). Such expressions were actually novel to Urdu poetry and make a contribution towards the Urdu linguistic corpus. Another good example occurs in the preface of *Ghizā-i rūḥ*, where Ṣafdar ʿAlī translates the idea of Jesus being mediator as *Shāfiʿ ul-maznubīn* ('intercessor for sinners', p. 17), and another is the translation of Christmas as *Milād-i muqaddas* ('Holy Christmas') rather than *baṛadin* ('Christmas holiday', pp. 4-5). Muslim poets who referred to Jesus in their poetry did not use such terms: in his signature *ghazal*, 'Ibn-i Maryam hua kare koi, Mere dukh ki dawa kare koi' ('If only someone became the son of Mary, and could cure the pain of my sorrow'), Ghālib used the qur'anic title 'son of Mary'.

Khullat nāmah is a prose work of 160 pages which Ṣafdar ʿAlī completed in 1899, the year of his death. The title means 'a treatise of friendship' from the Arabic *khulla*. The book was published by the Indian Christian Press in Allahabad with a print run of 3,000. From his retirement home of Bhandara (Maharashtra), Ṣafdar ʿAlī composed the text in three parts – each individually paginated – between February and May 1898, then added a conclusion in June 1899 (part 3, pp. 89-96).

The first part of *Khullat* (29 pp.) is an exhortation to loyal and peaceful behaviour among Hindus, Christians and Muslims in India; the second part (32 pp.) is titled 'The evils and treatment of an angry nature and bad temper'; and the third and longest part (96 pp.) is an attempt to uphold the thesis that 'Religious freedom is obligatory for everyone'. This part includes a subsection on 'Religious freedom for Christians' (pp. 7-25). After living in north India as a Christian from Muslim background for more than 30 years, Ṣafdar ʿAlī here makes a case for Muslim toleration of converts to Christianity on behalf of those who might follow his own action.

The third part also includes prayers for peaceful coexistence that churches can use in daily morning and evening worship (pp. 25-7), Ṣafdar

ʿAlī's own prayers expressed in poetry (pp. 60-4), and an explanation of 'missionary work' and evangelism (pp. 68-78). He quotes liberally from the Qur'an, Hadith, Gospel accounts and other parts of the New Testament. The earnest tone of his appeal is typified in a series of heartfelt questions (*dilsoz savālāt*, pp. 54-60).

At the beginning of the 20th century, both *Khullat nāmah* and *Ghizā-i rūḥ* were readily available at the Religious Book and Tract Society depots in Lahore and Allahabad (Wherry, *Muslim controversy*, p. 95), though *Khullat nāmah* has since become very difficult to find. The library of the Henry Martyn Institute in Hyderabad, India, preserves a precious copy.

Faryād-i muntaẓar ('Cry of the anticipator') is a 14-page poem written by Ṣafdar ʿAlī to express the feeling of a devotee of Jesus who cannot wait for the second advent of his Lord. Pinki Justin, a Pakistani historian of Christianity in India, dates it to around 1887 ('Contribution of Christian writers', pp. 158-68). It is composed in the typical antique language of Urdu poetry in 19th-century India. Some expressions are not found in modern Urdu dictionaries, and in some places the grammar seems outdated, so that a modern reader might not enjoy it as much as its original audience. It is full of beautiful poetic expressions and well-employed literary devices. Every stanza is closely connected to the next and there is a clear continuity and progression of thought. It shows Ṣafdar ʿAlī's devotion to Jesus Christ and how eager he felt to meet his master at His second coming.

Copies of *Faryād-i muntaẓar* are now very hard to find but, during her doctoral research, Pinki Justin found a copy in a private library in Lahore, which was printed by F.M. Najam ud-Dīn Akhtar in Lahore in 1927. Another notification, in *Qamūs ul-kutub Urdu* (Karachi, 1961, p. 1085; this should not be confused with *Qamūs ul-kitāb*, an Urdu translation of a Bible dictionary), cites a publication of the book by Gilani Press, Lahore, in 1928.

SIGNIFICANCE

Wherry suggested in 1905 that *Ghizā-i rūḥ* was Ṣafdar ʿAlī's 'best known [work] in the churches' (*Muslim controversy*, p. 95). It was the first *tazkira* (see above) of Christian poets in Urdu, and became an inspiration for two others, D.A. Harrison's *Urdu ke Masīḥī shuʿarā'* and Griffin Jones Sharar's *Masīḥī mashāhīr*. Further, Ṣafdar ʿAlī's fellow convert Imāmuddīn praised the first edition and was stimulated to attempt a similar work ('Report of Mr. Imam-ud-din, Catechist at Batala', *Church Missionary Intelligencer*, new series 3 [1878] 495-6, p. 495).

Without *Ghizā-i rūḥ*, many Christian poets would now be unknown, but through this book they remain alive. Ṣafdar ʿAlī's poetic works and

leadership in gathering and publishing the poetry of others opened a window onto a significant phenomenon in north India in the second half of the 19th century. A substantial number of well-educated and culturally rich Muslims converted to Christianity and continued to enjoy the beauties of their native culture, injecting their new faith into cherished forms. In his 1893 *Khaṭṭ-i Shakāgo*, ʿImāduddīn was able to name and describe 117 prominent Muslim converts to Christianity that he knew (*Mohammedan converts to Christianity in India*, trans. H.M. Clark, London, 1910, pp. 6-16). Urdu poetry was an appropriate way to encourage fellowship and identity among the new believers.

Even so, at the end of the 19th century Ṣafdar ʿAlī felt compelled to make a friendly, heartfelt, and earnest plea to Muslims for toleration of converts to Christianity in his *Khullat nāmah*.

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Waseem Raza and Gordon Nickel

Edward Sell

DATE OF BIRTH 1839
PLACE OF BIRTH Wantage, Berkshire
DATE OF DEATH 15 February 1932
PLACE OF DEATH Bangalore

BIOGRAPHY

Edward Sell was a missionary to India with the Church Missionary Society (CMS) from 1865 to 1923, and remained there until his death in 1932. He distinguished himself as an educator, administrator, clergyman and author, and he was highly regarded by his students, Indian Christians, ministerial and missionary colleagues, linguists and Orientalists.

Sell began his missionary preparation in 1860 at the CMS College, Islington, London, studying Sanskrit, and was ordained deacon in the Church of England in 1864. He left England in 1865 to take charge of the Harris High School, Madras, a school for educating Muslims that was part of CMS work among Muslims where he served as president until 1881. He was ordained priest in 1867. He was 'obliged to create textbooks and class books of every grade: his grammar and readers were in use for many years. It was then that he laid the foundation of his deep learning in Arabic, Persian and Urdu' (F.R. Sell, 'Canon Edward Sell', p. 17).

Sell also served as secretary of the CMS, Madras, as a fellow, syndicate member and examiner for Madras University, and in many other roles. In addition, his literary output was impressive. He authored numerous articles and books, including *The faith of Islam* (1880), *The historical development of the Qur'an* (1898) and *Essays on Islam* (1901). *The faith of Islam* established him as an Islamic scholar; he was later described as 'the greatest living authority on Mohammedanism' ('Missionary work amongst Mohammedans', *Huddersfield Chronicle*, 7 December 1895, p. 4, col. 3). During his retirement, when he lived in Bangalore, he wrote 'no fewer than 31 commentaries on the books and subjects of the Old Testament and Jewish literature [...] for the Pastors and Clergy of the Indian Church' (F.R. Sell, 'Canon Edward Sell', p. 18). He received his BD from the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1881, an honorary DD from Edinburgh University in 1902, and the Kaiser-i-Hind Gold medal for public service in 1906.

Sell married Jane Pinder in 1867 ('Marriages', *North Wilts Herald*, 13 April 1867, p. 5). They had four sons, one of whom, Charles Edward, followed his

father into the ordained ministry and was appointed chaplain at St John's Church, Bangalore, in 1909, and four daughters, one of whom, Eleanor, worked with the Church of England Zenana Missionary Society from at least 1892 to 1907, and another, Margaret Susan, known as Marjorie, may have worked with the CMS.

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

The faith of Islam

DATE 1880
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION
The faith of Islam, presented as a comprehensive account of the faith, established Sell as a scholar of Islam. In the preface to the first edition

of 1880 he explained that he used 'authentic [Islamic] sources' and built his case for the inadequacy of Islam 'entirely upon Musalman authorities' (pp. ix, x). His intention in writing the work was to produce something that would be 'of use to missionaries' (p. 303) as well as 'European Governments' (p. ix). He was convinced that in order to understand Islam 'aright, one should know its literature and live amongst its people' (p. x).

Much of the material in the first four chapters of the 1880 edition also appeared in five articles of *The British and Foreign Evangelical Review* between 1878 and 1881. Each successive edition of the book was revised and enlarged, expanding from 269 pages in the first edition to 370 pages in the second edition (1896), to 427 pages in the third edition (1907) and to 466 pages in the fourth edition (1920). In all four editions the number of chapters remained six. The principal additions in these editions were an outline of 'certain phases of modern Muslim thought in India and Persia', additional quotations from Arabic sources and two appendices. Sell also made extensive use of transliteration for technical Islamic terms, in both Arabic and Farsi.

In ch.1, 'The foundations of Islam', Sell provides a detailed account of the four bases of Sunnī law, the Qur'an, the Sunna, consensus (including accounts of the eponymous leaders of the four legal rites) and analogy, and also identifies differences in Shī'ī legal thinking (pp. 24, 31; all references from this point are to the fourth edition of 1920). He forthrightly asserts that these bases are inadequate for building a modern society: 'No nation can possibly progress, the foundations of whose legal and theocratic system are what has been described in this chapter' (p. 57); and further: 'When a Muhammadan nation has had to live by industry, intelligence, and thrift, it has always miserably failed' (p. 58). He hints further at the inflexibility of these legal bases elsewhere in the chapter: the Qur'an is 'an obstacle to innovation in all spheres – political, social, intellectual and moral' (p. 16); the fixed dogma of *ijmā'* makes 'change and progress [...] impossible' (p. 37) so that 'it becomes very difficult to introduce modern ideas, or civil liberty into a Muslim country' (p. 50). He concludes by contrasting the Islamic ideal of being a 'slave to Allah' with the Christian ideal of being a 'Christ-like son' (p. 59).

Ch. 2, 'Exegesis of the Qur'an and the Traditions', discusses the Muslim method of interpreting the Qur'an by following authoritative commentators and the Hadith. Consistent with his criticisms in ch. 1, here Sell states: 'Until Muslims modify their belief in its [the Qur'an's] verbal inspiration and apply to its interpretation the principles of the higher criticism, there can be no sound progress and no real reform' (p. 112). The rest of the chapter

is devoted to the Hadith, limited to the six collections recognised by the Sunnīs and their method of classifying individual sayings (pp. 113-24).

Ch. 3, 'The sects of Islam', is about 'some of the unorthodox sects' (p. 125), by which Sell means the branches that differ from Sunnī Islam. He describes the Shīʿa, including their 'two principal divisions [...] the Isma'ilians and the Imamians' (pp. 138-44), and their main differences from Sunnīs (pp. 144-5), leading him to a brief discourse on the caliphate, which he regards this as 'an evil for Turkey' (p. 150) because the Ottoman caliph 'must oppose any attempt to set up a constitutional government' (p. 150 n. 2), denying any hopes for political reform. The rest of the chapter contains accounts of Sufism, dervish orders and 'Umar Khayyam (pp. 150-84); Bābism (pp. 184-97) and its scion, Bahā'ism (pp. 197-209); Wahhābism (pp. 209-24); and the Qadianis or Aḥmadiyya (pp. 224-6).

Ch. 4, 'The creed of Islam', presents the six articles of faith as held by Sunnīs, followed by a 'note' on Muslim philosophy. At the beginning Sell revealingly asserts that 'a Muslim is one who performs the outward duties of religion. This is a more correct view than that he is one wholly resigned to the will of God' (p. 228), and he goes on to give a thorough account of the six articles. Referring to the last of these, God's predestination of good and evil, as 'dark fatalism' (p. 338), he describes it as the reason why 'all Muhammadan nations decay [... and] are in all that relates to the higher aspects of intellectual and civilised life far behind the nations of the West' (p. 338-9). In the 'note' on Muslim philosophy, which is an overview of its history (pp. 344-54), Sell challenges the popular notion that the impetus for Muslim philosophers was Islam, pointing out that the 'translation of the works of Aristotle and of other Greek authors was made by Syrian and Chaldean Christians, and especially by the Nestorians' (p. 345) and that 'the founders of Islam, the Arabs, produced but one philosopher of note' (p. 352). He ends this chapter with another powerful assertion: 'Any project of reform in Islam which admits its fundamental principles must fail. Revolution, not reform, is the only hope for the permanence of an independent Muslim State when it enters into the circle of civilised nations' (p. 354).

Ch. 5, 'The practical duties of Islam', describes the Five Pillars of Islam with a note on a recent *fatwā* that had been issued. Sell starts with a brief introduction to primary and secondary duties in Islam, along with its four categories of prohibitions (pp. 355-7), and then proceeds to the Five Pillars. He follows this with a typical criticism: 'The arkanu'd-din [Pillars of the religion] show how largely Islam is based on the Sunna' (p. 411), but 'Until this chain of superstition [acceptance of the authority of the Sunna] is

broken, progress and enlightenment seem to be very difficult' (p. 412). The 'note' that follows concerns a *fatwā* which condemns an Indian Muslim who translated the *shahāda* and the *ṣalāt* into Hindustani because he thought it was necessary for 'those who do not know Arabic [...] to recite the translation' (p. 412). Sell includes this to show 'how unyielding the law of Islam is to the varied circumstances of the countries in which it exists' (p. 416).

Ch. 6, 'The feasts and fasts of Islam', covers the major observances as they are practised by Muslims in India as well as 'other practices borrowed from the Hindus' (pp. 439-40). Sell concludes by asserting that he has 'given a representation of the Faith of Islam from its own authorities' (p. 441).

Appendix A, 'The authenticity of the Traditions', is new to the fourth edition, replacing the appendix on ''Ilm-i-tajwīd' ('the science of recitation'), which appeared in the second and third editions and was subsequently re-published in 1915 by the Christian Literature Society for India as part of 'The Islam Series' (Sell, *'Ilm-i-tajwīd*). In this appendix, Sell shows from contemporary Muslim sources and recognised earlier authorities that the Hadith are unreliable, but even so they constitute the foundation upon which Islam is built. If they are undermined, however, they 'would seem to be likely to render it unstable and to endanger the great Islamic system of the past and present' (p. 447). Appendix B, 'The law of jihad', which appears in the second, third and fourth editions, contrasts the teaching on the duty of jihad given in the early authoritative sources with the way in which later Sunnī authorities have distorted this. He refers to Maulvī Chirāgh 'Alī's (see *CMR* 24, 625-36) redefinition of it in *A critical exposition of the popular 'Jihād'* as defensive rather than aggressive (pp. 453-6), and while he himself recognises this as unorthodox, he endorses it as 'undoubtedly the best position for enlightened Musalmans to adopt' (p. 456).

SIGNIFICANCE

The initial edition of *The faith of Islam* in 1880 was one of the first books in English to give a reasonably comprehensive and accurate overview of Islam. Sell's reliance on Islamic sources, which he was able to read in Arabic, Persian and Hindustani, coupled with his almost 'daily intercourse with Musalmans' (*Faith of Islam*, 1880, p. iii), lent authenticity to his writing and distinguished them from the works of those who wrote about Islam 'either in ignorant prejudice, or from an ideal standpoint' (p. x). Its reception by both Europeans and others was extremely favourable and rightly earned for Sell a reputation as a scholar of Islam. H.U. Weitbrecht

translated it into Urdu in 1883 (*A descriptive catalogue of Urdu Christian literature*, London, 1886, p. 53), though, according to E.M. Wherry, this was 'in a style so difficult of comprehension that even native readers find it hard to understand' (*Muslim controversy*, 1905, p. 117). It was also translated into Tamil in about 1898 (Anon., 'Mission field', p. 782).

Numerous reviews of the first edition appeared in both British and Indian publications, eleven of which are quoted in the second edition (*Faith of Islam*, 1896, p. 371). Two points stand out in many of them: praise for its thorough description of the religion of Islam, and agreement with Sell's assessment that Islam was politically inadequate for a modern nation-state. The latter was especially important to Europeans, as the late 19th century was a time when colonialism was strong and European governments faced a range of difficulties with Muslim powers.

The most pointed criticism came from the Indian Muslim modernist Maulvī Chirāgh ʿAlī. His main objection was to Sell's assertion that Islam is 'stationary' (*The proposed political, legal and social reforms*, p. vi), that is, incapable of change. ʿAlī labels this as 'misbelief' (p. vi) and argues that Sell and others who maintain this view are 'mis-led themselves [and] have mis-led others also' ('Letter', p. 15). Sell rejected these criticisms in the preface to the second edition of *The faith of Islam* in 1896: 'I have seen nothing yet from any authoritative source in Islam which leads me to depart from, or even to modify, the conclusions arrived at on these and other points in the former edition' (p. vi). He further addresses these and similar objections in ch. 4 in the new subsection of the second edition, titled 'Modern Mu'tazilas' (pp. x, 195-9), which is also included in the third and fourth editions.

The reception given to the second edition of *The faith of Islam*, which was almost 100 pages longer than the first, was overwhelmingly favourable. J.R. Bacon, writing in *The Chronicle* of the London Missionary Society in 1897, referred to it as 'a book of special value in regard to the system of Islam [...] and a close perusal of his book will amply repay all who are interested in this important question' (pp. 1-2), while F.F. Ellinwood, writing in *The Missionary Review of the World* in the same year, stated, 'Mr. Sell's book is especially valuable for the light which it throws upon the period following the first bloody sweep of Mohammedan conquest' (p. 758) and praised Sell as 'a high authority [... whose] scholarship [... is] generally recognised' (p. 757). Others were even more effusive.

Reviews of the third and fourth editions were noticeably fewer. In a review of the fourth edition in *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1923), R.A. Nicholson, the English Orientalist and Islamicist, was not

willing to praise *The faith of Islam* as a scholarly work but as 'convey[ing] in clear and vigorous language the impressions made by Islam upon one who possesses a wide, though hardly exact, knowledge of its theology' (pp. 294-5). Arthur Jeffery's review of the fourth edition in *The Moslem World* (1924) was more favourable: 'Though not as complete as one would wish, we know no better compendium of the facts concerning the religious life of Islam' (p. 319). He nevertheless criticised it for being 'written from the Persian and Indian standpoints, rather than from the Arabic' (p. 310) and for taking 'no account whatever of the mass of work done by modern European scholars [… , which] defect is a serious detraction from the value to students of an otherwise excellent compendium' (pp. 319-20). Nevertheless, it was generally received, particularly among missionary authors, as an authoritative presentation that had few rivals.

The enduring value of *The faith of Islam* is, according to Alan Guenther, due to Sell's commitment 'to live among the people and to know their literature' ('Ḥadīth', p. 101). Clinton Bennett also recognises this and extols the work for having 'established as axiomatic among missionary scholars that "to know [Islam] aright, one should know its literature and live among its people"' (Bennett, 'Sell', p. 611). Regardless of any faults one may find with it or disagreement with Sell's views, his reliance on primary Islamic writings is the reason why his book accurately describes Islam and remains a reliable source of information. This is why it well deserves to be termed a 'classic' (Bennett, *Victorian images*, p. 130).

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The historical development of the Qur'an

DATE 1898
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

The historical development of the Qur'an, 256 pages long in its third edition of 1909 (which is cited here), is an attempt to show how the content of the Qur'an 'was determined by the events of [Muḥammad's] life' (p. ix). This required Sell to examine the Qur'an 'with some regard to chronological

order' rather than the '[confused] Arabic arrangement' (p. 255). He was confident that, if the Qur'an was treated in this way 'we are enabled to see how admirably this "piecemeal" revelation was fitted to meet the requirements of Islam as they arose' (p. ix). Though he was familiar with various chronologies of the Qur'an, he relied on that given by Theodor Nöldeke in the first edition of *Geschichte des Qorâns* (1860), which he considered 'to be the best and most authoritative book on the subject' (p. ix). As implied by the title, Sell felt that his chronological arrangement of the Qur'an was historically accurate. The third edition was 'carefully revised and considerably enlarged' (Preface, p. xiii) from three earlier editions: the initial, serial article with the same title published in *The Madras Christian College Magazine* (1897), followed by the first and second editions (1898, 1905). A fourth, slightly shorter final edition was published in 1923.

The book is divided into two main chapters, entitled 'The Meccan period' (93 pages) and 'The Madina period' (163 pages), followed by two appendices, 'Verses cited from the Qur'an' (9 pages), and a 'Table showing the approximate chronological order of the chapters of the Qur'an' (2 pages), along with an index (4 pages). Numerous quotations from the Qur'an in Arabic and various *tafsīr*s in Arabic and Persian are included, along with English translations. Sell's knowledge of Islamic literature and his fluency in several languages are evident in his use of Muslim commentaries in Arabic (al-Bayḍāwī, al-Zamakhsharī and Ibn ʿAbbās), Persian (*Tafsīr-i Ḥusaynī* known as *Mawāhib-e ʿAliyya*), and Urdu (*Khulāṣat ut-tafāsīr*). For the Qur'an, he compares the Arabic with the Persian translations of Ḥusayn and Shāh Walī Allāh Dihlavī and the Urdu translations by ʿAbdulqādir, Nadhir Aḥmad Khān and *Khulāṣat ut-tafāsīr*. He also makes numerous references to publications on the life of Muḥammad by non-Muslim authors such as William Muir, S.W. Koelle and D.S. Margoliouth, as well as extensive use of Abraham Geiger's *Was hat Mohammed aus dem Judenthume aufgenommen?*, which had been recently published in translation as *Judaism and Islam* in Madras in 1898.

Ch. 1 covers the revelations that Muḥammad was traditionally believed to have received in Mecca, which, following Nöldeke, Sell divides into three periods spanning the years 612-22. He begins this chapter by setting out his premise that Muḥammad's life cannot be 'intelligently understood' unless the suras are 'placed in their true chronological order' (pp. 1-2). While he acknowledges that there are 'differences of opinion' regarding the dates for some of the suras and that some of them are 'composite', that is, made up of separate passages from different times, he asserts that 'for all practical purposes we can now arrange them in some sort of consecutive order' (p. 2). He does not endeavour to provide a comprehensive treatment for

the entire content of the Qur'an but highlights significant events and teachings according to Muslim tradition. These include the first revelation, the heavenly original of the Qur'an, descriptions of paradise and hell, the episode of the 'Satanic verses', the doctrine of abrogation, the divine inspiration of the Qur'an, the command to Muḥammad to leave Mecca and go to Medina, the first pledge of ʿAqaba, the *miʿrāj*, and the second pledge of ʿAqaba. A good amount of this chapter is dedicated to the opposition that Muḥammad faced and his responses to it.

Ch. 2 continues with the revelations Muḥammad was believed to have received in Medina in the years 622-32. As in ch. 1, Sell highlights selected events and teachings, including Muḥammad's interactions with the Jews and the 'hypocrites' (insincere converts to Islam), accusations that the Jews corrupted their scripture, the change of the *qibla* (direction of prayer), the sanction of the pilgrimage to Mecca, the call to arms and military expeditions, and Muḥammad's 'domestic affairs'. The last part of the chapter focuses on various of Muḥammad's decisions and policies after he returned to Mecca in triumph at the end of his life. Sell depends on the Hadith and various *tafsīr*s to provide the details of Muḥammad's life, though his reliance on these does not necessarily indicate he accepted them, but provides support for his thesis that the Qur'an was the product of Muḥammad's thinking and pragmatic actions rather than of divine inspiration. Examples include attributing Muḥammad's circumstances to influencing 'the very words used, in the Qur'an' (p. 13 n.1), Muḥammad's claiming 'divine origin for the Jewish legend of Joseph' in Q 12 (p. 72), the manner in which 'the changing policy of Muḥammad' in Q 2 is 'an excellent example of the way in which the revelations were timed to meet the exigencies of the varying social and political situations of the Prophet and his cause' (pp. 123-4), Muḥammad having to justify his marriage to Zaynab 'by alleging that he had for it the direct sanction of God' (p. 165) and explaining the defeat at the Battle of Uḥud 'by a very skilful production of revelations' (p. 153). Sell summarises his conviction that Muḥammad was the source of the Qur'an as follows: 'The fragmentary nature of the revelations was useful, as it enabled the Prophet to meet with a supposed divine opinion the varying events of each day, but it needed some authority to justify it' (p. 55).

Even though Sell rejects the divine inspiration of the Qur'an, he writes with a certain admiration for Muḥammad, referring to him as 'undoubtedly a great man' (p. 256) who had 'many personal virtues, indomitable patience, uncompromising fearlessness and fervid eloquence' (p. 77). His analysis of Muḥammad's legacy, though critical, is one of regret: 'The legacy of the Prophet is no word of peace, but an inspiring war cry which as

years roll on ever keeps alive a fanatical spirit. It is a sad ending to the life work of so great a man' (p. 227).

SIGNIFICANCE

The historical development of the Qur'an was the second of Sell's major publications on Islam, following *The faith of Islam* (1880). Through this work he introduced English speakers to the nascent field of 'higher criticism' that was being applied mainly by German scholars to the literary sources of Islam. He made use of Theodor Nöldeke's chronological arrangement of the Qur'an from the first edition of *Geschichte des Qorâns*, which he believed was the most accurate. In fact, Arthur Jeffery characterised the book as a 'simple [...] summary' of Nöldeke's work 'from a manuscript translation [...] made for him in India' ('Quest', p. 330). Nevertheless, Sell's work remained the standard, recommended work of its kind for evangelical missionaries through the first quarter of the 20th century.

The initial response by two of Sell's contemporaries in India was extremely favourable. H.U. Weitbrecht, a fellow CMS missionary, described *Historical development* as 'indispensable' ('Three-fold view', p. 903), while E.M. Wherry, the American Presbyterian missionary considered an authority on Islam because of his *A comprehensive commentary on the Quran* (1896), was so keen on it that he oversaw its translation into Urdu. He believed that 'the reading of it is likely to shake the confidence of the Muslim reader in the inspired character of the Quran' (*Muslim controversy*, p. 118). It seems that this praise contributed to the high regard in which the work was held by evangelical missionaries and others, for in subsequent years it is mentioned as one of the main publications for which Sell was considered a scholarly authority on Islam. Two examples will suffice: 'too well known to require any description' (Wherry, *Progress*, p. 30) and one of his 'ouvrages importants et estimés sur l'Islam' ('Abrégé d'histoire musulmane', p. 625).

Three years after the publication of the third edition of the work, Samuel Zwemer included it as part of his 'working library on Islam', mentioning it with *Geschichte des Qorâns* for those desiring 'a critical study of the text' of the Qur'an ('Working library', p. 35). In the following year, Weitbrecht recommended that it should be read along with the Qur'an as part of the study of Islam for those inspired to be missionaries following decisions that came out of the World Missionary Conference held in Edinburgh in 1910 (*Bibliography*, p. 63). It was also used as a textbook in the Cairo Study Centre, the school that Zwemer and W.H.T. Gairdner established in Egypt for the training of missionaries to Muslims ('Study

course', p. 81). Towards the last decade of the 20th century, the fourth edition was reprinted because it 'fulfills a need in the church to better understand Islam and its origins, so that relevant and informed communication can take place' (*Historical development*, Delhi, 2001, back cover). The complete text of the fourth edition was also made available online in 2005, and an Arabic translation in 2011.

Sell's work did not appear to attract much attention outside evangelical circles. In what is perhaps the earliest review of it, someone who signed himself simply as 'A Mohammedan' considered it to be 'the first work of its kind' ('The Koran', *The Madras Weekly Mail*, 1 December 1898, p. 593). He praised Sell for his 'mild and inoffensive' style and acknowledged his 'unmistakable testimony of research', but he recognised two weaknesses from a Muslim point of view: first, Nöldeke's chronology does not follow 'the special circumstances recorded by *Bokhari* [al-Bukhārī] under which the original arrangement of the Koran was made'; and second, 'the very title is revolting [...] as it is a tacit challenge that the Koran is not of divine inspiration'. In another review, which appeared after the publication of the second edition, the reviewer described the work as 'accurate and compendious' and a 'desideratum' but nonetheless incomplete. He called for 'a treatise on the "Editions of the Qor'an"' that would 'settle not only the time and place of each of the Suras, but also the chronological order and relative setting of each and every a'yat' with the hope that 'a man so competent and so industrious as Dr. Sell should undertake it' (B., 'Review of *The historical development of the Quran*', *Imperial and Asiatic Quarterly Review* 21 [1906] 173-5).

Historical development is typical of other evangelical works on Islam in which biblical commitments are maintained. Regardless of academic qualifications or how fair-minded the author is, such analyses inevitably result in some kind of critique that is unfavourable towards Islam. Sell characterised the Qur'an as originating with Muḥammad on the basis of its content as well that of the Hadith and *tafsīr* tradition. This is an understandable analysis because Sell's standard was the Bible, which repeatedly shows God refusing to adapt His message to the preferences or circumstances of any individual prophet. Finally, though Sell and his evangelical contemporaries considered *Historical development* to be part of a critical study of Islam, its limited impact was directly related to its acceptance of the Islamic narrative as historical in its broad outlines on the one hand, and on the other to the lack of an objective criterion by which to sift the historical from the unhistorical within primary Islamic sources. The former reinforced and perpetuated Muslim claims for the Islamic narrative,

while the latter could easily be dismissed as the subjective view of the author.

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Essays on Islam

DATE 1901
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

Essays on Islam is Edward Sell's third major work, following *The faith of Islam* and *The historical development of the Qur'an*. It is an eclectic collection of topics directly and indirectly related to Islam, 267 pages long and consisting of eight chapters and an appendix. Each chapter is taken from articles which 'originally appeared in the *Madras Christian College Magazine* [but were] carefully revised and most of them considerably lengthened' (Preface). Three of the articles were also published in the *Church Missionary Intelligencer*, a monthly periodical of the Church Missionary Society (CMS) to which Sell belonged. There are numerous footnotes from the varied sources upon which Sell relied for much of his writing, including technical terms and quotations in Persian and Arabic.

Ch. 1, 'The mystics of Islam', is a brief historical and descriptive overview of Sufism. Sell describes it as 'a reaction from the [Islamic] burden of a dry monotheism, of a rigid law and a stiffened ritual' (p. 2) by the Sufis' adoption from Arab philosophers of 'Quranic terms to the [Neo-Platonic] ideas they thus gained' (p. 3). He provides a detailed description of Sufism, with numerous quotations from celebrated Sufi works such as the Persian poet Maḥmūd Shabistarī's (1288-1340) *Gulshan-i rāz*, and Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī's (1207-73) *Dīwān-i Shams-i Tabrīzī* and *Masnavī-i maʿnavī* to illustrate better Sufi beliefs, which are dependent on allegorising the Qur'an (pp. 3-44). Although Sell commended some aspects of the 'earlier Muhammadan mystics' (p. 36) and 'Sufi poets' (p. 37), his overall assessment of Sufism is negative: 'the effect of the system has been bad and has worked for evil in Islam. Pantheistic in creed and too often antinomian in practice, it possesses no regenerative power' (p. 37). Sell's 'antidote' (p. 44) for the gnosticism in Sufism is 'to search into the true historical facts of the Christian religion [... and find] God manifested, not in some intangible principle; but in a living person, in One who "is the image of the invisible God, the first born of every creature" [Col 1:15]' (pp. 44-5).

Ch. 2, 'The Bab and the Babis', is an account of the history, beliefs and results of Bābism, the 19th-century Persian messianic movement. Sell acknowledges that Bābīs do not constitute 'a Muslim sect, for they practically discard the Quran and supersede Muhammad' (p. 46), yet he insists that knowledge of Bābism's close connection to 'the Sufis [...]

the teaching of the Shi'ahs on the Imam [...and] Muhammadan dogmas' (p. 46) is 'necessary to [Bābism's] intelligent study' (p. 47), thus warranting the inclusion of this essay in this volume. He then outlines a number of contributing factors that gave rise to Bābism (pp. 47-55), followed by an account of its founder, the 'Bāb' (i.e. gate), Mīrzā ʿAlī Muḥammad (1820-50), which includes Bābism's rapid and extensive growth (pp. 55-67), estimated between 'half a million [to] nearer one million' (p. 77). The Persian government's severe persecution of the Bābīs resulted in the execution of the Bāb and many of his followers (pp. 67-77), of which Sell writes, 'No sect in modern days has suffered such persecution and survived' (p. 47). After the death of the Bāb, the movement split into two factions, the Ezelis (Azalis) and the Beha'is (Bahā'īs; p. 77-81). He gives an account of Bābī doctrines (pp. 81-9) followed by a brief treatment of Bahā'ism (pp. 89-96), and concludes by commending what he feels are positive aspects of Bābism (pp. 96-8) and expressing the hope that Bābīs will look to Jesus Christ, quoting Colossians 2:3 and 1:19: "'in Whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge", for it "pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell"' (p. 98).

Ch. 3, 'The religious orders of Islam', draws attention to various Islamic movements, primarily by highlighting the orders of the Darwishes (Dervishes) and the Sanusiyah (Sanūsiyya) order. Sell considers the Darwishes to be one of the 'two most active elements in Muslim lands in the opposition to social, political, and religious reforms and to the advance of modern civilisation' (p. 99). A common thread in these orders is their conviction that Islam is 'a vast theocracy, in which their spiritual leaders are the true guides' (p. 99). Sell gives a short introduction to the Darwish orders followed by an outline of their organisational structure and practices (pp. 99-115), adding the comment, 'the whole system is so developed that individuality is crushed out and the Order is exalted' (p. 115). He then makes very brief mentions of 'the most important orders' (p. 115) followed by 'more recent' ones (pp. 122), who, he notes, are indebted to 'the Wahhabi movement in Arabia' (p. 126). The rest of the essay is given to the Sanusiyah order (pp. 126-46), 'which surpasses all the others in its power and its influence' (p. 127). Sell commends its founder, Shaikh Sanusi (1787-1859) for being able to start this movement 'without shedding blood or calling in the aid of any temporal ruler', making it almost, if not quite, independent of any political power (p. 131). The success of the Sanusis, he observes, has resulted in 'a great pan-Islamic Movement' (p. 141) with the goal of regenerating Islam (p. 141), especially in light of 'the growing Christian occupation of [Muslim] lands' (p. 144). According to Gerhard Rohlfs

(1831-96), whom Sell quotes, they are characterised by 'their burning hatred of Christians' (p. 140, n. 2, taken from A. Silva White, *From sphinx to oracle*, London, 1899, pp. 126-7, translating from Rohlfs, *Kufra. Reise von Tripolis nach der Oase Kufra*, Leipzig, 1881, p. 285).

Ch. 4, 'The Khalif Hakim and the Druses', is an account of the Druze religion with special attention given to Hakim (al-Ḥākim bi-Amr Allāh), the sixth Fāṭimid caliph (r. 996-1021), because of his importance within the religion. Sell first provides an overview of the history and beliefs of the Ismāʿīlīs leading to their establishment of the Fāṭimid caliphate in Egypt in the early 10th century (pp. 147-56). He describes al-Ḥākim as a cruel and oppressive ruler (pp. 156-8), who was further emboldened by the Ismāʿīlī *dāʿī* (missionary) Darazi (Muḥammad ibn Ismāʿīl al-Darazī) – from whom the name Druze is derived – who 'encouraged the Khalif in his pretensions to divinity' (p. 158). This belief was encouraged by Akhram and Hamza, two successors of Darazi. After al-Ḥākim was murdered by his sister in 1020 and his body could not be found, the Druze 'say that he was not really slain [...and] for nearly a thousand years have worshipped [him] as a god.' (p. 163).

The rest of the essay is devoted to the beliefs and practices of the Druze, who reinterpret passages not only from the Qur'an but also from the Gospels (pp. 178, 180). Sell concludes with a strong denunciation:

> That a religion should grow out of the caprices of a madman, and that generation after generation should see in a bloodthirsty despot the incarnation of the Divine, shows to what an extent men may be deluded, when they close their eyes to the 'true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world [John 1:9].' (p. 184)

Ch. 5, 'The status of the Zimmis', seeks 'to show what was the actual social condition of the Zimmis [*dhimmī*s] in the early days of Muslim rule and for centuries afterwards' (p. 185). With very little exception, this essay consists of extracts translated from a two-part French article by François-Alphonse Belin, 'Fetoua relatif à la condition des Zimmis, et particulièrement des Chrétiens, en pays Musulmans', that appeared in *Journal Asiatique*, published in 1851 and 1852. Sell writes that Belin's articles 'are translations [...] from Arabic standard works' (p. 186). These Islamic legal judgements regarding the status of Jews and Christians under Muslim rule show that the actions of Caliph al-Ḥākim (see ch. 4) were 'by no means peculiar, but only followed what had been done before his time, and which continued to be long after a settled procedure on the part of Muslim rulers' (p. 185). In his conclusion Sell writes, 'the whole system of [Islamic] Law which

regulates such lands is an anachronism now; but how it is to be altered without endangering the foundations of the [Islamic] Faith is not an easy question to settle' (p. 197) and '[t]he only remedy is *force majeure*, supplied by other Powers, which would really help a Ruler of a Muhammadan State like Turkey, should he wish to make reforms' (p. 197).

Ch. 6, 'Islam in China', is Sell's response to the concerns of 'Professor Vasilieff, a Russian writer' that Islam will gain 'political supremacy over China' (p. 198) by presenting an account of the history, beliefs and practices of Chinese Muslims. To do this, he relies on *Le Mahométisme en Chine* (1878) by Dabry de Thiersant, French Consul-General in China, to which, Sell writes, 'I am indebted for most of the facts which are here given' (p. 199). After a brief account of the first Muslims entering China and establishing themselves as a community, Sell states that they currently number twenty million (p. 203) and describes how Chinese Muslims differ 'both in character and in physiognomy from the Chinese proper' (p. 204). While they adhere to a number of the requirements of Islam, they have greatly conformed to the majority Chinese culture at large so 'that Islam is looked upon by the Chinese as a religion similar in many points to their own' (p. 205). In illustration of this, they maintain certain beliefs and engage in beliefs and practices at odds with Islam such as the salvation of certain non-Muslims (p. 214) and gambling (p. 215). Sell's overall assessment is that Chinese Muslims 'may be classed as orthodox Muslims, but they are certainly lax and time-serving in their conduct and relation to others of an alien faith' (p. 217). For these reasons, he doubts the view expressed by Professor Vasilieff and other Russians that Chinese Muslims 'may become, or are at all likely to prove a hostile power in the future developments of the Chinese Empire' (p. 217).

Ch. 7, 'The recensions of the Qur'an', recounts the Islamic narrative of how the Qur'an came into existence together with related matters from Islamic writings that challenge the traditional Islamic view of its inspiration. Sell begins with a brief account of its two recensions, first under Abū Bakr and then under ʿUthmān (pp. 218-24), and then discusses various features and controversial issues such as its lack of 'chronological sequence' (p. 224), the single letters at the start of some of the suras (pp. 224-5), the different ways of reading the Qur'an (pp. 225-7) and traditions that conflict with the text and arrangement of ʿUthmān's recension, including the omission of *Sūrat al-Nūrayn* (the 'Two lights'), of which he gives an English translation as well as the Arabic text (pp. 227-40). Sell's verdict is that 'the Quran is open to criticism, and that the orthodox view of inspiration needs to be very much modified, but do [*sic*] not prove that

the present copies are not authentic' (p. 240) and that 'we may upon the strongest presumption affirm that every verse in the Quran is the genuine and unaltered composition of Muhammad himself' (p. 241).

Ch. 8, 'The Hanifs', is a short discourse on the Dutch Professor Abram Kuenen's theory of why the term *ḥanīf* came to be associated with Abraham in Islamic literature and was applied to Arabian monotheists prior to Islam. Sell first provides background by giving examples of how this term is used in the Qur'an and Hadith (pp. 242-4), and then introduces Kuenen's view: 'When once Muhammad identified his religion with the faith of the Patriarch, was it not a historical necessity that pre-Muhammadans should conform in Muslim tradition to the type of Abraham?' (p. 244). In other words, the 'Traditionists' anachronistically applied the term to these 'pre-Muhammadan' monotheists. Sell provides support for this theory from the Qur'an, based on the traditional framework for the dating of the suras (pp. 244-9) and then presents the traditional Islamic view in contrast to Kuenen (p. 249). However, he is inclined to accept Kuenen's view as it 'certainly fits in better with the historical development of the Quran and with the growth of ideas in the Prophet's mind. It also fully accords with other adaptations of his views to the changing circumstances of his life' (pp. 249-50). Nevertheless, because scholars differ, Sell concedes, 'we cannot be too dogmatic on the point' (p. 250), though he insists on 'the great importance of reading the Suras of the Quran, so far as may be, in their chronological order' (p. 250).

The appendix is dedicated to the 'various readings' (p. 267) of the Qur'an. Sell begins with a list of 'the seven famous "Readers" and their disciples' (p. 251) and follows this with discussions on the rules for pronunciation (pp. 253-7), differing divisions of its text (pp. 257-8), and the rules for writing the text (pp. 258-63). Knowledge of all of these details is necessary for 'any real claim to the honourable title of a Hafiz' (p. 263), one who has memorised the entire Qur'an. Sell ends the essays with a table of different readings (pp. 264-7), pointing out that only the pronunciation of the words is affected, not their meanings (p. 267).

SIGNIFICANCE

After it was published, *Essays on Islam* was consistently praised for its scholarship. It was considered 'erudite' (*The Scotsman*, 16 May 1901, p. 2), 'scholarly' (*Missionary Review of the World*, October 1901, p. 782) and to '[maintain] the reputation of its author as an authority on the subject of Islám' (*Calcutta Review*, July 1901, p. vi). Of the two most critical reviewers, one recognised it as 'increas[ing] the debt of the general reader to [its

author]' (*Madras Weekly Mail*, 14 March 1901, p. 284) while the other 'cordially recommended [it] to all who desire a lucid summary of the development of religious ideas under Islam' (*The Athenaeum* 3850, 10 Aug 1901, p. 187). William St Clair Tisdall, a CMS colleague of Sell, noted that some of the essays dealt with topics 'which have hitherto received less study from English writers than their importance deserves' (*Christian Missionary Intelligencer* 52, May 1901, p. 401). In agreement with this assessment, the book was said to contain a 'wealth of information [...and] supplies a real need' (*Calcutta Review*, July 1901, p. vi).

It was agreed that *Essays on Islam* was a sound piece of work. Sell's Persian quotations were noted to be 'well selected and to the point' (*Calcutta Review*, July 1901, p. iv); Tisdall wrote that each essay 'bears witness to the accuracy, research, and learning of the author' (*Christian Missionary Intelligencer* 52, May 1901, p. 402); another reviewer wrote that, even though the essays 'are largely based upon the works of previous writers [...] each makes some original contribution, greater or less, to the subject with which it deals' (*Madras Weekly Mail*, 14 March 1901, p. 284). A good example of such confidence is an article that appeared in the *Calcutta Review* entitled 'The Muhammadan revival in Africa', in which ch. 3 of *Essays*, 'The religious orders of Islam', is used as the sole English reference and lauded for its 'clear and succinct account' (p. 243). This particular chapter was elsewhere identified as 'perhaps the most important' essay from this volume (*Madras Weekly Mail*, 14 March 1901, p. 284). The reviewer in *The Scotsman*, 16 May 1901, noted that, here, Sell openly expressed his 'Christian [...and] clerical sympathies' (p. 2). He demonstrated much more of his evangelistic commitment in the first, second and fourth chapters by quoting the Bible as the solution to what he believed were the errors of Sufism, Bābism and the Druze religion, though at the same time, his 'fairness' was evident.

Alongside these compliments, there were recurring criticisms of *Essays*. The reviewer in the *Madras Weekly Mail* wrote, 'There are more misprints than seem reasonable' (p. 284), while the reviewer in the *Athenaeum* remarked that the 'mistakes in the spelling of Arabic words are annoyingly frequent' (p. 187). The *Madras Weekly Mail* reviewer thought it lacked 'clearness of arrangement and the lucid style' (p. 284), and 'Z', in the *Missionary Review of the World*, thought it was 'a maze [...] because it has no index' (p. 782). One very strong criticism involved the seventh chapter, 'The recensions of the Qur'an', which the reviewer in the *Calcutta Review* described as 'not a scholarly account' (p. v), though this reviewer must

have felt that this was the only blemish of its kind because he also wrote that *Essays* were 'invaluable to the student of comparative religion' (p. vi).

Essays did not generate the kind of interest that had been shown in Sell's previous two books and, although it was sometimes included in lists of his works, there were fewer reviews and recommendations for it. For instance, while it was included by Samuel Zwemer in 'A working library on Islam' (*The Moslem World* [1912] p. 36), it was not included in H.U. Weitbrecht's, *A bibliography for missionary students* (London, 1913). Two factors that probably contributed to this were, first, that *Essays* is not a treatment of a single subject but a collection of disparate topics, most of which did not appeal to a general audience but rather to 'the student of comparative religion' (*Calcutta Review*, p. vi) and 'to all real students of [Islam]' (*Christian Missionary Intelligencer*, p. 401) and, second, that, instead of revising the volume, Sell went on to publish expanded versions of select chapters as individual booklets in connection with his work for the Christian Literature Society for India under their 'Islam Series' of which Sell was general editor (*The Moslem World*, April 1911, p. 208).

Sell's sound research in *Essays*, coupled with his ability to read primary source works in Persian and Arabic, guarantee that the work will remain a reliable introduction to the topics it covers. That it was a revision of earlier publications brought 'thoroughly up-to-date' (*Missionary Review of the World*, p. 782) at the time of its publishing, with most of the content further revised and published, is a testament to Sell's commitment to lifelong learning and desire to provide others with ready access to his literary investigations. It is a prime example of a work written by a Christian who was secure enough in his own faith to show apparent impartiality towards the subjects that interested him without needing to argue that the Qur'an was 'the genuine and unaltered composition' of Muḥammad (p. 241) rather than the supreme revelation from God, and that Christianity was so obviously the answer to Islam that single quotations from the New Testament were sufficient answers to what he perceives as Muslim questionings (e.g. pp. 45, 98, 184).

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Edward Sell, *The Báb and the Bábís*, Madras, 1895
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Edward Sell, 'The religious orders of Islam', *Madras Christian College Magazine* 15 (January 1898) 391-404; 454-65
Edward Sell, 'Islam in China', *Madras Christian College Magazine* 16 (July 1898-June 1899) 10-18
Edward Sell, 'The status of the Zimmis', *Madras Christian College Magazine* 16 (July 1898-June 1899) 205-14
Edward Sell, 'The Sanusiyah Darwishes', *Church Missionary Intelligencer* 50 (January 1899) 6-7
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Edward Sell, 'The recensions of the Quran', *Madras Christian College Magazine* 17 (July 1899-June 1900) 129-43
Edward Sell, 'The Khalif Hakim and the Druses', *Madras Christian College Magazine* 17 (July 1899-June 1900) 199-214
Edward Sell, 'The mystics of Islam', *Madras Christian College Magazine* 17 (July 1899-June 1900) 546-67
Edward Sell, 'The Hanifs', *Madras Christian College Magazine* 18 (July 1900-June 1901) 77-83
Edward Sell, 'The status of the Zimmis', *Church Missionary Intelligencer* 52 (May 1901) 354-60

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Edward Sell, *The religious orders of Islam*, London, 1908, 1914², repr. Wilmington DE, 1976, New York, 2000, London, 2002, Delhi, 2009, London, 2014; religiousordersoooselluoft (digitised version available through archive.org)
Edward Sell, *The recensions of the Qur'án*, London, 1909
Edward Sell, *Druses* (Islam Series, Christian Literature Society for India), London, 1910
Edward Sell, *Baháism* (Islam Series, Christian Literature Society for India), London, 1912
Edward Sell, *The Hanifs* (Islam Series, Christian Literature Society for India), London, 1912
Edward Sell, *Muslims in China* (Islam Series, Christian Literature Society for India), London, 1913

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W. Goldsack, 'The Islam Series', *The Moslem World* 1/2 (April 1911) 208-11

S. Zwemer, 'A working library on Islam', *The Moslem World* 2/1 (1912) 32-6

Adam Simnowitz

Abūlmanṣūr Dihlavī

DATE OF BIRTH 1823
PLACE OF BIRTH Nagpur
DATE OF DEATH 1903
PLACE OF DEATH Delhi

BIOGRAPHY

Sayyid Nāṣiruddīn Muḥammad Abūlmanṣūr Dilhavī, born into a Muslim family in 1823, was the son of Sayyid Muḥammad ʿAlī, a head clerk at the Nagpur residency (Imdād Ṣābrī, *Firangiyoṇ kā jāl*, p. 520). Tutored by his father and grandfather, he later worked in the home of Nawāb Jahāngīr Muḥammad Khān (1816-44), the ruler of the princely state of Bhopal. He learned English and in time became a prolific apologist for Islam, earning the sobriquet *Imām-e fan-e munāẓarah ahl-e kitāb* ('the leader of the art of polemics with the people of the book', Rāhī, 'Sayyid Nāṣir-ul-Dīn Muḥammad', p. 9). This was a period marked by literary exchanges between Muslims and Christians, both missionaries and indigenous Christians. His writings contain Muslim responses to works such as Karl Gottlieb Pfander's (1803-65; *CMR* 24, 188-236) *Mīzān ul-ḥaqq* ('The balance of truth') as well as the writings of ʿAbdullāh Ātham (1828-96; *CMR* 24, 392-6), Ṣafdar ʿAlī (1828-99; *CMR* 24, 765-80), ʿImāduddīn Lāhiz (1830-1900; *CMR* 24, 506-41), Rajab ʿAlī and Ṭhākur Dās (1852-1910). His major writings include *Taṣḥiḥ al-taʾwīl fī radd-i ʿalā Tafsīr al-mukāshfa* ('Correction of the explanation, in refutation of "Interpretation of the [biblical] Book of Revelation"'), *Namūna-i taḥrīf* ('Patterns of textual alteration'), *Navīd-i jāved* ('Eternally good news'), *Mīzān ul-mīzān fī radd-i ʿalā Mīzān ul-ḥaqq lī Pfander* ('Balance of the balance, in refutation of "The balance of truth" by Pfander'), and *Inʿām-iʿāmm fī radd-i ʿalā Aʾina-i Islām lī Rajab* ('A general reward, in refutation of "The mirror of Islam" by Rajab').

Despite the upheaval caused by the Uprising of 1857, Abūlmanṣūr continued the tradition of epistolary debate. He modelled and advocated for the open exchange of ideas, and encouraged Muslims to study the Bible and works of Christian theology in order to defend their religious viewpoints. In *Navīd-i jāved*, for example, he refuted 17 common reasons why Muslims should not read the Bible (pp. 6-30) as a means to prepare sound arguments for their faith.

Abūlmanṣūr spent most of his adult life in Delhi, where he died in 1903.

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I. Ṣābrī, *Firangiyoṇ kā jāl* ['A trap from the Europeans'], Delhi, 2008
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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Navīd-i jāved
'Eternally good news'

DATE 1879
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Urdu

DESCRIPTION

This book is a comprehensive response to questions frequently raised by Christians about Islam and its teachings. Comprising 658 pages, it was published in 1879. A second edition was published in 1929 (this is used here), containing additional references to works cited. Abūlmanṣūr structures it in two 'tablets' (*alwāḥ*) in reference to Exodus 34:14-28, Exodus 20:1-17 and Deuteronomy 5:5-21, where the Ten Commandments are described as being revealed to Moses engraved on two tablets of stone. Each tablet contains subsections labelled *ekklēsias*, referring to the congregations of persons from different nations. The first tablet has two subsections, the second has ten. The overall concern of the book is the revelations given to the various nations referred to in the Qur'an (*Navīd-i jāved*, pp. 6-10).

In the first subsection (pp. 9-12) of the first tablet (pp. 9-65) Abūlmanṣūr emphasises that the Qur'an must be taken as the gauge by which to measure the contents and teachings of other revealed scriptures, the Torah, Psalms and Gospel. He notes, for example, that there is no reason to accept the Jewish belief that Jews will not be subject to judgement as they are the children of God, because it can be seen that they face hardships, disabilities, diseases and decay like the other nations of the world and no special treatment is given to them by the Almighty. Even though they will be granted eternal life according to the particular covenant made by God with them, the Qur'an compares them to animals that carry a load

of books but do not benefit from them, as they fail to understand the real teachings of their religion (p. 12).

In the second subsection (pp. 12-65), Abūlmanṣūr urges Muslims to acquire knowledge of other religions, adducing 17 reasons in support. He opposes a statement attributed to the second Caliph ʿUmar that forbids the study of scriptures other than the Qur'an and favours instead a saying of the Prophet transmitted by Abū Hurayra, 'Talk about the Children of Israel and there is nothing wrong' (p. 13).

The first tablet emphasises the importance of the Qur'an for gaining a correct and authentic understanding of the stories and teachings mentioned in the Old Testament, except for the Psalms. It also aims to convince Muslims to learn about other religious traditions through the lens of Islam and argues that there is nothing in Islam that prohibits them from studying other religions.

The second tablet (pp. 65-603) consists of ten subsections which each address a particular controversy among Christians and Muslims. The third and fourth, for example, briefly discuss the issue of alteration of scripture (*taḥrīf*), in which Abūlmanṣūr emphasises that the Bible in its current state is not the same as when it was originally revealed to the Hebrew prophets. He adds several proofs derived from historical, form, literary, textual and source criticism to support his argument. In the fifth subsection, he argues that Christians have actually made themselves lesser in the Kingdom of Heaven by setting aside the laws that command circumcision and sacrifice. Faith alone is not enough for eternal salvation; observance of the law (*sharīʿa*) is essential for entry into the Kingdom of Heaven. Here, Abūlmanṣūr also addresses the question of polygamy, because both missionaries and orientalists frequently criticise Islam and the Prophet for this practice. He argues that polygamy was not initiated by Islam, but rather its basis is found in the Bible. Islam has restricted it to the taking of four wives.

In subsection four (pp. 334-69), Abūlmanṣūr categorically rejects all the theological, hermeneutical and miracle-based arguments given by Christian theologians and philosophers to prove the divinity of Christ. He refers to passages from the Bible, including 1 Timothy 2:5, Mark 13:32, Luke 2:52, Luke 2:4 and Matthew 18:21, to argue that Jesus was merely a human being and not divine, interpreting them to support this claim. For example, Mark 13:32 states that only God the Father knows the exact timing of the final day, which suggests that Jesus, lacking this knowledge, was only human. If Jesus were a divine being, he would have said that no one knows about this except the Father and the Son. He explains that while there

were many unitarian sects in early Christianity such as the Ebionites and Arians, with the passage of time one group who believed Jesus was divine made additions and alterations to the original revealed Gospels in order to justify their beliefs (p. 361). Lastly, he observes that Jesus's last words on the cross, 'O God, O God, why have you forsaken me?', clearly deny any divine status.

The fifth subsection (pp. 369-72) is concerned with distinguishing Jesus from God. Abūlmanṣūr argues that the threefold status of prophet, king and high priest attributed to the Son as the second Person of the Trinity is mistaken because there is no being in the Godhead other than God. However, Jesus does have the exalted status of prophet (p. 369).

In the sixth subsection (pp. 372-94), Abūlmanṣūr seeks to disprove the historicity of the crucifixion of Jesus and the claim that he rose from the dead on the third day. Referring extensively to the canonical Gospels, he argues that the resurrection was witnessed only by Jesus's companions and not by anyone outside. Paul, who was later included among Jesus's Apostles, claimed that over 500 people witnessed the resurrection of Christ (1 Corinthians 15:6), whereas Luke and Mark, who, according to Christian writers, wrote their Gospels based on the accounts of Paul and Peter, did not mention more than eleven (p. 374). The number given by Paul, Abūlmanṣūr claims, was an evident addition, which suggests that, if the resurrection accounts are open to question, then so are the accounts pertaining to the crucifixion. In addition, he argues that Christian clergy made additions not only to the scriptural texts but also to history books, such as that of Flavius Josephus, to include proofs of the resurrection (p. 375).

The seventh subsection (pp. 394-488) seeks to refute Christian claims that the Bible makes no predictions about Muḥammad. Abūlmanṣūr argues that scholars have identified numerous prophecies in both the Old and New Testaments concerning the final messenger, the four most important of which are Isaiah 19:19-23 (pp. 395-418), John 1:19-25 (pp. 418-29), Deuteronomy 18:15-18 (pp. 429-67) and John 14:16 (pp. 467-88). For example, regarding the passage in Isaiah, which talks about God being known in both Egypt and the land of the Assyrians and about a highway between them, he writes:

> No Muslim, Christian, Jew, or even idolater can deny that monotheism is practised in Egypt, and that Egyptians and Assyrians share the same religion, Islam. They worship the same One God, and Egyptians live in harmony with the Assyrians, just as Assyrians live in harmony with the

> Egyptians. They worship together in mosques and prayer halls, performing congregational prayers. There is no longer any danger of opposition or conflict between them. A great highway now exists between Egypt and Assyria, symbolising their mutual agreement and connection. Who can claim that anything remains unfulfilled in this prophecy? It clearly refers to the spread of Islam, as no other religion besides Islam has united Egypt and Assyria in such a way. (p. 397)

The eighth subsection (pp. 488-548) addresses the claim that Muḥammad, unlike earlier prophets, was not given any miracles to perform. Abūlmanṣūr emphasises that he not only performed miracles but also prophesied about future events that no historian can deny. Abūlmanṣūr discusses three miracles and seven prophecies (pp. 449-50).

The ninth subsection (pp. 548-86) is an answer to the objection that Islam was spread by jihad. Abūlmanṣūr stresses that jihad is carried out primarily to root out persecution and injustices in their many forms. It cannot be waged in the way of Allāh if certain ethical limits are ignored because moral values have to be given priority in all circumstances. Christians, on the contrary, have used all forms of persecution to spread their faith. Inhabitants of the region of Prussia, for example, were forced to adopt Christianity following a long succession of massacres. But Islam has been tolerant of other religions (pp. 552-3).

In the tenth subsection (pp. 586-603) Abūlmanṣūr compares two sacred places, the tabernacle in the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem and the Kaʿba in Mecca, and two nations, the Jews and the Arabs. He notes that the tabernacle was destroyed several times by invaders but when the Aksumite (Ethiopian) general Abraha attacked the Kaʿba, God Himself intervened and destroyed his army with a flock of birds (p. 588). Furthermore, throughout history the Arabs have retained their original status and numbers while the Jews continue to decrease in number.

The second tablet contains detailed criticisms from Abūlmanṣūr of Christian beliefs and a defence of Islamic teachings through rigorous analysis of verses from the Bible and historical argumentation. In it, he addresses such issues as the alteration of the Bible (*taḥrīf*), the humanity of Jesus and the authenticity of the crucifixion and resurrection accounts. He also refutes claims against the prophethood of Muḥammad and the alleged lack of miracles attributed to him, using both biblical prophecies and Islamic sources. His aim is to expose distortions in Christian theology and to assert the legitimacy and universality of the message of Islam.

Navīd-i jāved contains a wealth of information about the Muslim defence of Islam and refutation of Christianity. The choice of issues made by Abūlmanṣūr and the rationale he adopts allow important insights to be gained into the complex interrelations between the sources, scriptural and other, that he consulted in defence of his religious position. He presents an Islamised version of Christian teachings and, in doing so, reveals his own understanding of Islam and its doctrines. Thus, he presumably dates the corruption of Christianity to a period after the Apostles in order to defend their honesty because they are mentioned in the Qur'an, and also maintains that the People of the Book did not corrupt the actual text of their scripture but rather its meanings by misinterpreting verses.

SIGNIFICANCE

The work provides a survey of the questions and responses that were broadly given in the polemical literature of the 19th century. When it was published, it was warmly received in Muslim circles as a refutation and a fitting response to the intellectual challenges presented by Christians. Imdād Ṣābrī notes that after Raḥmatullāh Kairānavī settled in Mecca, Abūlmanṣūr Dihlavī became the major voice responding to Christian objections against Islam (*Firangiyoṇ kā jāl*, p. 123). His importance among his contemporaries is evident from the fact that he participated in the famous debate held at Mela Khudā Shanāsī in 1876 alongside Muḥammad Qāsim Nānautavī. As well as being a skilled debater, he also established an institute where he trained students for debates with missionaries. Present-day debaters in Pakistan still use his arguments: for instance, Khawar Rasheed Butt refers to him in his interpretation of Deuteronomy 18:18 to argue that it refers to Muḥammad (Khawar Rasheed Butt, *Mānind Mūsā*, Lahore, 2021, p. 81).

PUBLICATIONS

Muḥammad Abūlmanṣūr Dihlavī, *Navīd-i jāved*, Delhi, 1879

Muḥammad Abūlmanṣūr Dihlavī, *Navīd-i jāved*, Delhi, 1929 (the edition used here); 20744 (digitised version available through Chugtai Public Library)

STUDIES

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A. Powell, '"Pillar of a new faith". Christianity in late-nineteenth century Punjab from the perspective of a convert from Islam', in R. Frykenberg and R. Eric (eds), *Christians and missionaries in India. Cross-cultural communication since 1500*, London, 2003, 223-55

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Taṣḥiḥ al-taʾwīl fī radd-i alā 'Tafsīr al-mukāshfa'
'Correction of the explanation, in refutation of "Interpretation of the Book of Revelation"'

DATE Unknown; before 1903
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Urdu

DESCRIPTION

Abūlmanṣūr wrote *Taṣḥiḥ al-taʾwīl* ('Correction of the explanation') in response to ʿImāduddīn Lāhiz's *Tafsīr al-mukāshfa* ('Interpretation of the Book of Revelation'), which had been published in 1870 (giving a *terminus post quem* for Abūlmanṣūr's undated work). *Taṣḥiḥ al-taʾwīl*, which is only 44 pages long, is a response to ʿImāduddīn's criticism of claims made by Muslims that references to Islam and Muḥammad can be found in the biblical Book of Revelation. It has no chapter divisions, though it can be divided into three parts.

In the first part, Abūlmanṣūr outlines the nature of the Book of Revelation and explains that, since it is supposed to be a dream vision of its author John (Revelation 1:10), its meaning can be interpreted in different ways. To demonstrate this, he examines many passages from the book, together with ʿImāduddīn's commentary, and reinterprets them to show that it is possible and legitimate to discern in them references to the supremacy of Islam, its teachings and its founder. An example is his discussion of ʿImāduddīn's interpretation of Revelation 3:3, in the fifth of

the seven letters at the beginning of the book, to the Church in Sardis. Abūlmanṣūr quotes ʿImāduddīn as saying:

> If you will not repent I will come upon you with wrath like a thief and at that time you will be destroyed completely; the time for repentance will end, for it is my law that I destroy the mischief of one who is mischievous. (*Taṣḥiḥ*, p. 6)

He points out that this passage does not allow ʿImāduddīn to say that this church faced anything more than threats, which is untrue because the community was in fact annihilated and no longer exists. In the same vein, he denounces ʿImāduddīn's reading of Revelation 7:9, which ignores what Abūlmanṣūr sees as an evident prophecy about Islam and Muḥammad. The great multitude of all nations, tribes, peoples and tongues referred to in the verse can, he claims, only be Muslims who have believed in the Prophet; they come from all nations and countries, and they alone will be eligible to stand before God. Arabia is famous for its palm branches, and this prophecy, which mentions the multitude 'with palm branches in their hands', is referring to Muslims (*Taṣḥiḥ*, p. 11).

In the second part, Abūlmanṣūr focuses on ʿImāduddīn's commentary on Revelation 9, where the latter applies its symbolic language to denounce Islam, Muḥammad and both Arab Muslims and the Roman Catholic Church. In interpreting Revelation 9:1, for example, ʿImāduddīn argues that the fallen star mentioned there stands for Muḥammad and that the keys to 'the bottomless pit' were given to him. Abūlmanṣūr gives two responses to show the error of this thinking. First, the place where the star falls is not identified so there is no reason to link this to 7th-century Arabia. Second, many in the Roman Catholic Church understood the fallen star to be the reformer Martin Luther and there is no reason to change this. In addition, in his interpretation of Revelation 9:2 ʿImāduddīn takes the smoke rising up from the pit to symbolise the Qur'an and its teachings, and the sun and sky, which were darkened by the smoke, to be the Christian kingdom and its inhabitants. Abūlmanṣūr responds that this is a forced interpretation because other interpreters could interpret smoke as referring to erroneous teachings within Christianity, such as those produced by Luther and his translation of the Bible, which polluted Christendom (p. 14). In the interpretation of verse 6, which mentions people longing for death because of their suffering, ʿImāduddīn claims that this refers to the Muslims who persecuted Christians living under their rule, but Abūlmansūr replies that such persecution is not supported by historical evidence.

These responses show how Abūlmansūr challenges ʿImāduddīn's attempt to link biblical texts with events and personalities of his own time. He claims that, just as these verses can be applied to criticise Islamic teaching, they could also be used against Protestant Christianity and its founder. In the last verse of chapter 9, which refers to humankind not repenting of their sins, ʿImāduddīn criticises the adherents and leaders of the Roman Catholic Church for their loss of Christian lands to the Turks. Instead of fighting against the Turks, they fought against one another, and subsequently these 'immoral people' killed many 'righteous souls'. Abūlmanṣūr reprimands ʿImāduddīn for his chastisement of Catholics and reminds him that Protestant Christians inherited their religious and scriptural traditions from the Catholic Church (p. 35).

The third part of the work, adduces more examples to show further errors in *Tafsīr al-mukāshfa*. Regarding Revelation 20:10, which mentions Satan being thrown into the lake of fire, he says that ʿImāduddīn is mistaken in stating that Satan will be released from the lake because there is no hint of this in the text. In Revelation 16:13, ʿImāduddīn interprets the dragon, the beast and the false prophet as symbolising Satan, the pope and Muḥammad, although in other verses he interprets the beast differently as Satan, thus compromising his own hermeneutic principles.

SIGNIFICANCE

Abūlmanṣūr's engagement with Christian scripture in this work is the result of a remarkable depth of biblical knowledge, which has been rivalled by only a few other Muslim scholars throughout Islamic history. In India, few Muslims would have paid much attention to the Bible due to traditional discouragements and also because Christianity was not perceived as a significant threat until the arrival of missionaries and their persistent attacks. As the great Muslim debater Raḥmatullāh Kairānavī noted, this missionary challenge necessitated a more robust defence of Islamic beliefs, and here Abūlmanṣūr responds.

PUBLICATIONS

Nāṣir-ul-Dīn Muḥammad Abūlmanṣūr, *Taṣḥiḥ al-taʾwīl fī radd-i alā Tafsīr al-mukāshfa*, Delhi, n.d.

STUDIES

Ali, 'Christian-Muslim relations', pp. 159-61

Farman Ali

Annie Hunter Small

Ann Hunter Small

DATE OF BIRTH 26 December 1857
PLACE OF BIRTH Redding, Stirlingshire
DATE OF DEATH 7 February 1945
PLACE OF DEATH Edinburgh

BIOGRAPHY

Ann (Annie) Hunter Small was born on 26 December 1857 in the village of Redding, in Polmont parish, Stirlingshire. She was the eldest daughter of the Reverend John Small (1833-99), who was a missionary of the Free Church of Scotland, and Nathina Hunter (1824/5-1913), who herself taught her daughter for the first six years of her schooling. From the age of six, she lived with her parents in Poona, India, where she began to learn the local language and establish a fondness for the country and its people. When she was 13 she continued her education in Walthamstow, Essex, at the School for the Daughters of Missionaries.

In 1876, Small returned to India as a missionary herself, working for the Free Church of Scotland Ladies' Society for Female Education in India and South Africa. Her first two years were spent in Chindwara, a place so remote that she resigned from the mission for a time in order to recuperate in the familiar surroundings of Poona, where she took up an interim role at the mission school from 1879 to 1884. After a furlough in Scotland, she returned to Poona to serve for another five years. As she indicates in her works, Small developed many friendships with her pupils, several of whom were Muslim women. She was dedicated to the missionary work of teaching and witnessing to her faith, but she refrained from being forceful in either.

In 1892, health concerns led Small to return to Scotland, where she was offered an opportunity to employ her skill and passion in teaching and mentoring women who were being trained for missionary work. In 1894, she was appointed the first principal of the Free Church of Scotland Women's Missionary Training Institute in Edinburgh (later known as St Colm's Women's Missionary College of the United Free Church of Scotland), and for the next 20 years she worked to prepare Christian women for missionary work. Even after she retired in 1913, Small continued

to be an influential speaker at conferences. She also served as the secretary of Commission V at the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference in 1910.

Her early works recount her experiences in India, and it is in these that the stories of her friendships with Indian Muslims, particularly women, can be found. She also contributed writings on Islam and Buddhism to the Student Christian Movement. Her works are noteworthy for their preference for respectful interfaith dialogue. Small died on 7 February 1945. Her ashes are buried in the family grave at Arbroath Abbey.

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Three accounts of a Christian woman living among Muslims in India

DATE 1888
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION
Three works by Small, *Islam in India* (1888), *Brave life* (1891) and *Suwarta and other sketches of Indian life* (1894), capture the personal and informal qualities of her experience of Islam and Muslims in India.

Small took to writing *Islam in India* after being prompted by questions about Islam during her last visit to Scotland. The brief 32-page booklet opens with a memory of visiting a mosque in an unnamed city, which Small describes as 'a true picture of the faith [...] beautiful, but empty, cold without life' (p. 8). She gives an account of 'Mahomed' that depicts him as unique and 'full of strange contradictions' (p. 9). She highlights his faithful and enduring relationship with his first wife Khadīja, and outlines his prophetic career up to the time of his death. She outlines Islamic beliefs in three main points: strict monotheism, a high view of Muḥammad as the last prophet, and the Qur'an as the final divine revelation. She also adds some historical notes about the spread of Islam, its arrival in India and the current situation of Muslims there.

A quarter of this short work is devoted to describing and critiquing the situation of Muslim women. Small particularly highlights and criticises the way in which Islamic law permits and enables inequality between the sexes and the abuse of wives within marriages, and also expresses her disdain for the marriage laws that allow men to marry and divorce as they please.

Small shares her observations and thoughts regarding the small amount of missionary work taking place among Muslims in India. Christian missionaries often avoid working among them, and yet those who come prepared and have learned about Muslims and their faith become 'deeply attached to them' (p. 22). Small advises that those who engage in religious dialogue with Muslims in India should approach it with a 'spirit of love' and a readiness to seek common ground rather than engaging in disputes; nevertheless, she maintains a clear emphasis on speaking of Jesus. She further recommends reading works such as T.P. Hughes's *Notes on Muhammadanism* and William Muir's *Life of Mahomed*, and also knowing the Qur'an.

In *Brave life*, a 93-page work, Small gives an account of the life of the *bai saheb*, whom she identifies as the dignified 90-year-old mother of Abdulla Hoosein and a friend of hers. The account traces the life of the *bai saheb* from when she was 10 into her adult life as a mother of two and wife of an avaricious man. She also records the *bai saheb*'s observations and insights into the idolatrous practices of Muslims who have little or no education. She does not, however, credit education for inspiring faith, since her English-educated son-in-law has rejected the need for faith entirely.

Small wrote *Suwarta and other sketches of Indian life* after her return to Britain. Comprising 175 pages, it contains a series of vignettes from her years of missionary work in India. In the preface, she asserts that these

sketches are of 'history and not fiction', despite the omission of precise places and dates 'for obvious reasons' (p. v). Several of the shared stories involve her encounters and relationships with Indian Muslims, and a great many include comments from Muslims with whom she converses. Particular vignettes to be noted are 'A family group: characters and scenes from a Mahometan zenana', 'Rahimunissa', 'A Moslem revival of religion', 'A moulvi's story', 'The daughter of the moon', and 'Ashabi'. These sketches capture her reflections on Muslim life, including the characteristics of devout Muslims, the realities faced by teenage brides in arranged marriages, and the role and view of women in Muslim society.

SIGNIFICANCE

Against the backdrop of the growing interest in the academic study of Islam in 19th-century Europe, Small's sketches offer a personal dimension to the history of Christian-Muslim relations in India, derived from her own experiences and observations. While she maintains a strong evangelistic spirit for the Christian faith, her sincere respect towards Muslims is evident in her accounts.

Islam in India, Small's first work on the subject, presents a more candid view of Islam than her later *Islam*, written in 1905. Here, she is unreserved in her criticism of Muḥammad and Islamic law, especially the laws relating to marriage and the absence of women's rights. Though her account of Muḥammad begins positively, she appears to suggest that his ambition got the better of him later in his life; she describes many of the later revelations as being made for Muḥammad's own 'comfort and convenience' (p. 11), and judges that he replaced the initial message of peace with the strict law of Islam (p. 13). She strongly expresses her view of the injustice done to women under Islamic law, to the extent of calling for advocates for Muslim women among her readers. Yet, while her criticisms of Islamic laws are severe, Small maintains a love for the people. She conveys a burden for outreach to the Muslims in India and emphasises the need for an informed approach to interfaith dialogue. It may be significant that her first work on Islam was written while she was still living in India, and at a time when her work among Muslims there was very limited.

Brave life and *Suwarta* both testify to the friendship and respect that Small shared with Muslims in India. *Brave life* especially captures her high regard for the Muslim women she knew and her understanding that the 'inner life of a woman' and the burdens of life that all women bravely endured were similar, regardless of place and faith and, in this respect, they shared 'one common sisterhood' (p. 15). Small maintained hope that

these Muslim women would come to know the 'truer faith' of Christianity (p. 93), but did not treat them with condescension. In *Suwarta*, the dialogues recorded provide rich snapshots of Muslim perceptions and assumptions about Christians and the Christian faith. Among the sketches are accounts of both Muslims who sought Christianity and Muslims who remained firm in their own convictions. Despite differences in faith, amiable relationships and dialogue were commonly shared between Small and Indian Muslims, particularly her students. These sketches supplement scholarly accounts of Christian-Muslim relations by providing glimpses into the lived history of a Christian woman and her Muslim neighbours.

PUBLICATIONS

Annie H. Small, *Islam in India* (Woman's work in heathen lands, in connection with the Free Church of Scotland, booklet no. 27), Paisley, 1888

Annie H. Small, *Brave life*, London, 1891

Annie H. Small, *Suwarta and other sketches of Indian life*, London and New York, 1894, repr. Charleston SC, 2010, Norderstedt, 2018; 100495534 (digitised version available through Hathi Trust)

STUDIES

T. Aftab, 'Extracts from archives. Women's history', *Pakistan Journal of Women's Studies. Alam-e-Niswan* 20 (2013) 117-30

Islam

DATE 1905
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

In this 72-page book, Small presents her version of a basic introduction to Islam for Christians, particularly those preparing to be missionaries. Divided into two main sections, 'Islam' and 'Islam and Christianity', together with a shorter third section entitled 'The coming battle', it is admittedly not a comprehensive study, but rather an overview of the major tenets of the Islamic faith and a comparison with aspects of Christianity. Recognising Islam as undeniably a 'world power' and explaining it as having been influenced by the 'least true, the least pure' kind of Christianity (p. 5), Small encourages Christians to study and understand Islam in order

to be prepared to engage with it in a 'worthily and Christianly' manner (p. 6). In this later work, she adopts a more instructive tone than in her first piece on the subject, *Islam in India*, though she maintains her balance between a sympathetic approach to Islam and also calling Christians to unite and take up their responsibility to share the truth about Christ with Muslims.

The first section, on Islam, opens with a translation of Q 1, 'the great prayer of Islam', and of Q 93 (mistakenly referred to as Q 96). Each chapter in this section starts with translations of verses from the Qur'an without identification. Similarly, the section on Islam and Christianity opens with quotations from the Bible and other Christian works.

In ch. 1, Small gives a biographical account of 'the apostle of Islam' that is more eirenic than her earlier account in *Islam in India*. Here, she refuses to engage in the common practice of attacking his character and instead advises her readers to gain cultural understanding rather than express condemnation. Even so, her interpretation of Muḥammad's prophetic status would still be offensive to Muslims, for she frequently presents Islam as his own work, which he was determined to establish, rather than as a divine message.

In ch. 2, 'The great thoughts of Islam', Small addresses the theological subjects of God, the Qur'an, sin and judgement. Though she indicates that 'the Idea' is not new, she argues that 'the God of Muhammad' is clearly different from the God of Judaism and of Christianity. In ch. 3, 'The religious life in Islam', Small explains the Five Pillars of Islam (though she does not refer to them as such) and also includes comments on 'social morality'. On the Hajj, she notes how this experience fosters solidarity between the various sects of Islam, but also criticises it as 'the least spiritual thing in the whole system' because it appears to promote idolatry (p. 39). On Muslim social morality, Small presents a positive account and even comments that the laws regarding women's property are 'in advance of the law of Great Britain' (p. 41). In ch. 4, she again praises the solidarity found among Muslims, particularly as this is demonstrated in their response to 'the Unbeliever' and to someone who has left Islam.

The second section focuses more on Christian thought and is more apologetic, though here Small also draws on aspects of Islam to exhort the Christian Church. For instance, she presents the 'Brotherhood' of Islam as an example that contrasts with the disunity of Christianity (p. 59) and 'the missionary impulse' and Muslims' pride in confessing their faith as a rebuke to Christian inactivity (p. 61). She also boldly criticises Christianity's reputation of materialistic imperialism and suggests instead

that the Church should be active about 'the kingdom vision' of Christ (p. 61).

In the third section, contrary to what might be suggested by her sympathetic approach to Islam, Small remains adamant that the two religions are mutually exclusive and that 'a religious war' is inevitable (p. 61). Yet, rather than taking up arms or even engaging in debate by comparing sacred texts, Small urges the Church to acknowledge its sin of spreading the false doctrine 'that Christianity and Islam are sister religions' (p. 67) and to focus simply on sharing news about Christ and trusting the results to Him (p. 72).

SIGNIFICANCE

Small's account of Islam here is not particularly novel; even her comment that aspects of Islam are an indictment against the failings of the Christian Church is an echo of popular opinion. Nevertheless, her work does provide an example of what was being taught about Islam, and with what attitude the subject was being taught, in the Protestant missionary training schools that were emerging at the end of the 19th century. The accuracy of Small's portrayal of Islam, specifically the 'personal claim' of Muḥammad and the solidarity found among Muslims, may be disputed, but her example of advocacy for cross-cultural sensitivity is instructive and reflective of the changing attitudes of Western Christians towards Islam in the latter half of the 19th century; this attitude and her unwavering Christian conviction find parallels in the reports from the Second and the Third Decennial Missionary Conferences that were held in India in 1882-3 and 1892-3 respectively.

Unlike her other works reflecting Muslim life, Small's focus here is pedagogical, and her perception of Islam is that its beliefs and practices have not changed since the time of Muḥammad (p. 41). This work is most useful for showing how Protestant students in the early 20th century were being trained for engagement in missionary work among Muslims.

PUBLICATIONS

Annie H. Small, *Islam*, London, 1905; 006524838 (digitised version available through Hathi Trust)

Eunice Chow

James Monro

DATE OF BIRTH 25 November 1838
PLACE OF BIRTH Edinburgh
DATE OF DEATH 28 January 1920
PLACE OF DEATH Chiswick, Middlesex

BIOGRAPHY

James Monro was born in Edinburgh on 25 November 1838. He completed studies at the University of Edinburgh when he was 18, receiving the gold medal in philosophy, and then studied law in Berlin. In 1858, he joined the Indian Civil Service in Bengal, where he learned the Bengali language. He married Ruth Littlejohn in 1863, after which he worked as a magistrate and 'collector' in Calcutta from 1864 to 1874. He soon became a district judge and, in 1878, was appointed inspector-general of police in Bengal. In 1883, he became commissioner of the presidency division of Bengal.

Monro returned home in 1884, where a second career began for him in London when he was appointed to take charge of the criminal investigation department of the Metropolitan Police. For the next six years, his work included investigation of the Fenian bombing campaign and also the case of Jack the Ripper (whom he did not catch). He demonstrated his strong evangelical faith in some of the initiatives in which he participated. In 1887, he took charge of the Metropolitan Police special branch and, at the end of 1888, was appointed Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police. In 1890, he named the new headquarters on the Thames Embankment 'New Scotland Yard'.

Monro resigned from the Metropolitan Police in 1890, after working as commissioner for only 17 months. At the age of 52, he made arrangements to return to India, where he had been a member of the Church Missionary Society's committee. He now wished to join the CMS, but he eventually set out for Calcutta in November 1891 with his family of six to undertake independent mission work. He established and self-funded the Ranaghat Medical Mission, located some 50 kilometres north of Calcutta.

Monro gave public addresses to Hindus, published a series of Christian tracts with Muslims in mind, and wrote on Islam in India for missionary publications. He was an advocate of medical missions together with 'the plain and full preaching of the Gospel by the distribution of suitable

literature among Moslems' ('Notes', p. 328). When he returned to Britain in 1905, he transferred the mission to CMS ownership, while his son Charles and daughter Daisy, both of whom were physicians, continued the work in Ranaghat. (Daisy and her husband Charles Neill were the parents of Stephen Neill, who became Anglican Bishop of Tirunelveli.) Monro died in Chiswick, Middlesex, on 28 January 1920.

MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION

J. Monro, 'History of police pensions', *New Review* 3 (September 1890) 194-207
J. Monro, 'London police', *North American Review* 151 (November 1890) 617-18
J. Monro, 'Compromise and an expedient in religion. Address to Hindu gentlemen delivered at Krishnagar on May 18th, 1892', *Church Missionary Intelligencer*, new series 18 (1893) 8-15
'Editorial notes', *Church Missionary Intelligencer*, new series 18 (1893) 65-72 (report of a meeting with Monro, p. 69)
J. Monro, 'Notes on Islam in India', *Missionary Review of the World*, new series 16 (1903) 321-8
J. Monro, 'The teaching of the higher criticism incompatible with missionary work', *The East and the West* 1 (1903) 413-25
E. Stock, *The history of the Church Missionary Society. Its environment, its men, and its work*, London, vol. 3, 1899, pp. 302, 366, 485; vol. 4, 1916, p. 234 (mentions Monro passing his mission on to his son Charles)
E.M. Jackson (ed.), *God's apprentice. The autobiography of Stephen Neill*, London, 1991, pp. 15-21, 41
M.C. Curthoys, art. 'Monro, James', in *ODNB*
D.B. Daughrity, *A worldly Christian. The life and times of Stephen Neill*, Cambridge, 2021, pp. 19-21

WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Two tracts questioning the sinlessness of Muḥammad

DATE 1902-3
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION
The doctrine of sinlessness was a flashpoint in Christian-Muslim polemics in 19th- and 20th-century India because it highlighted a difference between Christian and Muslim views of prophethood. While the Christian teaching

is that, although prophets speak the word of God, it is possible for them to sin, Muslim teaching is that prophets are sinless and so they claim that the reports in the Bible of some prophets sinning is evidence for its having been corrupted. James Monro entered the debate over this and attempted to demonstrate the inconsistency of the Muslim doctrine by using the Qur'an and Hadith against Muslim arguments.

He wrote *The teaching of the Moulvies as to the sinlessness of Mahommed* sometime (probably not long) before 1903. It is a short tract of 19 pages, a summary of a series of written exchanges with some Muslim clerics on the question of whether the Qur'an and Islamic tradition support the doctrine of the sinlessness of the prophets in general, and of Muḥammad in particular. He mentions at the beginning how he posed this question to a local *moulvī* in Santipore named Helaluddin. The cleric was unsure how to answer the question, so he referred Monro to the principal *moulvī* of the Calcutta Madrasa, 'Shamsh-ul-ulema Moulvie Ahmad', to whom Monro then wrote. Though Monro does not identify 'Moulvie Ahmad' in either this or the other tract discussed here, he was, in fact, the founder of the Aḥmadiyya, Mīrzā Ghulām Aḥmad of Qadian. This important detail was included in the title of a later edition of the two works.

In reply to Monro's enquiry, 'Moulvie Ahmad' asserts that the Qur'an teaches the sinlessness of Muḥammad in Q 36:4, which is addressed to an unnamed individual: 'You are one of the messengers, on the right path' (pp. 1-2). In reply to Aḥmad's letter, Monro notes that the qur'anic passage he cites does not clearly teach the sinlessness of Muḥammad, since faithful Muslims are also said to be on the right path, though this does not mean they are sinless. A few months later, Aḥmad sends another letter in which he quotes from Q 7, where it is stated that the prophets are exalted to degrees of wisdom and knowledge, Q 17, where it says 'We led them into our mercy, for they were righteous doers', and Q 23, where it says 'They were in our sight elect men and righteous doers' (pp. 2-3). To this, Monro replies that even the Qur'an teaches that many of these prophets sinned, and he presents various passages that describe these prophets sinning and asking for forgiveness (pp. 3-5). A year later, Aḥmad replies that sinlessness only applies to the prophets after they are commissioned as prophets. Before commissioning, they may have committed sins voluntarily or involuntarily, but after they are commissioned they are protected from major sins (both voluntary and involuntary), as well as voluntary minor sins, but not involuntary ones (pp. 5-6).

Monro replies by pointing out that many of the sins attributed to the prophets in the Qur'an took place after their commissioning, thus arguing

that Aḥmad's explanation does not work (pp. 6-9). Monro then goes on to list a number of places in the Qur'an that speak of the addressee (whom Monro understands to be Muḥammad) sinning and asking for forgiveness for his sins, showing that he is in no way different from any of the earlier prophets. Monro does the same with reports about Muḥammad in the Hadith collections *Mishkāt al-maṣābīḥ* and *Ḥayāt al-qulūb* (pp. 9-18).

At the end of the tract, Monro concludes that the Qur'an and Hadith cannot be used to teach the sinlessness of Muḥammad for seven reasons: 1. nowhere in the Qur'an is Muḥammad said to be sinless; 2. no sura says that the prophets are sinless; 3. many suras speak of the prophets' sinfulness; 4. many suras speak of the prophets seeking forgiveness for their sins; 5. many suras state that Muḥammad was a prophet just like the prophets before him; 6. many suras direct Muḥammad to seek forgiveness for his own sins; and 7. the Hadiths expressly assert Muḥammad's sinfulness (pp. 18-19). At the end of his short work, Monro also uses his conclusion to question whether Muḥammad, 'who is also in the Koran shown to be sinful', is able to 'give salvation from sin to any man' (p. 19).

The short four-page tract entitled 'Zanb and jurm. Or did Mahomed sin?' originally appeared as a letter in the Calcutta Christian periodical *Epiphany*. It was published by the Revd J. Pengwern Jones Sylbet. Although neither this nor the longer tract comes with a date of publication or mentions the other, it is noticeable that they are similar in content and that 'Zanb and jurm' contains 'pt. II' in its title. It seems to be an addendum to the other tract or a second part of it, explaining details about Arabic terms related to prophetic sins or sinlessness that appeared in the course of the exchange. As for dating, a response from the Muslim Sher Ali (the leading Aḥmadī Shīr ʿAlī, 1875-1947) refers to a letter from Monro on the subject, which was published in *Epiphany* on 29 November 1902 ('Controversy on the sinlessness of the prophets', *Review of Religions* 2/6 [1903] 226-47, p. 241).

The main focus of 'Zanb and jurm' is on two Arabic words in the Qur'an that are customarily translated into English as 'sin'. Monro notes the argument of many contemporary Muslim apologists that the word *zanb*, which is frequently imputed to Muḥammad in the Qur'an, only refers to 'the natural weakness of man for which he requires the strength and support of God'. This is contrasted with *jurm*, which, according to the apologists, means 'an act in violation of the commandments of God deserving to be punished'. This semantic argument is supported by the claim that the Qur'an specifies hellfire as the punishment for the *mujrim,* whereas no such punishment is assigned to the *muznib* (p. 1).

Monro replies to this argument by pointing out that, in contrast to what the Muslim apologists say, in many places throughout the Qur'an the word *zanb* is indeed used to refer to sin properly speaking, and not just human weakness. He quotes a litany of verses, including Q 55:39, which states, 'On that day neither man nor jinn shall be asked concerning his *zanb* (sin)', where it is absurd to understand *zanb* to mean anything other than sin (pp. 1-2). He does the same with regard to Q 27:78, 67:11, 12:29 and 91:14, arguing that the word obviously means sin in all these instances (pp. 2-3).

Next, Monro quotes the definition of *zanb* in the Arabic dictionary *Maheet al-maheet* (*Muḥīṭ al-muḥīṭ*) as 'the repeatedly looking into sin or crime or fault or iniquity in a state of sin' and 'the act of committing sin by a responsible agent, or the giving of an order that is contrary to the divine law'. He notes that, based on this definition, *zanb* is arguably even worse than *jurm* in its connotation of sin (p. 3). At the end of the tract, Monro concludes that the word *zanb* in the Qur'an refers

> a) to the sins of men and jinns which deserve punishment, b) to the sins of the wicked, who deserve the punishment of hell [...], c) to the sins of those in hell suffering punishment for not believing in their Lord, d) to the sins of lying, exciting to adultery, and calumniating a holy man, and e) to the sins of persons, who rejected the testimony and disregarded the orders of an apostle of God. (p. 4)

From this, he concludes that, when the Qur'an imputes *zanb* to Muḥammad and commands him to ask pardon for it, it must be taken to mean sin, and not mere human weakness.

SIGNIFICANCE

The teaching of the Moulvies as to the sinlessness of Mahommed was published in two editions, which are more or less identical in structure and argumentation.

While 'Zanb and jurm' is much shorter than the other tracts written by Monro, it is significant for showing the lengths to which Christian missionaries in India were willing to go in studying the lexicography of the Arabic terms in the Qur'an in order to furnish polemical arguments against Muslims. It is not clear how much Arabic Monro actually knew, though his discussion in this short tract shows that he understood it well enough to argue comfortably with Muslim clerics and scholars about the original Arabic of the Qur'an, rather than just English translations. It also

shows that missionaries were both able and willing to use the resources of the classical Muslim tradition to undermine Islamic doctrines such as the sinlessness of Muḥammad, as evidenced by the sources Monro cites.

Monro's questioning of the Islamic doctrine of the sinlessness of prophets drew significant reactions from Mīrzā Ghulām Aḥmad and Shīr ʿAlī, leaders of the Aḥmadiyya headquartered in Qadian, Punjab. Aḥmad himself evidently opened the subject in 1902 in the pages of the *Review of Religions* with articles on 'Sinlessness' in May (*Review of Religions* 1/5 [1902] 165-208) and 'The teaching of Gospels as to the sinlessness of Jesus' in November (*Review of Religions* 1/11 [1902] 446-64), and Monro was first mentioned by name by Shīr ʿAlī in June 1903 in his article 'Controversy on the sinlessness of the prophets' (*Review of Religions* 2/6 [1903] 226-47, pp. 227, 230, etc.), where his exegesis of *zanb* and *jurm* is answered (pp. 229-36). In four further rejoinders in vols 2 and 3 of *Review of Religions* between February 1903 and February 1904, Monro was mentioned by name in the titles of articles.

Among Christian authors, William St Clair Tisdall listed *The teaching of the maulvies as to the sinlessness of Mahomed* in *A manual of the leading Muḥammadan objections to Christianity* (London, 1904) in an appendix on 'useful books on Islam' in European languages, adding that some of Monro's tracts were also published in Urdu and Arabic (p. 229). A sign that its arguments were known more widely is that the Methodist minister Émile Brès Fils (1883-1964), who came from Jersey, mentioned it in his *Que penser de l'Islam?* (Paris, 1909), which brings together Christian, mainly Protestant, views on Islam.

PUBLICATIONS

J. Monro, *The teaching of the moulvies as to the sinlessness of Mahommed*, Calcutta, c. 1903, c. 1903[2]

J. Monro, 'Zanb and jurm. Or did Mahomed sin?', in G.H. Rouse (ed.), *Tracts on Islam*, Calcutta, c. 1903, repr. Monash, 2017

J. Monro, *Moslem teaching as to the sinlessness of Mahomed*, Calcutta, 1903

J. Monro, *The teaching of the maulvies as to the sinlessness of Mahomed, pt. II, being an exposure of the fictitious theory of Mirza Gulam Ahmad of Qadyan, on the Koranic meaning of zanb and jurm*, Calcutta, c. 1903

Three articles related to Islam

DATE 1893-1903
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

Monro wrote the three articles, 'Compromise as an expedient in religion', 'Notes on Islam in India' and 'The teaching of the higher criticism incompatible with missionary work', over a 10-year period between 1893 and 1903, after he returned to India. 'Notes on Islam in India' is directly concerned with Christian engagement with Muslims, while the other two articles reveal further aspects of Monro's missionary thinking that relate to Islam.

'Compromise as an expedient in religion' (eight pages) is the transcript of a public address Monro gave to an audience of Hindus at Krishnagar in 1892, during the first year after his return to India. Its main point is that Hindus, particularly Brahmans, had dealt with historical challenges to their religion through a 'policy' of accommodation (p. 8). Monro describes the Hindu response to the Muslim conquest of India as one among a number of 'compromises' (pp. 11-13). He posits a Hinduism prior to caste distinctions and contrasts this with later Brahmanism, and then considers the 'protest' of Buddhism (pp. 10-11), the theism of Islam, and the 'assault' of Western ideas (pp. 13). He concludes with an appeal to Christianity.

Monro asserts that Islam brought 'a very decided check' to the Brahman 'love of caste, which means simply love of power' (p. 11). The cause of 'many Hindus joining the ranks of Islam', he insists (citing the 50 million Muslims in India in 1892), was not 'the violence of the conquerors' but rather the attraction of 'religious equality with the conquerors'. The consequence of the 'pride of caste' among Brahmans was that millions of Hindus deserted them because they 'found in Islam that removal of hereditary inequality and hopeless slavery which Brahmanism denied to them' (p. 12). The Brahmans responded with two kinds of compromise: first, they revived the idea of theism, claiming that its roots can be found in the Vedas, and surrendered the common Hindus and the lower castes with their polytheism 'to Islamism'; and, second, they 'protected themselves and their families from the violence of the conqueror' by adopting the system of *purdah*. Monro asserts that the harsh restrictions on women 'adopted in the days of Mohammedan oppression and violence' were not known in Hinduism before the coming of Islam and were being thrown off at the end of the 19th century (pp. 12-13). He then questions his audience

about the consequences to Hinduism of the policy of compromise for which he has argued.

Monro begins the eight-page article 'Notes on Islam in India' with the claim that, while the British government in India attempts to pursue an attitude of neutrality towards religious questions among its subjects, missionaries 'cannot remain neutral' (p. 321). Writing after 10 years of medical mission work at Ranaghat, he then sketches out some of the attitudes he believes a missionary should adopt. The final part of the essay addresses the practicalities of missionary work among Muslims in particular.

Monro finds Islam in India to have been 'immobile' because, he asserts, it has resisted 'civilisation, progress, [and] modification of religious views' (p. 322), though this is being challenged at the beginning of the 20th century. He suggests as an example of this the Young Turks movement in the Ottoman Empire who want more than the teaching of the mullahs. In India, there is also a movement among some Muslims towards more liberal views and Western knowledge, represented by the college at Aligarh. The Aligarh movement is not appreciated by the orthodox Muslim leadership, but Monro sees much to be praised in developments of more liberal-minded Muslims.

Other movements Monro highlights among Muslims in India include the college at Deoband (the Deobandi Darul Uloom), which he suggests was established for 'proselytising purposes' (p. 325), and the rise and growth of the Aḥmadiyya in the Punjab, which he characterises as a consequence of weakness and decadence in Indian Islam. He seems to complain about the Muslim missionaries who appeal to Hindus to unite with Muslims against Christianity, and charges Muslim proselytisers with offering 'inducements', the very methods that Christian missionaries have been accused of using. Monro adds that offering people temporal advantages in an effort to induce them to embrace Christianity is 'a system which every right-minded Christian will join with non-Christians in condemning' (p. 326).

In the final section of the article, Monro challenges Christian missionary societies to take up the 'great work to be done among Muslims'. At the turn of the 20th century, he is hopeful and encouraged, citing '(t)he number of valuable converts who have come from Islam' (p. 327). He appeals for more 'consecrated men and women' to be trained for mission work among Muslims, which in his view includes learning Arabic and being 'thoroughly conversant with the Koran and the commentaries thereon'. He also makes clear the two methods he favours most: a united effort to

produce 'suitable literature for circulation' among Muslims and medical missions (p. 328).

'The teaching of the higher criticism' (13 pages) addresses a widespread phenomenon among Christian missionaries at the beginning of the 20th century but also applies its implications to daily encounter between Christians and Muslims in India. Monro understands that there has been a virtual consensus among missionaries about the reliability of the Bible and 'until recent times [... with] no doubt as to the message' (p. 413). If that traditional consensus is to be displaced by 'modern' or 'higher' criticism of the Bible, he asks, how is missionary work to proceed?

Monro mentions such matters as critical teaching about the Pentateuch and particularly the prophetic books – especially Isaiah – and a depreciation of the status of the Old Testament in general. The central message of missionaries about Jesus from the New Testament, he writes, is put in doubt if the Old Testament is not accepted. The 'critics' Monro has in mind are 'the disciples of the Tübingen teachers of previous years', the *Encyclopaedia Biblica* and the Assembly of the United Free Church in Scotland (pp. 417-18). If such sources are taken into account, he asks, what message is the missionary to deliver? The question extends to the conduct of missionaries among the 'native Christian Church' in countries such as India. Should they begin to teach the critical approach there? Monro presents as examples the splitting of Isaiah into two parts and the theories about Isaiah proposed by Ernest Renan (pp. 420-1).

Concerning religious dialogue with Hindus and Muslims, Monro again queries: How will the critical theory of the Bible help? In his experience, the missionaries' opponents take the thinking of the critics as a weapon which they 'joyfully seize as forged for them to make their attacks on Christianity more effective' (p. 422). Muslims already deny that the Pentateuch is the genuine word of God given to Moses. How would a missionary committed to the critical school respond? As a case in point, he discusses a current article from the periodical *Review of Religions*, published by Mīrzā Ghulām Aḥmad and the Aḥmadiyya (pp. 423-5).

The article ends with a series of questions along similar lines, which seemingly reveal a good deal of agitation within Monro about the acceptance of 'higher criticism' among Western Christians and perhaps some of his fellow (though unnamed) missionaries in India.

SIGNIFICANCE

Written during the transition from the 19th into the 20th century, these essays indicate a number of points of change among evangelical Christians in their engagement with Indian Muslims. They strike a note of hope

for communication and dialogue while at the same time they point to rumours of change in theological approach among western Christians.

One of the few contemporary sources of comment on Monro's work, Eugene Stock's *The history of the Church Missionary Society* (London, 1899) understands Monro's 1892 lecture to Hindus at Krishnagar as signifying 'an open door for English lectures and addresses', which a certain Revd A.J. Santer, who was present at the lecture, supports when he writes about the careful attention paid by the audience to Monro's argument (*History*, vol. 3, p. 485). Also, Monro's positive view of the number and quality of converts from Islam ('Notes on Islam in India', p. 327) was affirmed by ʿImāduddīn Lāhiz (d. 1900; *CMR* 24, 506-41) in a paper written in 1893 (*Mohammedan converts to Christianity in India*, trans. H.M. Clark, London, 1910, pp. 6-16). But change was imminent. Monro's essay on 'higher criticism' reports that some missionaries were adopting new attitudes towards European scholarly writing on the Bible, and it shows a degree of consternation about this on his part. He was not a biblical scholar, but he perceived that the approach to the Bible adopted in higher criticism furnished Muslim opponents of Christian teachings with a 'weapon' ('Teaching of the higher criticism', p. 422). Indeed, well before Monro, in the mid-19th century, Raḥmatullāh Kairānavī (d. 1891; *CMR* 24, 253-60) and his colleague Muḥammad Wazīr Khān (*CMR* 24, 237-45) made extensive use of European critical scholarship in their *Iʿjāz-i ʿĪsavī* (1854) to oppose missionary activity in Agra, and polemical treatment of Christianity modelled on Kairānavī's writing dominated Muslim discourse into the 20th century (E.M. Wherry, *The Muslim controversy*, London, Madras, and Colombo, 1905, p. 2; A.A. Powell, *Muslims and missionaries in pre-Mutiny India*, London, 1993, pp. 286-7; K. Zebiri, *Muslims and Christians face to face*, Oxford, 1997, p. 47). Monro himself attempted elsewhere to defend the Bible by arguing from Muslim sources (see *How does the Koran confirm*), though with no mention of the methods employed in higher criticism, and he urged missionaries in training to become thoroughly familiar with the Qur'an and commentaries on it ('Notes on Islam in India', p. 327), but he evidently made no effort to answer Muslim arguments by using critical writings. Though Monro makes no mention of them, the converts Ṣafdar ʿAlī (d. 1899; *CMR* 24, 765-80) and ʿImāduddīn had written vigorous Christian responses to Kairānavī in the 1860s (M.P. Kamil, 'Islam and Christianity in 19th/20th-century South Asian debates', *International Journal of Asian Christianity* 5 [2022] 208-23, pp. 213-16; D. Becht, *The Book and the Prophet. The contribution of Indian Christians to the Muslim-Christian debate of the 19th century*, Tübingen, 2018, pp. 383-96, 414-27).

Issues surrounding the integrity and reliability of the Bible remain subjects of lively debate between Christians and Muslims to the present day.

Change in missionary attitudes towards the Bible was perhaps also reflected in change in evangelistic methods. Unlike the approach of the British government to religious questions in India, Monro stated, the missionary 'attitude must be more or less aggressive' ('Notes on Islam in India', p. 322). Neither his own favoured methods of literature and medicine (p. 328) nor the tracts for Muslims he published indicate that he wanted to promote an abrasive manner of encounter, and for some in the wider missionary community words such as 'aggression' and 'controversy' had already become pejoratives, or at least matters of serious questioning (A.M. Guenther, 'Controversy as a "necessary evil"? Perspectives on missions to Muslims in India in the late 19th century', presentation to the NAMP Research Forum, Westminster College, Cambridge, 5-7 April 1998; but cf. Wherry, *Muslim controversy*, pp. iii-x). Meanwhile, both attitudes and methods of Muslims related to the Bible and the Qur'an largely continued along a traditional path.

PUBLICATIONS

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J. Monro, 'Notes on Islam in India', *Missionary Review of the World*, new series 16/5 (1903) 321-8; 000049753 (digitised version available through Hathi Trust)

J. Monro, 'The teaching of the higher criticism incompatible with missionary work', *The East and the West* 1 (1903) 413-25

How does the Koran confirm and guard the Christian scriptures?

DATE Uncertain; probably 1900-5
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

Among the tracts written by James Monro is a three-part work, 58 pages long, titled *How does the Koran confirm and guard the Christian scriptures?* Although undated, it is likely to have been composed in the period at the beginning of the 20th century when he was writing other tracts. Its

purpose was to examine the claim made in the Qur'an that it confirms earlier revelations, given that many contradictions exist between the Qur'an and the Bible. Each part builds upon the previous one, and so the three parts should be read as a single continuous work.

The first part begins with a discussion of the concepts of 'abrogation' and 'confirmation'. Monro notes that Muslims regard abrogation as applying only to laws and commands, not to statements of fact, which cannot be abrogated, from which it follows that the Qur'an cannot abrogate any statements of fact found in the Torah. He then likens the idea of confirmation to a landowner writing up a new contract with his tenants that confirms the terms of their previous contract. If the tenants find that the new contract contradicts the terms of the old contract, he argues, they are right to reject the new in favour of the old.

With this established, he looks at a number of stories found in the Torah and the Qur'an, and finds ten significant differences between them. He notes, among other things, that the Qur'an has Adam and Eve eating from the Tree of Life rather than the Tree of Knowledge as in the Old Testament, that Noah has four sons rather than three, and that Moses has his family with him when he sees the burning bush. Using the analogy of the tenants and the landowner, he concludes that those who possess the older book, the Torah, have the right to reject the claims of the newer book, the Qur'an.

The second part switches to a discussion of the *Injil*, and how the qur'anic narratives about John the Baptist and Jesus differ from their counterparts in the Gospels. He notes that the Qur'an and the Gospels differ significantly with regard to four stories: 1. the dumbness of Zechariah, 2. the annunciation of the birth of Jesus, 3. the place of Jesus's birth, and 4. Jesus's crucifixion. If the Qur'an confirms the *Injil*, how is it, he asks, that it contradicts the *Injil* on these four key points? Citing Q 5:46-7, 57:19 and 3:4, he then reminds readers that, according to the Qur'an itself, those who disbelieve the *Injil* are transgressors.

The third part focuses on the key difference between Christians and Muslims, which concerns the divine nature and sonship of Jesus. Monro marshals witnesses from a number of places in the Bible, including quotations from Old Testament prophets, the angels, the disciples of Jesus, Jesus's own words and the voice of God himself, and points out that, if the Qur'an's condemnation of belief in Jesus as the Son of God were to be taken seriously, all these witnesses would have to be condemned as unbelievers, contrary to the Qur'an's own declaration that they are all righteous. Finally, he charges the Qur'an with being inconsistent in both confirming and contradicting the Christian scriptures.

SIGNIFICANCE

While the Qur'an's claim to confirm the Jewish and Christian scriptures was a fact long known to Christians and formed an integral element of intra-Muslim debate, it was not a significant argument in Christian polemics against Muslims until Christian missionaries brought it to the fore in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. These three tracts represent a shift in missionary strategy, in making greater use of qur'anic quotations in general but especially in using the line of argument set out in them. They undoubtedly emboldened other missionaries to adopt it in their dealings with Muslims, and prompted Muslims to attempt responses to the accusation of inconsistency.

That the tracts were long used by missionaries is evidenced by the fact that, decades after Monro's death, they were still being circulated in the Gulf region in Arabic translation, prompting a response from the Salafī apologist Muṣṭafā l-Rifāʿī l-Labbān at the request of Muslims who were concerned that fellow-believers in Kuwait were being persuaded by Monro's arguments (Ryad, 'Muslim responses', pp. 298-9). A member of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt in the 1930s, al-Labbān entitled his polemic *Mawāqif al-Islām min kutub al-Yahūd wa-l-Naṣārā* ('Islamic attitudes towards the scriptures of the Jews and Christians', Cairo, 1934-5). In it he contends that the scriptures that are confirmed by the Qur'an no longer exist, and that the Christians only possess corrupt copies (*Mawāqif*, pp. 3-21). This remains the standard response of many Muslims when the topic of the Qur'an's confirmation of the Bible comes up in inter-religious discourse.

PUBLICATIONS

J. Monro, *How does the Koran confirm and guard the Christian scriptures?*, [s.l, s.d.]

J. Monro, *Al-shahāda l-qur'āniyya ilā l-kutub al-masīḥiyya* (ref. in Ryad 'Muslim responses', pp. 298-9, mentioning al-Labbān's, *Mawāqif al-Islām* as a response to this translation)

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U. Ryad, 'Muslim responses to missionary literature in Egypt', in D. Pratt et al. (eds), *The character of Christian-Muslim encounter*, Leiden, 2015, 288-308

Muṣṭafā Aḥmad al-Rifāʿī l-Labbān, *Mawāqif al-Islām min kutub al-Yahūd wa-l-Naṣārā*, Cairo, 1934-5

J. Luis Dizon and Gordon Nickel

Arthur Naylor Wollaston

DATE OF BIRTH 14 October 1842
PLACE OF BIRTH Norwood, London
DATE OF DEATH 8 February 1922
PLACE OF DEATH Walmer, Kent

BIOGRAPHY

Arthur Naylor Wollaston was born in 1842 and, after schooling at Stockwell Grammar School, he joined the India Office at the age of 16 in 1859, a year after it was established. He served there for 48 years, first in the political department and later in the revenue, statistics and commerce department, where in 1898 he became Registrar and Superintendent of Records. In the office, he learnt Persian, worked on several translations and, in 1873, began to compile an English-Persian dictionary, which was published in 1882.

In 1886, Wollaston published his main work, *Half hours with Muhammad* (republished in expanded form as *The sword of Islam* in 1905), which explored Islam and its history. In the same year, he was made a Companion of the Most Eminent Order of the Indian Empire. He retired in 1907 and, in the following year, was promoted to Knight Commander (of the Order of the Indian Empire). Wollaston was also an active member of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, which he joined in 1876. He served on its council, helping to found the Triennial Gold Medal and the Public School Gold Medal for Indian History in 1906. Despite becoming well-known for his scholarship on the Persian language, he never visited Asia. Wollaston died in Walmer, Kent, on 8 February 1922.

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Art. 'Wollaston, Sir Arthur Naylor', in C.H. Rao (ed.), *The Indian biographical dictionary 1915*, Madras, 1915, 467

Anon, '[Obituary]', *Nature* 109 (1922) 246

W. Foster, 'Sir Arthur Naylor Wollaston, K.C.I.E', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* 2 (April 1922) 305-7 (obit.)

K. Karttunen, art. 'Wollaston, Arthur Naylor', in K. Karttunen, *Persons of Indian studies*, 2017, online; https://whowaswho-indology.info/38189

WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Half hours with Muhammad and other works

DATE 1886-1905
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

Wollaston wrote *Half hours with Muhammad* as a 'concise and popular account of the religion of Islam' (p. iii) aimed at a general readership. It was published to coincide with the Colonial and Indian Exhibition, held in South Kensington, London, in 1886 and he says that, when he was writing it, he had in mind the faith 'which is professed by upwards of one-fourth of the population of the countries watered by the Indian Ocean, and by not less than fifty millions of British Indian subjects' (p. iii). The main text is 324 pages long and consists of seven chapters on: Arabia up to the birth of Muḥammad, the life of Muḥammad, Muḥammad's successors, the Twelve Imams, the Qur'an, the Sunnīs, and the Shīʿas. Ch. 5, on the Qur'an, is the longest at 128 pages. The work is primarily historical and descriptive, presented as 'a mere compilation from the pages of the best known original authors on the subject of which it treats' (pp. iii-iv). In the first half, the influence of Sir William Muir's (1819-1905; *CMR* 24, 666-96) 'masterly essay' (p. 3), which Wollaston does not name but is presumably *The life of Mahomet*, an abridged version of which was published in 1876, is particularly evident in his description of Arabia (see especially pp. 2-6). He also quotes from the 'historian of Rome' (p. 46), by which he means Edward Gibbon (1737-94) and, in his account of Mecca and the annual pilgrimage, he uses Johann Ludwig Burckhardt (p. 206; *CMR* 22, 89-105) and Richard Burton (p. 216; *CMR* 17, 368-83).

Wollaston does not appear to have held any strict antithetical view about Islam. He reflects the more open attitudes of his time, and does not get involved in dogmatic judgements. Thus, in ch. 2 he traces Muḥammad's biography from his sources without any signs of wanting to deny Muslim beliefs about his sincerity, to compare him unfavourably with Jesus or to judge the morality of his behaviour. He refers to Muḥammad's first experience of revelation as the appearance of 'a heavenly visitant' (p. 34) without amplification, and he deals with the story of Muḥammad's miraculous Night Journey by quoting the account given by Muir, where it is described as a dream (pp. 43-4), without himself expressing any view about it as an actual event. Similarly, in the chapter on the Qur'an, he briefly mentions

that Muḥammad disclaimed any ability to perform miracles and that it was his followers who credited him with these (pp. 163-4, see also pp. 144-5), again not expressing any opinion himself.

In ch. 5, on the Qur'an, Wollaston does make the plain statement: 'That Muhammad was really the author of the Quran is beyond dispute' (p. 153). But he says no more about this and immediately goes on to set out the Muslim belief about the Qur'an and to describe the process by which it became a written text. He follows with an account of its main teachings, including what it says about earlier revealed scriptures, which Muslims believe were all lost or corrupted except the Qur'an (p. 162). On prophets, Wollaston allows himself one oblique criticism: 'It is not a little curious that the one sinless prophet of Islam [...] is the founder of the Christian Faith' (p. 163). In this chapter, Wollaston goes into minute detail about divine judgement and the afterlife and about the Muslim pilgrimage. It is noticeable that there is nothing concerning the teachings of the Qur'an about Jesus, the books of the Bible or Christians.

Wollaston proceeds in the same descriptive way throughout the book, showing admiration for Islam where he sees it as due. At the end, he again allows himself a mild criticism as he sums up: 'Such is the history of Islam, with its quaint ceremonies, its fatiguing devotions, and its trying hardships' (p. 323), but his concluding paragraph draws the attention of his Christian readers to the superior piety of Muslims and their exemplary devotion. He ends with the wish: 'May we one and all read the writing on the wall, and bow the head in humble submission, as the voice of conscience utters the words of gentle reproof – "Go thou and do likewise" [Luke 10:37]' (p. 324).

This is as fair an account of Islam as could be desired. Wollaston covers the main features of the faith with fairness and immense attention to detail. He occasionally points out matters that Christians might think curious, but he does not go into the differences between Islam and Christianity or say anything material about such issues as Muḥammad being different from Jesus and inferior to him, the Qur'an being derived from the Bible and other Jewish and Christian books, or Muslim practices being morally unacceptable, all topics that were regularly being treated by Western authors at the time he was writing. Readers would come away with a comprehensive impression of the historical dimensions of the faith, though maybe one that fails to identify features that show its particular character.

Although Wollaston says at the very beginning that he is thinking of 'not less than fifty millions of British Indian subjects' (p. iii), the book does not contain much about Muslims in India. There are passing references throughout, but no examination of the distinctive features of Indian Islam.

The religion of the Koran, a volume in the *Wisdom of the East* series, first appeared in 1904. Only 70 pages long, it contains an introduction to the Qur'an followed by a series of translated extracts from E.H. Palmer's 1880 translation in the *Sacred Books of the East* series representing its main topics: the unity of God, Muḥammad, resurrection, hell, paradise, jinn, angels, the devil, predestination, prayer, almsgiving, fasting, pilgrimage to Mecca, laws on drinking, gambling, food, infanticide etc., marriage and divorce, proselytism. This is a heavily abridged version (in some places more obvious than others) of parts of the chapter on the Qur'an in *Half hours with Muhammad.*

As in the earlier book, Wollaston's focus here is historical and descriptive. He seeks to inform his readers about the key teachings of Islam and key points in the life of Muḥammad. His apparent reluctance to make judgements about the authenticity of Islam is also evident, though he does repeat the view from *Half hours* that Muḥammad produced the Qur'an himself (p. 11) and only goes as far as to say that Muḥammad 'claimed to be a prophet sent by God' (p. 13). He also refrains from making comparisons between Islam and Christianity. Where judgements are detectable, the influence of 19th-century Western thinking can be seen. Thus, he links Muslim conceptions of paradise to the harsh environment of Arabia, and argues that the sensual nature of the Muslim paradise and the practice of polygamy are products of the warlike environment in which Islam emerged, so that the practice of having four wives 'meant but little more than a spouse in each of the towns where the husband was fighting' (p. 25).

He concedes that there were imperfections in Muḥammad but maintains that he had lofty goals and did good in destroying idol worship and proclaiming the one God. The Qur'an, he argues, 'must ever remain a testimony to an inspiration which, if human, is so rare as to justify the claim that it was little less than divine' (p. 26).

Wollaston's *The sword of Islam*, published in 1905 and also intended for a general audience, is an edited and expanded version of *Half hours with Muhammad*, stretching the original to 523 pages (including indices, which the earlier work lacks). It consists of 15 chapters, of which 1-3 and 9-13 cover the same topics as *Half hours with Muhammad* with much the same content. Ch. 15 offers conclusions, though it is simply a reformatted version of the final paragraph of the earlier book.

The main bulk of additional content comes in the form of chapters covering the Umayyad and ʿAbbāsid caliphates (chs 4-5), the Crusades (6), al-Andalus (7), Turkey (8), and minor sects (14). As the title implies, the

additions to the book focus primarily on Muslim expansion. Ch. 4, on the Umayyad caliphate, is structured according to the periods of rule of the various leaders, their conquests and internal conflicts, and there is no exploration of the character of Umayyad society. The later chapters also focus primarily on rulers, conquest and internal conflict. An exception is the new chapter on minor Muslim sects which extends to 46 pages (pp. 458-504). Here, Wollaston explores sects such as the Fāṭimids, Ashʿariyya, and Azraqiyya, which did not receive widespread scholarly attention within Europe at this time.

The chapter on the Crusades is particularly important for understanding Wollaston's attitude towards relations between Christians and Muslims. He situates their origins partly in the Church's encouragement of pilgrimage and penance at a time when Christians in Palestine were facing persecution under the rule of the Seljuks and there was conflict between Muslim powers and Byzantium. He writes: 'Under [...] fanatical and cruel governors, the unhappy Christians were exposed to insult and oppression to a degree which stung to frenzy their co-religionists throughout the length and breadth of Christendom' (p. 145). This was so intense that all members of society from warriors and traders to children and criminals 'clamoured to be permitted to wash out their sins in the blood of the enemies of God' (p. 146). In his description of the Crusades, Wollaston focuses heavily on the tribulations suffered by Christians. For instance, he notes that, during the siege of Antioch (1097-8), in the face of famine, pestilence and desertions, the Christian forces 'held their own' (p. 150), though morale improved after the holy lance with which the crucified Christ's side had been pierced was discovered and the siege turned in favour of the Crusaders, so that a mere 200 horsemen and a few warriors on foot were able to rout thousands of Muslims and capture Antioch. In this chapter, Muslims are often described as strong and mighty, skilled and brave, whereas the Crusaders are portrayed as occasionally acting with 'fanatical cruelty' (p. 152) and massacring their enemies, although Christian violence such as this was followed by atonement in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. In other places, Christians are depicted primarily as victims, easy prey because they were weakened by famine and pestilence while they had to battle 'swarms of Musulman fanatics' (p. 165). The chapter differs from the rest of the work in so far as Christians are the primary focus. Nevertheless, as in the chapters on Islam, Wollaston does not explore Crusader society beyond its internal and external conflicts.

A fourth book related to the others is *The Sunnis and Shias*, which appeared in 1905. This was substantially chs 12 and 13 of *The sword of Islam*.

SIGNIFICANCE

A conspicuous feature of all three works is that they describe Islam in great detail but leave judgements about such matters as its merits as a tradition of belief and morality, its relationship to Christianity and its viability in the modern age largely to their readers. While they are not apologies for Islam, they show great respect for elements within it and go as far as recommending these to their readers for consideration. They contain no hint of the polemical judgementalism of earlier times, leaving the implicit question of what Christians are to make of Islam open for their readers to decide.

It is clear from the fact that *The religion of the Koran* was reprinted four times within a few years that it was popular and enjoyed a large circulation, though *Half hours with Muhammad* and *The sword of Islam* do not appear to have met with the same success. None of the works had much influence among scholars.

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A.N. Wollaston, *The sword of Islam*, London, 1905, repr. Whitefish MT, 2010; 006572442 (digitised version available through Hathi Trust)

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A.N. Wollaston, *The Sunnis and Shias*, London, 1905

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R. Crotty and T. Lovat, *Islam. Its beginnings and history, its theology and its importance today*, Adelaide, 2016
S.J. Vicchio, *Biblical figures in the Islamic faith*, Eugene OR, 2008

James Harry Morris

John Henry Wyckoff

DATE OF BIRTH 28 September 1851
PLACE OF BIRTH Roycefield, New Jersey
DATE OF DEATH 29 April 1915
PLACE OF DEATH Vellore, India

BIOGRAPHY

John Henry Wyckoff was the son of Garret Wyckoff, descendant of a Dutch immigrant farmer, and Cornelia Ann Garretson. Not much is known about his early life. He graduated from Rutgers College, New Jersey, in 1871 and New Brunswick Theological Seminary in 1874, and then travelled to India as a missionary with the Dutch Reformed Church, an experience which acted as a hingepoint in his life. In India, he began his 'large and abiding contributions to the building up and confirming of the Kingdom of God in that land' (Reformed Church in America, '83rd annual report', p. xi). His first station was in Tindivanam in the far south. During his time there, Wyckoff became proficient in Tamil, which helped him to engage with local life and thought. He also began writing magazine and journal articles and on one occasion served as editor of *Mongola Vasanam*, an Anglo-Tamil paper published by the Arcot Mission.

Wyckoff married his first wife, Emmeline Bonney, in 1876. They remained in India for the next decade and had five children, of whom only three survived infancy. In 1886, Emmeline's health required the family to return to America on furlough, and Wyckoff became pastor of the Dutch Reformed Church in Claverack, New York. Tragedy soon struck the family, when the couple's newborn daughter died in October 1886 and Emmeline died of tuberculosis four years later.

In June 1892, Wyckoff married Gertrude Abigail Chandler. The couple returned to Vellore, north of Tindivanam, where Wyckoff's 'capacity for direct missionary service and … [his] … contributions found expression. The entire mission was said to have been 'strengthened by [his] renewed association with its life' (Reformed Church in America, '83rd annual report', p. xi).

Wyckoff became secretary and treasurer of the Arcot Mission, an elected member of the Representative Council of Missions (chosen from 5,000 men in India), and the principal and professor of systematic theology in

Arcot Theological Seminary (also in Tamil Nadu). In 1899, he was awarded an honorary Doctorate of Divinity by Rutgers College.

Wyckoff died of heart disease at his home in Vellore at the age 63 in 1915. It was said that 'his sudden removal from the active participation in missionary life [... was] an irreparable loss to the Arcot Mission as to the whole body of missionaries in India', and 'his name is associated with the most significant [mission] movements in the recent history' of India (Reformed Church in America, '83rd annual report', p. xii).

Wyckoff was survived by his wife and four children. His daughter Charlotte carried on his missionary work in India and wrote frequently about her experiences (e.g. see 'Jothy', *New York Times*, 27 May 1934, p. 305). His son John Henry Wyckoff II, whose childhood experiences in India left 'an indelible impression upon his developing mind and character' ('John Henry Wyckoff, II'), went on to become a 'distinguished cardiologist' in Bellevue MA.

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'Deaths of a day', *Chicago Examiner* 13, Tuesday 4 May 1915, p. 15; http://digital. chipublib.org/digital/collection/examiner/id/53757/ (obituary)

WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

'Islam in India'

DATE 1905
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

'Islam in India' is a seven-page article published in 1905 in *The East and the West*, journal of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign

Parts, a Church of England missionary agency that was active in the 18th and 19th centuries. A little over half of the article focuses on Muslim-Hindu relations in the early years of the 20th century. Christian-Muslim relations are addressed in the last three pages.

At the beginning of the article, Wyckoff makes clear that he considers the spread of Islam to have failed in India for two main reasons. First, Muslims arrived in India very soon after a 'great Brahmanical revival' (p. 294), which came after the victory of Hinduism over Buddhist beliefs and the 'complete expulsion of the latter from the peninsula' (p. 294), and resulted in an increase in Hindu piety. After they 'had won such easy victories over the corrupt Christianity of the West', Muslims encountered far greater resistance to their conversion attempts in India. Second, Muslims in India are seen by the majority Hindu population as 'downtrodden, poor and illiterate' (p. 297): only six per cent of women, men and children are able to read. For this reason, jobs and land have naturally passed into the 'hands of the Hindus' (p. 297). Wyckoff quotes Monier Monier-Williams (*CMR* 17, 259-64), professor of Sanskrit at Oxford University, who compares Islam and Christianity in the following terms:

> There is a finality and want of elasticity about Mohammedanism which precludes its expanding beyond a certain fixed line of demarcation. Having once reached this line, it appears to lapse backwards – to tend toward mental and moral slavery, to contract within the narrower [...] circles of bigotry and exclusiveness. But the Christian's course is ever onwards, his movements are free; he is ever tending towards wider reaches of comprehensiveness, tolerance and charity. He is ever advancing towards a higher life. (p. 298)

Comparing Hinduism and Islam, he reports that Muslims in India are intolerant whereas Hinduism 'is the most tolerant of all religions' (p. 295), and considers the Hindu population to be far superior in morality compared with the 'deplorable condition' of the Muslim community (p. 297). He rejoices in the fact that only a 'small portion' of the population have turned to Islam, and hopes that many more might turn to Christianity. He refers to attempts to reform Islam in India through a revival of Islamic learning and scholarship for both men and women and describes these efforts as 'good sentiments', although they will probably prove unpopular with the majority of pious Muslims (p. 299).

Finally, Wyckoff offers encouragement to his Christian readers by summarising the results of Christian mission to Muslims. He quotes the American missionary Elwood Morris Wherry (*CMR* 16, 371-84) claiming that

'five Moslems have been converted for every Hindu convert', and Wyckoff describes 'a remarkable turning of Mohammedans to Christianity' (p. 300). He concludes with a reminder to the reader that, in countries under Muslim rule (e.g. Turkey) where conversion from Islam is illegal, there may be more converts to Christianity than reported. However, 'in countries where Islam is not fortified by the civil power, the Mohammedans are by no means a hopeless class for Christian workers: we expect to see a turning of the hosts of Islam to the banner of the Cross' (p. 300).

SIGNIFICANCE

Wyckoff's article represents one of the few literary records of the Dutch Reformed Church in India from the early 20th century that offers remarks on Islam and Muslims. His comments reflect traditional exclusivist views of Islam as a rival faith to Christianity and inferior to it, with its followers represented in stereotypical and negative terms.

PUBLICATIONS

John Henry Wyckoff, 'Islam in India', *The East and the West. A Quarterly Review for the Study of Missions* 3 (1905) 294-300

Rachel Riddell

Methodist Episcopal missionaries and preachers

BIOGRAPHIES

In 1817, British missionaries from the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society founded and organised the earliest known Methodist mission presence in India. By the mid-19th century, American missionaries had arrived, appointed and supported by the Methodist Episcopal Church based in the United States. The first American missionaries, William and Clementina Rowe Butler of the New England Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, arrived in Calcutta in 1856. They were later joined by several other missionary families.

This entry focuses on five American Methodist missionaries who provided American readers with textual and visual representations and perspectives on Muslims and the Islamic tradition. Their works, which were to be found in both public libraries and private homes in the United States, include images and impressions of India, home to several million followers of Islam, which many, indeed most, Americans had never encountered. They provided windows through which readers could envision and encounter the history, religion and people of Islam.

The five missionaries are: James Lorenzo Humphrey (1829-1910), Emily Jane Trussell Humphrey (1833-94), William Baxter Godbey (1833-1920), John Fletcher Hurst (1834-1903) and James Mills Thoburn (1836-1922). They represent only a select number of the many 19th-century American Methodist missionaries and ministers who worked among Muslims in India and wrote about their experiences and observations in locations throughout the country.

James Lorenzo Humphrey was born on 11 August 1829 in Stockholm, New York. He married Emily Jane Trussell in 1850 and was appointed an Elder with the Black River Conference, Northern New York Conference and North India Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. In 1857, he was approved to join the fledgling American missionary work in India, where he served in several capacities as a missionary, minister, author, administrator, teacher and medical doctor. The Humphreys left the United States in June 1857 and arrived in Calcutta on 22 September in the middle of the Sepoy Rebellion. In Calcutta, they studied the Hindustani language and prepared for the translation, preaching and conversion work ahead. In February 1859, James was appointed to Bareilly, where he opened a school for children in the Kashmir Palace. He served as the school administrator

and helped direct an orphanage. While speaking at a festival in the summer of 1859, he met and later baptised the Muslim teacher Zahur-ul-Haqq (1834-96; Ẓuhūr ul-Ḥaqq), who was considered one of the earliest Muslim converts to Methodism (J.L. Humphrey, 'Our first convert in India a Mohammedan', *Epworth Herald* 19/15 [September 1908] 363-4).

Humphrey also worked as an editor and publisher and produced several books and articles, including *Twenty-one years in India*. He spent a number of years in Moradabad and Budaun before returning on furlough to the United States, where he received his MD from Albany Medical College, returning to Nainital with an ardent interest in medical missions. From 1869 to 1871, he established a government-supported hospital, worked as both a hospital administrator and surgeon, taught medical courses for women and published a medical textbook. He returned to the United States in 1874 and served as minister at Little Falls and Utica, New York, until he went back to India for a final appointment in 1881. Humphrey retired in 1900 after over 40 years as a missionary and minister. He died in Earlville, New York, on 5 September 1910.

Emily Jane Trussell Humphrey was born on 17 February 1833 in Nicholville, New York. Married to James Humphrey, she worked as a missionary, teacher, artist and translator and became proficient in the Hindustani language. She worked in India with women and helped organise the first Methodist school for girls in Nainital. She translated English books and hymns into Hindustani, including *The autobiography of the Reverend Zahur-al-Haqq*, the Muslim converted through her husband's efforts, and a hymnbook used in local churches. She was an accomplished author and published several books, including *Six years in India*, as well as several articles in periodicals and newspapers. Emily died on 29 January 1894 in Earlville, New York.

William Baxter (also Baver) Godbey was born on 3 June 1833 in Pulaski County, Kentucky. He converted to Christianity at the age of 16 and at the age of 20 was licensed as a local minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. In 1859, he graduated from Georgetown College in Kentucky. The following year he married America Emma Durham, and together they had eight children. In 1868, Godbey joined the Kentucky Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South (in the southern parts of the United States), and shortly afterwards experienced what the Methodists refer to as 'entire sanctification', becoming a well-known spokesperson of the so-called 'Holiness Movement'. Godbey was an administrator and educator, serving as President of Harmonia College in Perryville, Kentucky, and professor at God's Bible School in Cincinnati, Ohio. In 1884, he moved from

local church work to nation-wide and world-wide evangelism and began speaking at camp meetings, conventions and revival meetings throughout the United States.

Godbey was a prolific author, producing over 200 publications that included books, articles, sermons and tracts. He travelled the world as an evangelist and spoke to American audiences who were largely unaware of the religions, customs and contexts of people outside the United States. Together with the work discussed below, he published *Around the world, Garden of Eden, latter day prophecies and missions* (1907) and *Light in darkness; or, missions and missionary heroes* (1892). He died in Perryville, Kentucky, on 12 September 1920.

John Fletcher Hurst was born in Salem, Maryland, on 17 August 1834. In 1854, he graduated with a BA degree from Dickinson College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, and received further education at the University of Halle in Germany. He returned to the United States between 1858 and 1866, and worked as an instructor at the Hedding Literary Institute in Ashland, New York, and as a minister in the Newark Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. While at Hedding Literary Institute, he met and later married Catherine Elizabeth La Monte, and together they had five children. Hurst returned to Germany as principal and professor of systematic theology at the Martin Mission Institute in Bremen. During his time away, he travelled to India, Syria, Palestine and Egypt. In 1872, he became professor of historical theology and later served as president of Drew Theological Seminary in Madison, New Jersey. In 1880, he was elected bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church and appointed to the Des Moines (Iowa) and Buffalo (New York) areas. In 1885, he directed the first Central Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church when it met in Bareilly, India. Between 1891 and 1902, he helped found and later served as chancellor of American University in Washington DC. He published several books, including *Indika. The country and people of India and Ceylon*. He died in Bethesda, Maryland, on 4 May 1903.

James Mills Thoburn was born near St Clairsville, Ohio, on 7 March 1836. He received a BA from Allegheny College in Pennsylvania and became a minister with the Pittsburgh Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. He was appointed a missionary to India, arriving on 21 August 1859 with several other missionary couples. His initial assignment was in Lucknow and, in November 1861, he oversaw his first Muslim conversion to Christianity. He served in several locations including Nainital, Gurhawl, Moradabad, Lucknow and Calcutta.

In 1861, Thoburn married Sarah Minerva Rockwell Downey, widow of the missionary Joseph R. Downey, who had travelled to India with Thoburn and died there. Sarah herself died in Nainital the following year as a result of complications during childbirth. In 1880, Thoburn married Anna Jones, a missionary candidate and medical student from Philadelphia, who joined him in India following her graduation in 1882. James served as a minister and was later appointed Presiding Elder of the Calcutta District of the South India Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. In 1885, he was transferred to Singapore to begin missionary work that eventually became the Malaysia Conference. In 1888, he was appointed bishop to India, Burma and Malaysia. He served as a missionary to the Philippines in 1899 and later attended and spoke at several international mission events, including the 1900 Ecumenical Missionary Conference in New York and the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference in 1910. Thoburn was co-founder and served as editor of *The Lucknow* (later *Indian*) *Witness*. He published several books and articles, including *India and Malaysia* (1893), *The Christian conquest of India* (1906), discussed below, and *India and southern Asia* (1907). He died in Meadville, Pennsylvania, on 28 November 1922.

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G. Garrett, 'The missionary career of James Mills Thoburn', Boston MA, 1968 (PhD Diss. Boston University)
W. Barclay, *History of Methodist missions*, vol. 2, New York, 1957, pp. 451-663
W. Oldham, *Thoburn. Called of God*, New York, 1918
'Sketches of deceased Methodist Episcopal missionaries', *Gospel in All Lands* (October 1900) 462-3 (mentions Emily Jane Trussell Humphrey)

WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Methodist Episcopal Church missionaries' writings on Islam

DATE 19th and 20th centuries
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

The works discussed below document the perceptions and perspectives of Methodist Episcopal Church missionaries who described their experiences and interactions with Muslims in India. They include narratives, reports and correspondence of missionaries and ministers serving and visiting places throughout the country. These accounts were written by James L. Humphrey, Emily J. Trussell Humphrey, William B. Godbey, John F. Hurst and James M. Thoburn.

James Lorenzo Humphrey

In *Twenty-one years in India*, published in 1905 and 283 pages long, James Humphrey provides historical context and previously unrecorded information about the history of American Methodist missions work in India. He sees his work as contributing to the broader understanding of missionary encounters and giving perspectives on Indian Islam and Muslim communities. He represents Muslims as antagonistic and unwilling to

cooperate with missionaries and, more importantly, refusing to accept Western forms of progress, especially Christianity, which represent improvements on the current way of life in India.

For Humphrey, Muslims are self-contained people who look upon others with contempt and are intolerant and immoral. Islam was spread by followers who were intent on building an empire led by the Prophet Muḥammad (Humphrey uses the form Mohammed) and established by the sword. Muslim rulers were corrupt and often engaged in warfare as they spread their faith and cultural practices across India. They cared little for humanity and were not concerned for the life and property of the people they conquered. Muḥammad was a sincere seeker of truth, but he was also an impostor and a blatant hypocrite. He used violence to spread his teachings and encouraged assassinations and ordered massacres for which he claimed the authority of revelation from God.

Despite saying this, Humphrey also carefully paints the Islamic tradition as containing kernels of essential religious truth and affirms that Muslims in India are beginning to understand that their cultural practices, such as polygamy and the seclusion of women, should be abandoned. He witnessed Muslims converting to Christianity and thinks they could become religious leaders in communities across India. To illustrate this, he refers to the examples of a young Muslim named Peer Bakhs, a house servant of an English family who, though he never publicly professed Christianity, secretly converted, and of another Muslim named Zahur-ul-Haqq (Ẓuhūr ul-Ḥaqq), who converted to Christianity and worked for the Methodist Episcopal Church as a local minister.

In the final analysis, for Humphrey there is hope of progress. Muslims are beginning to respond to the teachings of the missionaries and, when they convert, they become useful instruments for propagating Methodist Christianity. Thinking of Bakhs and Zahur-ul-Haqq, he is confident that converts make excellent ministers, given that some of the most effective preachers in churches in India had been Muslims.

Emily Jane Trussell Humphrey

Emily Humphrey's *Six years in India*, published in 1866 and 286 pages long, is a collection of letters between herself and her mother, who was in the United States. In them, she describes the people, geography and customs she has observed during her time as a missionary in order to provide 'information in regard to a people of whom but little is known, but toward

whom, at the present time, the attention of the Christian world is directed' (p. 15). She does not attempt to present a comprehensive sketch of the history of mission in India, but instead provides textual windows through which her readers can see the day-to-day experiences of American missionaries, in the hope that she can create interest in their work and their need for resources. She affirms that she has not written her work as a form of hagiographical championing of American missionaries but as a means of displaying the pioneering work of missionaries who 'do not always live on the mountain top, full of hope and enthusiasm; they are often buffeted, depressed, and anxious, like those in the work at home' (p. 15).

Humphrey regards the Islamic tradition and its expansion into India as violent. She notes that Muslims have annihilated the spirit of inquiry, with the result that Indian intellectual life has lain dormant for centuries. Islam is a faith that is given to war and oppression, whose leaders prescribe the reign of lawlessness. One result is that Muslim women are confined to *zenanas*, which prevent missionaries from meeting women of the higher classes.

Humphrey writes about domestic aspects of the life she witnesses, going into detail about food preparation and the particular dress of her Muslim hosts and their servants. She describes an excursion to a village where Muslim women welcomed her and appeared to be interested in Christianity, inviting her to return in the future. She also describes Muslim religious practices and the architecture and decor of mosques. She recognises that Muslims are examples of religious devotion in the way they abruptly cease their work the moment they hear the call to prayer.

William B. Godbey

Godbey includes a section entitled 'Mohammedanism' in vol. 1, ch. 6 of his *Commentary on the New Testament* (pp. 50-3). In this he portrays Islam as a rigid, uncompromising monotheistic faith that is centred on the life and teachings of the Prophet Muḥammad. He is clear that it is a violent tradition that has resulted in the deaths of more Christians than any other religion. Its adherents are 'bloodthirsty' and take delight in war, using the sword indiscriminately to rob and murder. He thinks that Muslims watch Americans closely because they are convinced that missionaries will convert Muslims to Christianity and will then kill them and dispose of their bodies, 'never to be seen again' (p. 9). They are an impediment to the spread of Christianity, and missionaries have difficulty because they are

resistant to the missionaries' message. He concludes that many Muslims are either wizards or witches. They are lazy and treat women with disrespect to a point that 'womanhood is degraded, oppressed and almost brutalized' (p. 9).

At the same time, Godbey is impressed by the commitment of some Muslims to their faith. Like Humphrey, he is struck when he sees them stop work at the call to prayer and he is also impressed by their adherence to the Qur'an and respect for it. He portrays Muḥammad as a false teacher, an uneducated magician who caused the death of millions of people and a 'man of the flesh' who taught about sensual gratification in the afterlife. Yet Godbey is captivated by what he calls Muḥammad's 'magnetic' personality and thinks that he had more influence over his followers than any other religious leader in the history of the world. He was a 'charming' and morally sincere person who preached boldly and told people to turn from their sins, just like Christian missionaries and ministers in the 19th century.

Godbey claims that Muslims 'make beautiful Christians' and his writings are an attempt to demonstrate that more missionaries and funding are needed to help convert the 'over two hundred millions of Mohammedans now on the earth' (p. 32).

John Fletcher Hurst

Hurst's *Indika. The country and the people of India and Ceylon*, published in 1891 and 794 pages long, is a survey of the people, religions, customs and architecture of late 19th-century India and Ceylon (Sri Lanka), including many illustrations and maps. Hurst notes in the Foreword that he has studied the history, geography and industries of India and Ceylon extensively, but that time actually spent there has led him to greater awareness and appreciation of the two countries. He makes clear that there is a need for missionaries who are interested in converting Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs to Christianity.

Hurst includes accounts of calls among the people for representative government and concerns about the production, marketing and consumption of alcohol. He comments on the state of education in India and points to the availability of literature as well as the successes of Christian missionaries. Interestingly, he notes changes to traditional name forms: 'the old spelling of Mahomet is now rapidly passing away. The latest of the reliable authorities spell it Muhammed, and the old Koran must now give place to the new Qur'an' (p. viii).

Hurst wrote *Indika* to underscore the work of American missionaries and to encourage and entice readers to join in their work. Like his colleagues, he describes how Islam took India by force and observes that Muslims are the most difficult group for Methodist missionaries to convert. But he is captivated by Indian Muslim architecture and notes how Muslims often build mosques close to Hindu temples. He was especially drawn to the Taj Mahal, claiming it is 'the most beautiful structure in the world', and to the Pearl Mosque in Agra, which 'is not surpassed in the beauty of its proportions and the skill of its workmanship by any religious edifice known to architecture' (p. 57).

He observes that some Muslims have become religiously and culturally progressive, not least those who eat food forbidden by the Qur'an. They send him mixed signals regarding the consumption of alcohol, some observing the qur'anic prohibitions and others consuming alcohol with indifference. Hurst concludes by expressing the hope that the work of Methodist missionaries in India, as well as this written account of his travels there, will make American Methodists aware of the intellectual and spiritual needs of the millions of Muslims among whom he lives. He calls for more people and funding to bring 'to the Aryan cradle of our Anglo-Saxon race a hundred missionary, medical, and educational labourers where to-day there is but one' (p. x).

James Mills Thoburn

In *The Christian conquest of India*, published in 1906 and 276 pages long, Thoburn agrees with his Methodist colleagues in describing Islam in India as both repellent and alluring. Muslims make up 20 per cent of the country's population, and their religion, which is built on violence, is hostile to Christianity and to the conversion efforts of American Methodist missionaries. Islam is intolerant towards other faith traditions and its most ardent followers will inevitably try to win back wayward Muslims who have converted to Christianity. Muslims are lacking in education and, Thoburn claims, they have the lowest level of literacy among the faith traditions apart from animists. Some Muslims are regarded as unclean, worship the devil, and practise fortune telling, which influences the fertile minds of children. Muslim women are socially and morally immature since they have been treated as valueless by 'dictatorial' husbands who usually have several wives.

Thoburn reminds his readers that Muslims generally appear agreeable in public and are a physically vigorous and independent people, who display what he regards as unusual qualities of leadership. They are a proud people who are dedicated to their religion. Islam has a number of agreeable features and has helped to remove such objectionable practices as human sacrifice and witchcraft. The architecture of mosques is among the most attractive in the world. But Thoburn is not convinced that the good in Islam outweighs the questionable because it offers fatalism while Christianity offers redemption, and the hope of a Muslim is in a prophet while the hope of a Christian is in a saviour.

SIGNIFICANCE

Written by authors without specialist knowledge of Islam, these works exhibit a blend of familiar confidence in Christianity as the supreme religion, with its inbuilt abhorrence of Islam, and admiration for aspects of the Islamic tradition, in particular Muslim devotedness to the daily prayers, the leadership of Muḥammad and the masterpieces of Indian Muslim architecture. It appears that, alongside the common Christian presuppositions which these missionaries took with them to India, they were compelled through their daily experiences to find room for insights and attitudes that challenged their narrow Christianity.

Readers of all five missionaries' works would be left with no doubt that there was acute need in India for more intensive Western and Christian involvement that would root out the practices and ingrained attitudes that prevented people from progressing to what these authors took for granted were more advanced ways of living. However, the more attentive of these readers could not fail to find hints of appreciation for sophisticated cultural ways that they may have been surprised to learn were derived from Islam.

PUBLICATIONS

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Christopher J. Anderson

Malcolm Goldsmith

DATE OF BIRTH 5 January 1849
PLACE OF BIRTH Woolwich, Kent
DATE OF DEATH 2 October 1940
PLACE OF DEATH Madras, India

BIOGRAPHY

Malcolm George Goldsmith, the son of Malcolm Goldsmith and Mary Anne Little, was born in Woolwich on 5 January 1849. He was the second of seven children, among whom his brother Henry, like Malcolm himself, worked in Madras for the Church Missionary Society (CMS). He and his brother were among the few missionaries who worked to evangelise Muslims in south India.

He took a degree in classics at Cambridge in 1871 and was ordained deacon in May 1872. He arrived in India on 5 November that year, appointed to work with Muslims in Madras. In November 1873 (some sources give the year as 1874), he was sent to Calcutta, where he was ordained priest in 1874 to serve as minister for English services in the Old Mission Church. Then, in March 1875, he returned to Madras.

He worked among adult Muslims and in 1878 took part in a series of debates with a young *maulvī* that became well enough known to be reported in local newspapers (Goldsmith, 'Work among Mohammadans') In 1879, he served on the committee to organise a general missionary conference for south India. He also took part in debates to correct what some delegates thought Muslims believed. He spoke of his experience with Muslims, of the care needed in handling the scriptures with them and of the importance of making a clear distinction between European culture and Christianity.

From 1883 to 1891, Goldsmith served as principal of Harris School in Madras. He moved to become principal of Harris School in Hyderabad, where he remained from 1891 to 1909.

While he was in England for a short period in 1892, he visited the Muslim Institute in Liverpool in July, which led him to conclude that the success of the institute was not quite what had been reported (see R. Macnamara,

'Abdullah Quilliam and the Indian Muslims. The making of a Muslim mission in Victorian Liverpool', *CMR* ii online). In 1905, he was made an honorary canon of St George's Cathedral in Madras. When Harris School was closed, he moved to Trinity Chapel in Park Town. In 1918, he was awarded the Kaisar-i-Hind silver medal in recognition of his services for the cause of Muslim education at Harris School. He retired in 1923. In 1939 he was awarded the Kaisar-i-Hind gold medal.

Goldsmith remained a bachelor all his life, and it was said of him that there had been 'few men in the long history of Madras who have so won the respect, admiration, and affection of so large a portion of all communities' (*Alumni Cantabrigienses*, p. 76). He died at the age of 91 on 2 October 1940 in Madras, among the people he loved and who loved him.

Goldsmith's annual letters to the CMS, updating them on the daily activities of his mission and the people he was involved with, mention his work at Harris School and with Muslims in Madras, together with some of his work in Calcutta (for his annual letters, see 'Church Missionary Society India Missions', *CMR* 24, pp. 989-90, 998-1000).

MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION

We came from Sussex; http://www.genetok.com/sussex/b172.html#P5553 (giving Goldsmith's middle name)

Malcolm Goldsmith's Annual Letters from 1887-1904 and the *Register of Missionaries* are held in the archives of the CMS at the Cadbury Research Library Special Collections, University of Birmingham. A large part of the archival materials has been digitised by Adam Matthew Publications and is available on-line. For more details on the archival corpus, see: https://churchmissionsociety.org/about/our-history/archives/.

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M. Goldsmith, 'Work among Mohammadans at Madras', *Church Missionary and Intelligencer Record* 3 (1878) 194-5

B.H. Badley, *Indian missionary directory and memorial volume*, Lucknow, 1881, p. 83

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M. Goldsmith, 'Modern Muhammadanism in India', *Harvest Field* 6/4 (May 1895) 181-9

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Obituary, *The Times*, Friday, 18 October 1940, p. 7

WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Articles and papers

DATE 1877-1906
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

Originally part of Goldsmith's annual letter to the CMS, his 'Work among Mohammadans at Madras' was published as a two-page article in *The Church Missionary and Intelligencer Record* in 1878. The whereabouts of the complete letter itself is currently unknown. In this extract, Goldsmith begins by describing how the famine of the past year has compelled Muslims to seek Christian charity. He goes on to describe his encounters with a young *maulvī* in the bazaar over a period of five months. Their first meeting was accidental, the second drew a crowd, and from the third meeting onwards they had scribes writing down what they were saying. Goldsmith had many opportunities to expound the gospel even though the *maulvī*'s intention was to demonstrate the 'corruption' of the New Testament. Within a few weeks there were 100-150 Muslims in attendance at each meeting. Soon, the newspapers heard of it, and it gave Goldsmith much to talk about on a daily basis. But there were few conversions, which Goldsmith laments. He ends by mentioning a library containing some good Christian books that are taken out by educated Muslim boys. Though many books get lost or are hopelessly damaged, he still feels that this is a worthwhile endeavour as the boys get at least some education in the Bible.

The 'Second paper by the Rev. M. Goldsmith, C.M.S., Madras', written specifically for the 1882 Second Decennial Missionary Conference and eight pages long, was published in the *Report of the second decennial missionary conference held at Calcutta, 1882-83*. In it, Goldsmith gives an account of Muslims among whom he works with the aim of informing the British public of the kind of people who lived in south India. He considers the various ways in which missionaries in the area are trying to reach Muslims and how they might better achieve this. He first gives an outline of the various races and sects and their histories (this recurs in 'Islam in south India' and very briefly in 'The need of work among Muhammadans in Madras') and then he moves on to an account of the disappointingly few conversions as a consequence of the little effort put in by the church. He states that, since most missionaries are trying to reach Hindus, they

tend to look on the monotheistic Muslims as friends and so, after conversations, Muslims sometimes end up with the greater part of their beliefs intact.

Goldsmith details some limited success at Harris School and speaks encouragingly of missionaries who evangelise in connection with the school and arouse curiosity amongst the Muslims. He advances reasons why Christian education for all is important and argues that, once Muslim boys know enough English, they should go into a school with other races, because healthy competition between the races will be helpful to encourage excellence and prevent laziness. Goldsmith also mentions that Christian education has done much to break down barriers between Christians and the Muslims, thus proving that education at Harris School is beneficial. He reports a slight rise in numbers as a result of Muslims noticing how the missionaries treat the poor in the streets. They reason that, if the missionaries care about the poor, it is very likely they will also care for the boys and teach them well.

Goldsmith also briefly touches on some of the literature in local languages, mostly Dakhani, Hindustani and Persian. He speaks of the need for more Christian literature in Dakhani, and the need for a complete Hindustani Bible, for which he hopes he will find help from the north of India. He ends his report by mentioning that foreign speakers are warmly welcomed by Indians, and therefore by the missionaries in the south as well. Speakers who come from far away carry more weight than those who are always on hand.

'Modern Muhammadanism in India' is a nine-page article that was published in the journal *Harvest Field* in 1895. Goldsmith was asked to write it because he was regarded as having great experience as a missionary in India. He refers to 'The Apology of Al Kindy', a translation by Sir William Muir of the supposed 9th-century correspondence between the Muslim ʿAbd Allāh al-Ḥāshimī and the Christian ʿAbd al-Masīḥ al-Kindī (it is usually regarded as the work of a 9th-century Christian; *CMR* 24, pp. 684-8), and notes that many of the theological differences between Christians and Muslims that it mentions have remained unchanged. He describes the way in which a typical debate he has witnessed proceeds, with the Muslims trying to raise Muḥammad up to a level almost of divinity, mentioning some of the stories associated him, and then turning to the Bible and arguing that it has been abrogated by the Qur'an. When they are met with the argument that the 'word of the Lord stands forever', they counter by saying that a committee meets every year to change the Bible. Goldsmith responds that this is quite impossible as there are thousands of

Bibles in some 300 different languages and too many sects of Christianity to agree on such a procedure.

He goes on to describe the problem that the crucifixion presents to Muslims. Some say that Jesus did not die, others that his body did die but not his spirit, and most hold that Judas took on the likeness of Jesus and was crucified in his stead. He deals with the story that Islam (he uses the term 'Muhammadanism') is spreading in England by recounting his own experience of Islam there (presumably a reference to his visit to the Liverpool Muslim Institute) and how hard it was to find any Muslims there. He goes on to underscore the current unrest in Islam by noting how many Muslim leaders with different beliefs are appearing, and how many sects already exist or are emerging. He also notes that some Muslim men are being influenced by Christianity to adopt the Christian-style nuclear family of one wife and children. Even the women are starting to have more equal opportunities and Muslims are starting to think about educating them. Furthermore, he argues, the Christian style of propagating religion has now been adopted by Muslims. He concludes that, while there is only a small number of converts, they are growing in faith, and he adds that the church has not yet really done much to reach out to the Muslims. He endorses several new books on the topic of Islam.

'Work among Muhammadans in south India' is an eight-page article published in 1901. An update on the areas in south India where missionaries were working, it records more acceptance in Bangalore than in the past but still no more converts. In Masulipatam, there is a pervasive Christian culture and many good women workers, but more men are desired and conversions are still rare. These are both fairly brief sections because Goldsmith knew little about these areas. In contrast, the section on Hyderabad, where Goldsmith himself worked, occupies more than three pages. He delights in recording how much the prejudice and political and religious tensions have died down in the city, and how some of the more conservative Muslim institutions are changing leaders and becoming much more progressive and open to Christians. He also mentions the Muslim tendency towards saint worship and the belief that they will get to heaven by their good deeds.

Goldsmith is delighted that there is a growing amount of Christian literature in Hindustani and names several good books in Urdu and other local languages. He mentions some of the main arguments that are at issue. First, he states that a Christian worker should not speak badly of Muḥammad, indeed should not mention him if at all possible. Then he refers to two main matters on which Muslims and Christians differ, the

divine Sonship of Christ and his death on the cross. He briefly mentions the Eastern Churches that, to his mind, are badly in need of reform (the implication of which seems to be that this might be part of the reason why Muslims do not like Christians). Missionaries should not do anything that would compromise their message, or cause Muslims to stumble.

'Islam in south India', is a nine-page report published in *The Mohammedan world of today*, papers read at the First Missionary Conference on behalf of the Mohammedan World held at Cairo, April 4th-9th, 1906. A considerable amount of material in it is very similar to Goldsmith's 'Second paper' in the *Report of the second decennial missionary conference*. Here, he discusses obstacles to dealing with some Muslims, such as their lack of knowledge of the Hindi language and their fierce hatred of the English, whom they associate with Christianity, and he briefly comments on Harris School and its successes. The article also gives some of the history of various Muslim sects, how they came to India and how missionaries have tried or should try to reach them. It includes many of the same facts about Muslims that he gives in his report for the Second Decennial Missionary Conference, though the information here is brought up to date with fuller details. He records more instances of the violence of some Muslims and predicts that the whole of the west coast of India will become Muslim within a few years if it is not first Christianised. He points out that the CMS is more or less the only mission agency in the area and that, even though some converts have been made, many have left the faith. He delineates briefly the efforts that some groups of Muslims are making either to convert Hindus to Islam or to bring back Muslims who have converted to Christianity.

SIGNIFICANCE

'Work among Mohammadans at Madras' exemplifies the approach of not debating to win but rather to gain the opportunity to explain passages of the Gospel. It demonstrates that debating with Muslims to win is not necessarily effective, but debating to spread the truth is a worthwhile endeavour.

The original significance of Goldsmith's 'Second paper' in the *Report of the second decennial missionary conference* is that it comprised a rational and logical analysis of various kinds of Muslims and detailed the efforts of missionaries, thus allowing people in England to see what was going on and how much effort was being expended, as well as what was yet needed in order to obtain the desired results. In terms of Christian-Muslim relations, it primarily serves as a historical marker: the past can always be

learned from and improved on. However, it does indicate that Muslims (and others) see how Christians behave, and that it is often the small things that are most noticed. It emphasises the importance of Christian literature, and especially the Bible in the vernacular. And for this to be practical, it necessitates having missionaries who know the people and their culture and sub-cultures.

'Modern Muhammadanism in India' was mainly significant in its day for the way it set out and explained the origins of some of the main arguments advanced by Muslims. Goldsmith prepares readers for some of the most common arguments that would face them and the best logical defences against them. While none of this was very new at the time, Goldsmith wrote clearly and published the article where it would be accessible to many ordinary Christians. It also allowed other missionaries to be armed with important knowledge and answers for working with Muslims.

'Work among Muhammadans in south India' was significant at the time of writing because it showed that Muslims were becoming more accepting of Christians, although they may not have been prepared to convert. This depicts a key time in the south of India as it shows that Muslims were starting to get over some of the bitterness they harboured from poor treatment by Christians in earlier times.

The original purpose of 'Islam in south India' was to give a general idea of the work of missionaries and the people they worked among, including the point that CMS was the only missionary organisation working in the region. This was a more detailed and updated version of Goldsmith's report for the Second Decennial Missionary Conference and as a result it has little new to add.

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Janeil Mehrer

Syed Ameer Ali

Sayyid Amīr ʿAlī

DATE OF BIRTH 6 April 1849
PLACE OF BIRTH Cuttack, Bengal Presidency, British India
DATE OF DEATH 3 August 1928
PLACE OF DEATH Rudgwick, Sussex

BIOGRAPHY

Syed Ameer Ali was born in 1849, the son of Syad Saadat Ali from Oudh State (d. 1856). He was educated in Hooghly Moshin College and then Calcutta University, where he received an MA in Political Economy and an LLB. Having gained a scholarship to study in London, he was called to the bar at the Honourable Society of the Inner Temple in 1873. He then served in the High Court in Calcutta and later as the magistrate and chief magistrate. He also served as a member of the Bengal Legislative Council and the Governor General's Legislative Council before becoming Puisne Judge of the Calcutta High Court.

In addition to a legal career, he was appointed a Fellow of Calcutta University in 1874 and subsequently worked there as a lecturer in Muhammadan law between 1875 and 1879 and as Tagore Law Professor from 1884.

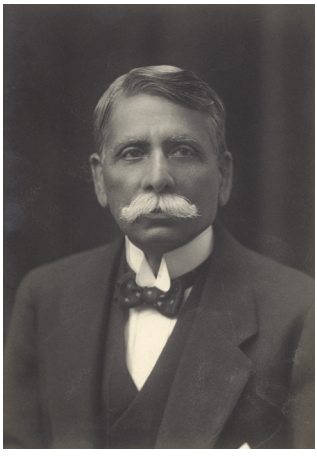


Illustration 23. Syed Ameer Ali

He also served as president of the committee of the Hooghly Imambara and founded the Central National Muhammadan Association.

In 1904, he moved to England where he served on the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council until his death in 1928. He was also a prominent member of the Royal Asiatic Society, which he joined in 1904, serving on its council from 1907 to 1911 and 1915 to 1918, and as vice-president from 1911 to 1915.

Ameer Ali wrote a number of important works on Islam and Islamic law, including *A critical examination of the life and teachings of Mohammed* (1873), *The spirit of Islam* (1891) and *A short history of the Saracens* (1899). A. Yusuf Ali wrote that his work can

> be considered under three heads, as a Muslim Jurist, as an interpreter of modernism in Islam both to the West and to his own co-religionists, and as a worker in the cause of Islam in the larger movements, political, social, and international. (Ali, 'The Right Hon. Syed Ameer Ali', p. 986)

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

A critical examination of the life and teachings of Mohammed

DATE 1873
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

This was Syed Ameer Ali's first major work, published in 1873 when he was 24 years old. He wrote it expressly to explain the person of Muḥammad and also Islam more generally to a European readership, often by making comparisons with Christianity, and to address what he saw as errors in European scholarship on Islam. It comprises 19 chapters in 346 pages. Ameer Ali regarded *The life and teachings of Mohammed or the spirit of Islâm*, which appeared in 1891, as a second edition of this work. This edition was republished in 1902 under the slightly changed title *The spirit of Islâm or the life and teachings of Mohammed*. As with the original, these later editions also consist of 19 chapters, ten on the religion of Islam and nine on the life of Muḥammad. Here, the 1873 edition will be discussed, with some comments on the 1902 edition at the end.

At the beginning of the preface, Ameer Ali notes that, although Muḥammad's life and teachings have been subject to attacks by followers of other religions, with Christian authors Friedrich Spanheim (1600-49), Humphrey Prideaux (1648-1724; *CMR* 13, 87-95) and Barthélemy d'Herbelot (1625-95; *CMR* 9, 610-18) singled out in this regard, more liberal views have recently been expressed, represented mainly by Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881; *CMR* 17, 165-75) and Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-82; *CMR* 16, 303-5). He turns to particular scholars on Muḥammad, challenging the work of Aloys Sprenger (1813-93; *CMR* 24, 472-95) as pseudo-philosophical and as 'biased against Islâm, in spite of all attempts to appear impartial and critical' (p. vi), and judges the work of William Muir (1819-1905; *CMR* 24, 666-96) as more rigorous, even though it contains certain biases due to its being written to aid Christian missionaries. He regards Armand-Pierre Caussin de Perceval (1795-1871; *CMR* 21, 221-5) as the most impartial among European scholars and explains that his own goal is to 'disabuse the minds of many readers of false impressions and false prejudices' (p. viii) and to show that Islam has been just like Christianity in helping to 'elevate humanity'.

Ch. 1, which focuses on Arabia at the time of the Prophet Muḥammad's birth, begins by situating the origins of Islam in a context familiar to Christian audiences, as Ameer Ali notes the similar religious and social conditions that were at play in the places where Jesus (here referred to as 'the Great Prophet of Nazareth') and Muḥammad were born (p. 1). This chapter includes a short exploration of the history of Christianity within the wider history of Arabia. Christianity intensified the social problems of western Asia, destroyed the moral fabric of Egypt and North Africa, and brought war and social degradation to Europe. The upshot was that at the time of Muḥammad's birth, although Christianity and Judaism had an influence on the traditions, myths and legends that made up the cultures in the Arabian Peninsula, neither had raised the moral and spiritual level of the Arabs. Muḥammad, however, took these and other religious traditions and used them as a lever to raise up the Arabs from social and moral degradation.

Chs 2-10 cover the span of Muḥammad's life. There is very little on Christianity here beyond some discussion of Christian works about Muḥammad (particularly Muir) and comments on them in footnotes (see e.g. pp. 124, 145-6). At the end of ch. 5 there is a short note on the similar beliefs about angels and demons in Christianity and Islam (pp. 86-7), and elsewhere examples from Christian history are sometimes used for comparison. Ameer Ali notes, for example, that the Battle of Badr in 624, at which Muḥammad and a force of Muslims defeated a larger force of pagan Meccans, was equivalent in importance to the Battle of the Milvian Bridge in 312, before which Constantine converted to Christianity (p. 89), in that they marked crucial turning points in the histories of the two religions. Later, he identifies the cruel treatment and murder of Muslim envoys sent by Muḥammad to Byzantium as the basic cause of conflict between Islam and Christianity (p. 123).

Chs 11-19 focus on aspects of Islam. In ch. 11, which explores the concept of God in Islam, Ameer Ali describes the 'absurd' concepts of God in Judaism and Christianity, the latter being a mixture of 'Neopythagorianism, Platonism, Judaeo-Hellenistic philosophy and the teachings of Jesus' (p. 163), which, being incomprehensible to the masses, led them to revert to the worship of relics and a goddess (Mary). This chapter presents Muḥammad as 'the grand apostle of the unity of God' (p. 165) and also refers to passages in the Qur'an that express disapproval of Jewish and Christian conceptions of God.

Ch. 12 frequently compares the Islamic practical duties of prayer, fasting, almsgiving and pilgrimage with Jewish, Christian and sometimes

Zoroastrian equivalents. It tends to present Islamic practices as the perfection of practices in other religions. For instance, like the absurd Zoroastrian, Jewish and Christian conceptions of the Godhead, corrupt practices of prayer in these religions – in Christianity it was the monopoly of the priesthood – found perfection in Muḥammad's teaching.

Ch. 13 is particularly important, since it explores the notion that Islam was 'spread by the sword', an idea that has often featured in Christian works about Islam. Ameer Ali insists that, although the criticism of 'the enemies of the Prophet' that the religion was spread and upheld through violence (p. 197) is often expressed, it can be refuted. He argues that Muḥammad's violent response to his enemies in Mecca was an act of self-defence and self-preservation, because the choice was between fighting or being massacred. He compares violence among Muslims with violence among Christians and Jews, arguing that the early Christians forgot 'the doctrine of humility and meekness, preached by the Prophet of Nazareth [...] in the pride of power' (p. 199), with the result that Christianity became an aggressive and persecuting religion as soon as it became dominant. Here, Ameer Ali challenges comparisons between the lives of Jesus and Muḥammad. He notes that Jesus had a small number of followers and that he died before they became numerous or powerful. Although both he and Muḥammad preached gentleness, charity and love, Muḥammad was born into a barbarous nation that lacked the humanising influences of the Romans and Greeks. His movement expanded rapidly within his own lifetime and, as a result of achieving religious and political power in Medina, he became embroiled in conflict in order to sustain his community, but achieved peace by bringing the Arab tribes together to worship God.

Next, Ameer Ali turns to the topic of war as an exterminating and inhuman force. He argues that Christianity has done little to create what he calls a system of international obligations and observes: 'From the first slaughters of Charlemagne, with the full sanction of the Church, to the massacre and enslavement of the unoffending races of America, there is an unbroken series of the infringement of international duties, and the claims of humanity' (p. 205). In contrast, Islam is 'opposed to isolation and exclusiveness' (p. 206). He notes that Muḥammad instituted laws on toleration and freedom of religion, and also legislation about the taxes to be paid by non-Muslims under Muslim rule. Returning to his point that war in early Islam was primarily the result of a need for the Muslim community to respond to enemies, Ameer Ali notes that qur'anic law stipulates that war should only be waged in self-defence and not aggression. At the end of the chapter he refers to Muir, who links together Muslim

violence and proselytisation, noting that although all religions, including Islam, have a history of aggression, it is not possible to maintain that Islam was intentionally spread through the use of force or that it is any more aggressive than any other religion (pp. 210-14). Citing some more examples of Christian violence, he ends by noting that, whereas Islam took up the sword in self-defence, when Christianity became the dominant religion it 'grasped it, in order to stifle freedom of thought and liberty of belief' (p. 216).

Ch. 14 focuses on polygamy and divorce. Ameer Ali's aim is to illustrate that polygamy was widely practised in human history and in many religions, including Christianity. He notes, for example, that both Augustine and German reformers in the 16th century defended it and argues that 'The greatest and most reprehensible mistake committed by Christian writers is to suppose that Mohammed either adopted or legalized polygamy' (p. 223), because Muḥammad was born into a country where polygamy was the norm and in a time when it was also the norm in other countries, including Christian ones. Furthermore, polygamy arises from particular circumstances and, contrary to what popular European thought assumes, it is not absolutely evil. Ameer Ali also explores the topic of divorce and the place of women in Islam. He notes that, although convents and nunneries in Christianity helped to alleviate the position of women in face of tyranny, lust and violence, the religion itself assisted in the vilification of women. In contrast, Islam includes respect for women among its central tenets. Ch. 15 focuses on slavery, which, like polygamy, existed among all nations. Ameer Ali explores the history of slavery in Judaism, Christianity and the Roman world, noting that the advent of Christianity had little impact on its existence, while Islam provided for its 'gradual but absolute extinction' (p. 255).

Ch. 16 covers a range of topics, including the resurrection of Christ and the concept of the Messiah. Here, Ameer Ali explores the person of Jesus and the millennialism of early Christianity. He is critical of traditions about Jesus, noting that there are difficulties in ascertaining what he actually said, though he identifies in what Jesus is supposed to have said the theme of the coming of the kingdom of heaven, which is the result, he argues, of Jesus realising the difficulties associated with attaining change in society immediately. After exploring Muslim conceptions of reward and punishment in the afterlife, where he seeks in part to challenge the idea that Muḥammad's conception of the afterlife was completely 'sensuous' (a common Christian assumption), Ameer Ali draws parallels between

Muḥammad's and Jesus's religious consciousness gradually widening and developing.

Ch. 17 explores Muslim intellectual culture, the extremely short ch. 18 focuses on the political character of Islam, and ch. 19 explores Muslim learning and arts. While these chapters do not directly touch on Christian-Muslim relations, they explore themes that were often lacking in Christian scholarly sources. In his concluding paragraph, Ameer Ali expresses his hope that Islam and Christianity will work together, since both aim at the same goal of elevating humankind. He challenges conceptions of Christian-Muslim hostility and asks Christians and Muslims to adopt as a motto the words of Muḥammad: 'Try to excel in good works; when ye shall return unto God, He will tell you as to that in which ye have differed' (p. 346).

The book is concerned with addressing misunderstandings or errors about Islam that are harboured by Europeans. It directly challenges often-repeated claims about topics such as the spread of Islam through violence and its adoption of polygamy by highlighting the importance of contextual factors and the existence of similar ideas and practices within Christianity, and through justifications (such as that the violence committed by the first Muslim community was a form of self-defence) and 'reinterpretation'. According to William Clarence-Smith, the book and these arguments were in part the outcome of Ameer Ali's realisation of the 'strength of British feelings on the question of Islam and slavery' ('Islam and the abolition of the slave trade', p. 186). He was alerted to this by David Livingstone's publications in which Muslims were portrayed as slavers. The book can thus be regarded as an apology for Islam, though it is also much more than this.

Muhammad Mojlum Khan describes *A critical examination* as the product of Ameer Ali's exploration of 'the traditional Islamic worldview vis-à-vis the post-Enlightenment European *Weltanschauung*[. ...] In this book, Ameer Ali created a synthesis between traditional Islam and the modern Western secular mindset' (*Muslim heritage of Bengal*, p. 185), allowing him to provide a vision of Muḥammad's teachings as universal ethical principles.

In *The spirit of Islâm or the life and teachings of Mohammed* , published about 30 years after *A critical examination*, Ameer Ali presents a darker view of Christianity. In the preface, for example, when he discusses Constantine's adoption of Christianity, he criticises the divisions in Christianity, the lack of Christian ideals among people in general, widespread

paganism marked by relic and saint worship, and the poor social conditions and the oppression fostered by Christianity (*Spirit of Islâm*, pp. xlii-xlvi). Elsewhere, he claims that the true person of Jesus is lost in legend and that the New Testament is unreliable as a historical and religious source, particularly on the matter of Jesus's divinity (pp. 120-1). He also includes fuller references to historical and contemporary instances of Christian violence as part of his discussion of the question as to whether Islam is a violent religion (p. 180).

Despite these misgivings, however, Ameer Ali declares that, with the exception of the understanding of Christ as divine Son, 'there is no fundamental difference between Christianity and Islâm. In their essence they are one and the same; both are the outcome of the same spiritual forces working in humanity' (*Spirit of Islâm*, pp. 157-8). In fact, 'The true Moslem is a true Christian, in that he accepts the ministry of Jesus, and tries to work out the moral preached by him' (p. 157). Both religions 'have produced results in accordance with the nature of the soil through which they have found their course' (p. 158). At the same time, as Christianity spread outside Palestine, it ceased to be Christian and, in Ameer Ali's own time, it represents something closer to a philosophy than to a positive religion. However, Islam faces problems similar to those of Christianity, including the rise of ritualism and lack of enthusiasm (p. 160).

SIGNIFICANCE

For Nandini Chatterjee, *A critical examination* was an exploration of Muslim law and ethics encapsulated in Ameer Ali's assertion that, with the Prophet Muḥammad, ethics and law were fully and effectively united for the first time, and without the assistance of any 'royal disciple' ('Law, culture and history', p. 150). Ameer Ali's assertions that practices such as polygamy and slavery were bound by historical and cultural circumstances, and his highlighting of their existence in religions other than Islam, as well as his demonstrations of Muḥammad's progressiveness, when taken also alongside his statements that modern Muslims question these practices, helped to emphasise that Islamic law evolved with the times. Chatterjee notes that the book represented the foundations of the approach that Ameer Ali would spend the rest of his life building.

In *The claims of Christianity* (1894), William Samuel Lilly (*CMR* 24, 880-9) grapples with *The life and teachings of Mohammed* and praises the accuracy of its historical and religious descriptions in comparison with contemporary European works. At the same time, Lilly questions Ameer Ali's apology for Islam, arguing that he adheres to an ideal form of the

faith. He particularly challenges the way he treats the question of women in Islam.

As well as continuing to feature in scholarly work on the history of Islamic thought, ethics and law, the book had an influence in the world of literature. Epista Halder notes its important influence on the authors of Muslim folk literature, who admired Ameer Ali even though they rejected his Westernism. Halder records that the Bengali writer Sheikh Abdur Rahim (1859-1931) composed his 1887 biography of Muḥammad, *Hajarat Mahāmmader Jīban o Dharmanīti* (1887), as a response to the book within the context of pan-Islamic awakening (Halder, *Reclaiming Karbala*).

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A short history of the Saracens

DATE 1899
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

A short history of the Saracens was first published in 1899 and republished frequently afterwards. The 1954 edition, a reprint of the 1927 edition, incorporating corrections made in 1909, 1921 and 1924, is in 32 chapters spanning 640 pages including appendices and indices. This is the edition used here.

Chs 1-3 cover pre-Islamic Arabia and the life of Muḥammad; chs 4-6 the Rightly-Guided Caliphs; chs 7-14 the Umayyad dynasty; chs 15-25 the ʿAbbāsid dynasty; chs 26-31 al-Andalus; and ch. 32 Muslims in Africa. The chapters at the end of most sections (ch. 6 on the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, ch. 14 on the Umayyads, chs 24 and 25 on the ʿAbbāsids, and ch. 31 on al-Andalus) focus on art, culture, society, law, education and scholarship,

While war between Christians and Muslims features as the backdrop for many sections, it is not usually explored explicitly as interreligious conflict, while sections that focus on Christian-Muslim interactions tend to examine Muslim policies towards Christians under their rule. Thus, ch. 3, which covers Muḥammad's years in Medina (622-32), includes a section on the charter supposedly given by him to St Catherine's monastery, Sinai, which grants rights to Christians and sets limitations on Muslim interactions with Christians (pp. 14-15; Ameer Ali uses the term *Ashtiname* and accepts the charter as a historical document); and later, when he discusses the effects of the Muslim conquest of Iberia (ch. 9), he argues that Muslim policies were grounded in tolerance, the exact opposite of the persecution and intolerance that had marked Christian rule there (p. 113). He suggests, moreover, that modern governments should learn from the

Muslim administration of Iberia, pointing out that Christians were able to practise their religion regardless of age or gender, they could follow their own laws, they had their own judges and governors responsible for tax collection and settling disputes, and public service was open to all regardless of religious identity (p. 114). So fair were Muslim policies that, in his view, 'The Christians themselves preferred the mild, generous, and beneficent rule of the Saracen to the grinding tyranny of the Goth or Frank, and flocked back into the cities and villages which they had at first abandoned through terror' (pp. 114-15). Descriptions of this kind feature again in later chapters that focus on Muslim Iberia and that discuss the policies adopted by Muslim rulers such as the ʿAbbāsid Caliph al-Maʾmūn (r. 813-33).

When he is writing on the causes of the Crusades in ch. 20, Ameer Ali stresses the toleration and protection that Christians were afforded under Muslim rule, including freedom of movement, the right to acquire property and the freedom to enter public office on equal terms with Muslims (p. 321). He also notes that there were churches everywhere and Christians were encouraged to go on pilgrimage to the Holy Land. But in spite of these privileges and the protection of their Muslim hosts, fanatical Christian pilgrims considered 'the presence of the Moslem in Jerusalem as an abomination [...] and [...] carried away in their hearts a bitter hatred' (p. 322). So, as he sees it, Christian religious fanaticism was the primary cause of the First Crusade, although the desire for territory and wealth also played a role. Later in his account of the Crusades, he describes Saladin's enlightened policies, including his permission for Christians to settle in his lands, his provision of safe passage for combatants and their families out of his lands, and his freeing of over 10,000 prisoners (pp. 356-7). This contrasted with the cruelty of Christian rulers, particularly towards Christians from Jerusalem to whom they refused entry at Antioch and Tripoli.

While Ameer Ali does not usually comment on these Muslim policies towards Christians, he compares them in some instances with Christian policy at the time, which he calls less liberal and thus inferior. He explores some Christian policies towards Muslims in detail, for example in ch. 30, where he describes persecutions of Muslims in Iberia under Christian rule that included forced conversions and, ultimately, the expulsion of the descendants of Muslims who had professed Christianity (pp. 560-3). Ameer Ali asserts that these Muslims only ever became nominal Christians, continuing to perform the five daily prayers and washing off the waters of baptism. He labels the Caliph Hisham I of Cordoba's (r. 788-96) war

against the Christians to the north a conflict between 'civilization' and 'barbarism' (p. 480).

SIGNIFICANCE

The popularity of *A short history of the Saracens* is evident from the number of new editions and reprints and also its regular appearance in footnotes and bibliographies in studies of both Islam and Anglo-Indian relations. To Muhammad Mojlum Khan, it represents the first serious attempt by a Muslim to write a history of Islam in a European language with the aim of inspiring other Muslims to write their own histories of Islam and the Arabs (*Muslim heritage of Bengal*, pp. 186-7). For Monica M. Ringer, it was an important influence within the tradition of 'new Islamic histories', which she sees as 'manifestations of Islamic modernists' adoption of the theoretical landscape of historicism and its intendent methodology' (*Islamic modernism*, p. 68). Christopher Bayly concurs, noting that Ameer Ali seeks to remedy ignorance about the socio-economic and intellectual development of the Arabs, whose civilisation not only informed the basis of various institutions in modern Europe but also provided a model for the effective administration of Muslim peoples – a comment 'directed largely to the British Empire' (*Indian thought*, p. 235). This point seems to have been taken at an early stage after the book was first published, because it was circulated among British officers in the Middle East during the First World War (Bayly, 'Representing Copts and Muhammadans').

PUBLICATIONS

Syed Ameer Ali, *A short history of the Saracens, being a concise account of the rise and decline of the Saracenic power and of the economic, social and intellectual development of the Arab nation from the earliest times to the destruction of Bagdad, and the expulsion of the Moors from Spain*, London, 1899, 1985; 102123994 (digitised version available through Hathi Trust)

Syed Ameer Ali, *Muṣavver tārīḫ-i İslām*, trans. M. Rauf, 2 vols, Istanbul, 1913 (Ottoman Turkish trans.); 102432696 (digitised version available through Hathi Trust)

Syed Ameer Ali, *A short history of the Saracens, being a concise account of the rise and decline of the Saracenic power and of the economic, social and intellectual development of the Arab nation from the earliest times to the destruction of Bagdad, and the expulsion of the Moors from Spain*, London, 1921[2]

Syed Ameer Ali, *A short history of the Saracens, being a concise account of the rise and decline of the Saracenic power and of the economic, social and intellectual development of the Arab nation from the earliest times to the destruction of Bagdad, and the expulsion of the Moors from Spain*, London, 1924[3], Delhi, 1926, Lahore, 1927, London, 1927, 1953, New Delhi, 1977; 001248352 (digitised version available through Hathi Trust)

Syed Ameer Ali, *Kaikyōshi*, Tokyo, 1942 (Japanese trans.)

Syed Ameer Ali, *Tārīkh-i Islām. Jismen avā'il-i ʿahd se tabāhī-yi Baghdād aur Andalus se ikhrāj-i Islāmiyān tak ʿArab saltanat ke ʿurūj o zavāl kī jāmiʿ tārīkh dene ke ʿilāvah saltanat-i ʿArab kī zihnī, iqtiṣādī, ikhlāqī, aur maʿāshiratī taraqqī par mufaṣṣil baḥas kī ga'ī hai*, trans. ʿIlmuddīn Sālik, Hyderabad, [1947], repr. Karachi, [1965], Lahore, 2009 (Urdu trans.)

Syed Ameer Ali, *A short history of the Saracens, being a concise account of the rise and decline of the Saracenic power and of the economic, social and intellectual development of the Arab nation from the earliest times to the destruction of Bagdad, and the expulsion of the Moors from Spain*, London, 1961[4]

Syed Ameer Ali, *Mukhtaṣar tārikh al-ʿArab*, Beirut, [1967], repr. 1981 (Arabic trans.)

Syed Ameer Ali, *Tārīkh-i siyāsī va ijtimāʿī-i Islām*, trans. Iraj Razzāqī, Mashhad, 1992 (Persian trans.)

Syed Ameer Ali, *Sejarah evolusi dan keunggulan Islam*, trans. Muhammad Salleh Rahamad, Kuala Lumpur, 1992 (Malay trans.)

Syed Ameer Ali, *Āraba jātira itihāsa*, Dhaka, 1995 (Bengali trans.)

Syed Ameer Ali, *Rūḥ-i Islām*, trans. Muhammad Hadi Husain, Jammun, 1996 (Urdu trans.)

STUDIES

C.A. Bayly, *Indian thought in the age of liberalism and empire*, Cambridge, 2012

Khan, *Muslim heritage of Bengal*

C.A. Bayly, 'Representing Copts and Muhammadans. Empire, nation, and community in Egypt and India, 1880-1914', in L.T. Fawaz and C.A. Bayly (eds), *Modernity and culture. From the Mediterranean to the Indian Ocean*, New York, 2002, 158-203

M.M. Ringer, *Islamic modernism and the re-enchantment of the sacred in the age of history*, Edinburgh, 2000

Other works

DATE 1880-1968
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

A number of other works by Ameer Ali touch on matters related to Christian-Muslim relations. Prominent among them are the five discussed here.

The personal law of the Mahommedans was first published in 1880. It is a sizeable work, 430 pages long. While it does not deal with Christian-Muslim relations directly, it does include some legal examples involving interreligious relations. Of greatest interest is its discussion of marriage. Within a wider discussion of potential conflict between Muslim laws and the laws of non-Muslim countries where Muslims live (pp. 124-47), Ameer Ali explores the complementary nature of Muslim and English law with respect to interreligious marriages (dealing mainly with Muslim men marrying non-Muslim women) and children born within them. He also discusses Christians adopting Muslim children and the legal ramifications of Muslims converting to Christianity and non-Muslims converting to Islam.

Based on his 1884 Tagore Law Lectures, in 1885 Ali published *The law relating to gifts, trusts and testamentary dispositions among the Mahommedans*, another large work of 635 pages. It later became vol. 1 of *Mahommedan law*, with vol. 2 covering *The personal law of the Mahommedans*. It includes passages pertaining to the donation of a *waqf* (an inviolable pious endowment) by Muslims to non-Muslims, the impermissibility of converting Christian or Jewish homes into mosques, using funds from a *waqf* to pay for the copying of the Pentateuch or Gospels, or for the construction of a church, and rules relating to wills made by non-Muslims or in cases of Muslims having non-Muslim family members. These legal discussions point to the reality that Ameer Ali and other Muslims were experiencing personally, of Christians and Muslims who were living alongside one another having to navigate their way among diverse legal rulings.

The ethics of Islam, published in 1893 and 51 pages long, was based on a lecture delivered to the Society for the Higher Training of Youths in Calcutta. It has been reprinted several times, most recently in 2018. At the beginning, Ameer Ali writes that he hopes it can 'help towards bridging the gulf which still [...] divides the Mahommedans, not only from the Hindoos, but also from the Christians – followers of a cognate creed' (p. vii).

The work seeks to challenge the impression that Islam is a religion of violence by presenting an exposition of Muslim ethics. Ameer Ali opens by noting that non-Muslims have a false view of Islam, often assuming that most of its principles have been adopted from Christianity and Judaism and that those that were not 'may be summarised by the stern alternative of "the Koran or the sword"' (p. 1). He describes how these prejudiced views have been spread through the colonial education system in India, helping to divide Hindus and Muslims in the country. With the importance of his challenge to the common misconceptions of Islam held in Europe thus outlined, Ameer Ali moves into his argument and the presentation of Muslim teachings, drawing primarily on Muslim sources.

Islâm, a short book of 78 pages, was first published in 1906. Citations below are to the 1906 edition. Here, Ameer Ali aims to dispel Christian prejudice against Islam and Muḥammad by providing an introduction to the faith and its history based on Muslim sources. He includes a short section on the guarantees given by Muḥammad in a charter to Christians from Najrān, quoting directly from the text itself (which he appears to accept as genuine), and also a short account of the Caliph 'Umar's (r. 634-44) conduct when he entered Jerusalem following the capitulation of the city in 637. He notes that the caliph met leading Christians and guaranteed them 'the free exercise of their religion, and the possession of their churches, subject to a light tax' (p. 62), and he records that 'Umar declined to accept the Patriarch Sophronius's invitation to pray in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre lest Muslims in later times were to follow his example and the church would be turned into a mosque.

Memoirs and other writings of Syed Ameer Ali, published in 1968, is a collection of a number of articles together with Ameer Ali's *Memoirs*. These latter include information about his education, acquaintances with members of the British establishment in India, and his time in England (pp. 5-130). Although he got to know Christians in England, not least the 'widow of a clergyman' (p. 24) with whom he lodged, he does not say much about religious differences, though with a few exceptions. One is his note, after he attended a meeting about women's suffrage, on how far English law was behind Muslim law on women's rights (pp. 25-6). Another is his account of a conversation in which he explained the Muslim attitude towards slavery to Henry Channing (nephew of William Channing), who was 'impressed with the humane provision of the Islamic law' (p. 32). Channing lent him a copy of James Freeman Clark's *Ten great religions* (1871), and, when he read it, he felt compelled to complain about the many

errors he found in it, so Channing encouraged him to write something on the subject. The result was *A critical examination of the life and teachings of Mohammed*.

Memoirs and other writings of Syed Ameer Ali also includes an essay entitled 'The unrest in India – its meaning' (pp. 264-79), which briefly explores the way in which British missionary, colonial and educational policy in India caused Islam to be represented poorly and damaged Hindu-Muslim relations, encouraging mutual antipathy.

At the end of the work is a series of letters published in *The Times* (pp. 333-50). In some of these, Ameer Ali appeals to readers concerning contemporary events and makes direct references to their Christian religion, and in others he seeks to correct misconceptions about Islam.

SIGNIFICANCE

While some of these works are significant in their own right as legal and ethical texts, they all attest to themes that are present in the works Ameer Ali wrote specifically about relations between Muslims and Christians. First, like *A critical examination of the life and teachings of Mohammed* and *A short history of the Saracens*, some of these works point to his challenge to contemporary European conceptions of Islam and his aim to facilitate the acquisition of more detailed knowledge of the religion, its history and its followers. These historical challenges are not only a discussion of the past, but also prescriptions for how Muslim societies under colonial rule should be administered in the present.

Second, some of these works point to legal and ethical issues in relations between Christians and Muslims that are as important now as when he wrote about them, particularly the important themes of interfaith marriage and conversion. Finally, some of these works show the influence of Ameer Ali's interactions with Christians.

PUBLICATIONS

Syed Ameer Ali, *The personal law of the Mahommedans* (*according to all the schools*) *together with a comparative sketch of the law of inheritance among the Sunnis and the Shias*, London, 1880; K.A3978 (digitised version available through Robarts Library, University of Toronto)

Syed Ameer Ali, *The personal law of the Mahommedans* (*according to all the schools*), Calcutta, 1894[2]

Syed Ameer Ali, *The personal law of the Mahommedans* (*according to all the schools*), Calcutta, 1904[3]

Syed Ameer Ali, *The personal law of the Mahommedans* (*according to all the schools*), Calcutta, 1908[4]

Syed Ameer Ali, *The personal law of the Mahommedans* (*according to all the schools*), Calcutta, 1929[5]

Syed Ameer Ali, *The law relating to gifts, trusts and testamentary dispositions among the Mahommedans* (*according to the Hanafi, Maliki, Shâfeï, and Shiah schools*). *Compiled from authorities in the original Arabic with explanatory notes and references to decided cases, and an introduction on the growth and development of Mahommedan jurisprudence*, Calcutta, 1885; 008693846 (digitised version available through Hathi Trust)

Syed Ameer Ali, *Tagore Law Lectures – 1884. The law relating to gifts, trusts and testamentary dispositions among the Mahommedans* (*according to the Hanafi, Maliki, Shâfeï, and Shiah schools*). *Compiled from authorities in the original Arabic with explanatory notes and references to decided cases, and an introduction on the growth and development of Mahommedan jurisprudence*, London, 2013

Syed Ameer Ali, *The ethics of Islam*, Calcutta, 1893

Syed Ameer Ali, *Islâm*, London, 1906, repr. 1909, Karachi, [195-]

Syed Ameer Ali, *Islâm*, Tananarive, 1962 (French trans.)

Syed Razi Wasti (ed.), *Memoirs and other writings of Syed Ameer Ali*, Lahore, 1968, repr. Delhi, 1985

James Harry Morris

William Samuel Lilly

DATE OF BIRTH 10 July 1840
PLACE OF BIRTH Fifehead, Dorset
DATE OF DEATH 29 August 1919
PLACE OF DEATH London

BIOGRAPHY

Following his early upbringing and schooling, William Lilly entered Cambridge University in 1859 to study law. He joined the Indian Civil Service in 1861 and became secretary to the Government of Madras in 1869, but was forced to return to England due to ill health. He was admitted to the Inner Temple in April 1869 and became a barrister in November 1873, though he did not practise law. He converted to Roman Catholicism in 1874, and served as secretary of the Catholic Union of Great Britain for about 20 years.

Lilly wrote extensively on history, society and religion, including *Ancient religion and modern thought* (1884), *Studies in religion and literature* (1904), and *Many mansions. Studies in ancient religion and modern thought* (1907). He died in 1919 at his home in London.

MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION

J. Foster, 'Lilly, William Samuel', in J. Foster, *Men at the Bar*, London, 1885, 279 (gives brief biographical details)

J.W. Cousin, 'Lilly, William Samuel', *A short biographical dictionary of English literature*, London, 1910, 440 (list of his main publications)

Anon., 'Death of Mr. W.S. Lilly. Essayist and Catholic champion', *The Times*, 1 September 1919 (issue 42193), p. 13; https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/The_Times/1919/Obituary/William_Samuel_Lilly

WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Discussions about Islam in Lilly's works

DATE 1884-1907
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

Lilly discusses Islam and Muslims in at least four of his books. His presentations show remarkable independence of mind and rare sensitivity towards a faith that was little known but nevertheless condemned for its excesses and failures.

Ancient religion and modern thought, which was published in 1884 and is 371 pages long (excluding front matter), contains an exploration of Islam in the third chapter (pp. 103-93), which focuses on contemporary trends and draws attention to the vitality of Islam as evidenced by the work of Muslim missionaries in Africa. He begins by engaging with current Christian scholarship, quoting from Edward Sell's (1839-1932; *CMR* 24, 781-803) *The faith of Islam* (1880) in order to identify Islam as a barrier to Christian missionary work in Asia, and praising Edward Henry Palmer's (1840-82; *CMR* 17, 286-7) translation of the Qur'an (1880) for its role in making knowledge of the religion more accessible. He praises the development in scholarship towards an appreciation of the person of Muḥammad, making comparisons with earlier views that described him as a dreamer, imposter, or even the devil. For Lilly, understanding the person of Muḥammad – whose qualities of courage, generosity, sweetness, friendship and love of children, amongst others – is key to understanding both the Qur'an and Islam.

Lilly's main goal in this chapter is to provide an introduction to Sufism, which he notes has not received a great deal of attention from European scholars despite its great influence in the Muslim world. Like his preceding discussion, this is situated within a discussion about contemporary scholarship. Lilly identifies the origins of Sufism within the Qur'an and the person of Muḥammad, whom he calls its author, and then examines key Sufis and Muslim saints (*Ancient religion*, pp. 167-72). Next he explores Sufi doctrine, which, in spite of major differences, he views as an 'analogy to much that we find in the writings of Christian mystics' (p. 172). In his summary of Farīd al-Dīn's (1145-1221) *Book of counsels* (or *Pend-Nâma*), he remarks that it reminds him of *The imitation of Christ*, *The spiritual*

combat and the poetic books of the Bible, and goes on to identify links between the work and Christianity. But while he claims that the book should be assigned a high place amongst works of piety, for Christians 'it presents one radical defect' (p. 177), which is that it fails to mention Christ. Nevertheless, he asserts that the same love of God that was manifest in Christ's mission is also the theme and source of inspiration in this work.

He also compares Sufism to Christianity at other points. For example, noting that it is 'upon the practice of Divine love that the Sûfîs rest all morality' (p. 184), he remarks that a Sufi described in a way remarkably similar to the Jesuit missionary Francis Xavier that people who served God out of fear of punishment or hope for reward were really bad. He also compares the organisation of Sufism into schools and brotherhoods to Roman Catholic monastic orders.

The claims of Christianity (1894) contains an extensive exploration of Islam, particularly in ch. 3, 'Christianity and Islam' (pp. 37-86). The book consists of seven chapters and is 258 pages long (excluding front matter). It seeks to explore two claims made by Christianity: that it is the 'sole and sufficient oracle of divine truth' (p. 2), and that it is not only an idea or theology, but also a community. Since both Buddhism and Islam claim universality, Lilly begins with two chapters on Christianity in comparison with these religions.

Opening his exploration of Islam, Lilly notes that, unlike Buddhism, it has remained true to its core idea that 'there is no God but God, and that Mohammed is the Prophet of God'. He outlines the missionary successes of Islam, particularly in the latter half of the 19th century, during which many more people became Muslims than Christians, and more Christians became Muslims than Muslims became Christians. Whilst many Muslims in India are from the 'lower races', Lilly suggests that Islam should not be underestimated. Referring to the period of Muslim rule in Iberia, he notes that, at that time, Muslims almost took control of 'Western civilisation' and that, in the future, they may even achieve full control. He praises Syed Ameer Ali's (*CMR* 24, 863-79) *The life and teachings of Mohammed* (published in 1873) as a work that 'enables us to contemplate Christianity from without and Islām from within' (p. 39). Situating this work within the wider context of Ameer Ali's interactions with Christianity, he observes that Ameer Ali not only explores the reasons for his rejection of Christianity but also gives an apology for Islam. He notes changes in conceptions of Islam in European scholarship, which, although falling short of Ameer Ali's work, take a step in the right direction.

Lilly goes on to explore and assess Ameer Ali's discussion of the life of Muḥammad, divided into three parts: up to 610, when his public ministry began, 610-22, when he was devoted to the peaceful propagation of his religion, and 622-32, when he was 'chief, warrior, supreme magistrate and law giver'. Lilly praises Ameer Ali's description of Muḥammad's early life and his highlighting of Muḥammad's good character and, in support, he cites a corroborating statement from Sir William Muir (*The life of Mahomet*, London, 1861, vol. 2, p. 14; *CMR* 24, pp. 670-80). But he challenges Ameer Ali's suggestion that the respect shown to female members of Muḥammad's family is sufficient to refute charges that women are degraded in Islam (pp. 46-7). Since Muḥammad's early life is an uncontentious topic, Lilly covers it briefly before moving on to the second phase of his career, his mission in Mecca. He gives a brief account, drawing heavily on Ameer Ali's work and focusing primarily on the difficulties faced by Muḥammad and the early Muslims, the search for converts, persecution, refuge in Ethiopia and the deaths of family members, including Khadīja and Abū Ṭālib, and an assassination plot. Moving on, Lilly places most emphasis on the last phase of Muḥammad's career, between the years 622 and 632 in Medina, a period in which he says the 'net result of his work [...] was to cleanse Arabia from foul idolatry and gross immorality, and to diffuse throughout it a Monotheistic religion' (p. 53). He notes that, despite the changed circumstances of these years, Muḥammad's life continued as one of 'plain living and high thinking' (p. 53), but he also remarks that Ameer Ali faced his most difficult task as an apologist in his treatment of this period. In the years before the hijra, few can deny Muḥammad's sincerity or goodness, or look on him without respect and admiration, but then the difficulties begin. Drawing on Edward Augustus Freeman's *The history and conquest of the Saracens* (*CMR* 17, 243-51), Lilly lays out his challenge to Ameer Ali. As Freeman puts it, the hijra marks the beginning of the deterioration of Muḥammad's character. He is now a warrior, has many wives, uses revelation to justify his activities and appears to have had his moral sense obscured. Lilly offers the view that the two periods of Muḥammad's life according to Freeman's exposition do not require any defence. Drawing on both Freeman and Thomas Carlyle (*CMR* 17, 165-75), he observes that the use of violence was understandable in the Arabia of Muḥammad's time, and that it has also been used throughout the history of Christianity. Tolerance, he asserts, is a modern concept that should not be expected in the 7th century. Furthermore, arguing against the idea that Muḥammad was some sort of 'deluder of others' (not made by Freeman

and likely to be a reference to Humphrey Prideaux), he writes that 'the more closely and carefully Mohammed's career is scrutinised, the clearer is it [...] that the accusation of imposture cannot, in any degree, be sustained against him' (p. 55). Lilly relates the story of Muḥammad's death to support his point.

Following this, Lilly explores Ameer Ali's response to the charges of sensuality and cruelty levelled against Muḥammad by Freeman and others: first Muḥammad's marriage to Zaynab, which was often cited by critics, and then his relationship with 'Coptic Mary'. Further on this theme, he discusses claims that Muḥammad was excessive in his sexual appetites, offering Ameer Ali's response that most of the women Muḥammad married 'were helpless or widowed women, well stricken in years' (p. 63). Then he turns to the topic of Muḥammad's cruelty, noting that there is overwhelming evidence that his life was 'marked [...] by benevolence and benignity, which extended even to the lower animals; nay, which extended even to his enemies' (p. 64). In spite of this, however, Lilly notes the difficulties that scholars have faced in trying to justify the later part of Muḥammad's career, which included commands to execute the Jewish tribe of Banū Qurayẓa and assassinate opponents. Here, Lilly again compares the views of Western scholars with Ameer Ali's apologies.

In order to justify this focus on Muḥammad's sensuality and cruelty, Lilly points out that he disagrees with making use of the defects and private failings of a writer's opponents to 'draw unfavourable inferences as to the modes of faith, or the public acts of those persons' (p. 67). Moreover, he believes that there is no correlation between 'the merits or demerits of a particular religious system [...and] the vices or virtues of individual professors of it' (p. 67). He admits that, in the case of the founders of religions, things may be different since 'bad men do not found good churches' (p. 67) and he praises Ameer Ali's attempts to 'clear away the aspersions on the fair fame of his Prophet' (p. 68).

This leads to a discussion of Muslim morality and moral laws. Lilly accepts that these are absolute though they can be understood differently in different cultures (or 'states of civilisation'). Nineteenth-century critics of Muḥammad, he argues, should not expect in him 'the mild virtues of the British "lower middles", the peculiar tenderness of the Nonconformist conscience' (p. 70), because Muḥammad was neither a libertine nor a man of blood, when judged by the standards of his time, and his work elevated ethical standards and formed a movement that 'was, in the best sense of the word, democratic' (p. 71).

Leaving what he describes as an exploration of Muḥammad the man, he turns to Muḥammad as a religious teacher. He repeats the claim made by Edward Gibbon that Islam consists of a truth, that there is only one God, and a fiction, that Muḥammad was the Prophet of God (he does not give a reference, though see *Decline and fall*, London, 1887, vol. 6, p. 222) and focuses on the second part. He criticises the idea that Muḥammad's prophetic experiences were the result of epilepsy, agreeing with Gibbon that this idea was a later Christian invention, and he questions the presumed implausibility of Muḥammad being a prophet by citing John Henry Newman (*The Arians of the fourth century*, third edition, London, 1871, p. 82) among others to suggest that revelation is a universal gift. Here, Lilly comes to a point at which he disagrees with Ameer Ali, that while Islam can be considered a reforming movement in the Arab world and an advancement of religious thought, it cannot supersede the claims of Christianity, as Ameer Ali argues. Lilly elaborates on this, noting that Muḥammad's main achievement has been understood as substituting 'Theism for Polytheism in his native country and a higher morality for a lower' (p. 77). He concurs with the judgement of the Jewish Orientalist Emanuel Deutsch (1829-73) that Muḥammad's religious thinking was Judaism for an Arab audience (*Literary remains of the late Emanuel Deutsch*, London, 1874, p. 64).

Lilly understands that the idea of the 'Divine Unity making, upholding, governing, perfecting all things [...] that at the heart of existence, is Mind, Personality, Law' (p. 78) is central to Islam and, like Ameer Ali, he argues that this does not imply fatalism but 'submission to the will of a moral Governor of the universe' (p. 79). Furthermore, he asserts that Muḥammad's teaching was grounded in the concepts of the existence of God and the free will of humans. Nevertheless, while all these truths are valuable, 'Christianity possesses them as fully as Islām' (p. 80). More than this, Christianity possesses what Islam does not because it is different not in degree but in kind from other religions. Whereas Ameer Ali contrasts the complete and simple system of Muḥammad with an incomplete and unsystematised Christianity as set out by its founder, Lilly asserts that the simplicity of Islam is the 'cause of its intellectual barrenness' and argues that Islam has not encouraged the development of poetry, philosophy or science, and in fact 'has no principle of development' (p. 82). Lilly finds Ameer Ali's comparison of the merits of Islam and Christianity untenable.

At the end of the chapter, Lilly discusses Ameer Ali's position more broadly. He notes that, while Ameer Ali is 'entitled, by his eminent position and wide culture, to be the spokesman of the fifty millions of

Mohammedans who owe allegiance to the Empress of India' (pp. 82-3), the creed he advocates would not be recognised by the majority of Muslims. This is because Ameer Ali adheres to 'a sort of sublimated essence of Mohammedanism, a rationalised Islām' (p. 83). In contrast, Lilly argues, an apologist must deal with religions as 'existing facts [...] not as [what] he thinks they ought to be' (p. 84). Whilst the future of Islam may include 'fruitful activity', it is ultimately a religion of 'low civilisation; destined, in the long run, to give way to a nobler faith' (p. 84). Lilly regards civilisation as based on the family, but Islam has a conception of family that 'is incompatible with the higher stages of human development' (p. 84) and which is grounded in the degradation of women. Lilly gives emphasis to this point – the place of women in Islam growing directly out of Muḥammad's teaching is a 'cancer which no reformer's knife can ever eradicate' (p. 85).

India and its problems (1902) includes an extensive introduction to the history of Muslim rule in the Indian subcontinent (pp. 65-97). Although this chapter builds on the work of Western scholars such as Mountstuart Elphinstone (1779-1859), apart from some short notes on the Emperor Akbar's (r. 1556-1605) respect for Christianity and positive relations with Catholic missionaries, there is little of relevance to Christian-Muslim relations. Later in the book, in the short chapter on non-Christian religions other than Hinduism (pp. 138-53), Lilly introduces Islam through quotations from European scholars, including Freeman, Deutsch and Isaac Taylor (1787-1865) (pp. 145-7). Further on, he offers some notes on the Muslim population of India, praising their trustworthiness, manliness, devotion and self-respect, and challenging the injustice of their 'practical exclusion from the fair share of appointments under Government' (p. 147). He goes so far as to assert that Muslims are superior to the other 'idolatrous races by which they are surrounded' (p. 148).

Many mansions. Being studies in ancient religions and modern thought was published in 1907. It is 260 pages long and is something of a spiritual successor to *Ancient religion and modern thought*, explaining in the Advertisement how *Ancient religion* has not been reprinted but that parts are included in essays now featured in this volume (p. viii). The first chapter, entitled 'The sacred books of the East' (pp. 1-52), explores Max Müller's (1823-1900) 50-volume series of the same title (49 volumes at the time Lilly was writing) giving English translations of Asian religious texts. It includes a brief section on Edward Henry Palmer's translation of the Qur'an (vols 6 and 9 of the series), which Lilly praises, but includes little of relevance to Christian-Muslim relations. However, ch. 4, 'The saints of Islām' (pp. 115-54), which was originally published in *The Fortnightly Review*, deals with

the topic of Sufism. Lilly opens by noting that Christianity and Islam share 'fundamental doctrines and in their historical development, a family resemblance' (p. 155), and that, whereas Christianity appears in many places to be waning, Islam manifests renewed eagerness and zeal. These points, Lilly suggests, are reasons to take interest in the religion and perhaps even compare it to Christianity. Nevertheless, the purpose of this chapter is not comparative religion, but to explore what Lilly describes as the often-overlooked topics of hagiography and Sufism.

The second part of ch. 4 (p. 117-24) is an edited version of the account of Muslim saints in *Ancient religion* (pp. 165-71), as is the next part. Diverging from the equivalent material in the other work, the fourth part of the chapter presents a lengthy quotation, without commentary or analysis, from a certain Téwekkul Bēg about his initiation into a dervish order, and the final section explores the biography of the great mystical poet Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī (1207-73), expanding a two-page passage in *Ancient religion* (pp. 186-7) to 14 pages here (pp. 141-54). Lilly draws parallels between several passages from the *Acts of Jelāl* (from James W. Redhouse's translation of the *Masnavī-i ma'navī*) and accounts of the life of St Francis of Assisi, including their affection for animals and their miraculous silencing of them. Nevertheless, the majority of the section is a selection of quotations from Redhouse's work with little exploration or analysis.

SIGNIFICANCE

Although Lilly's writings on Islam do not appear to have been drawn upon extensively by other scholars, several aspects make them noteworthy as examples of moves within European thought away from medieval attitudes towards Islam. The sections on Sufism in *Ancient religion and modern thought* and *Many mansions*, which are among the earliest introductions in English to Muslim mysticism, are clear examples of a move away from polemic to an appreciative understanding of Muḥammad and Islam more generally, with their sparing comparisons between Sufi and Christian saints pointing to elements within Islam that might attract readers rather than repel.

Lilly's analysis of the work of Syed Ameer Ali is a particularly important aspect of his attitude towards Islam as a tradition that should be approached seriously and sensitively. He shows imaginative understanding of Ameer Ali's presentation of his faith and uses it to counter standard criticisms in popular European scholarship, particularly against Muḥammad's personal life and the conduct of the earliest Muslim community. He accepts the claims made by Ameer Ali and incorporates them

into an account of Islam as a sophisticated religious and social tradition. At the same time, despite these positive steps towards a less polemical view of Islam and its founder, Lilly retained critical distance from Ameer Ali's arguments. He did not fail to notice structural defects in Islam that made it inferior to his own Christianity and a religion that was fundamentally incompatible with higher civilisation.

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James Harry Morris

Walter Ayscoughe Rice

DATE OF BIRTH 27 September 1861
PLACE OF BIRTH Boston, Lincolnshire
DATE OF DEATH 2 July 1948
PLACE OF DEATH Guildford, Surrey

BIOGRAPHY

Walter Ayscoughe Rice was educated at Repton School and Christ's College, Cambridge. In 1887, he was ordained a priest in the Church of England and, in April 1888, he was accepted by the Anglican Church Missionary Society (CMS) for missionary service in India. He served for six years from 1888 in the Punjab, teaching for some of that time at Edwardes High School, Peshawar. He returned to England on medical advice in 1892 and transferred to Iran in 1894.

Following a further break, and having married Clara Colliver Hammond (1866-1952) in 1899, Rice returned to Iran together with his wife for a mission that lasted from 1901 to 1921. He was a highly active and senior missionary secretary in Iran, gathering data for the *Report of Commission IV: The missionary message in relation to non-Christian religions* of the 1910 Edinburgh World Mission Conference. He also worked alongside William St Clair Tisdall (1859-1928; *CMR* 20, 285-309), author of *The religion of the crescent* (1895), whose writings caused rather more of a stir.

MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Crusaders of the twentieth century

DATE 1907
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

Although Rice completed it late in 1907, the publication of *Crusaders of the twentieth century; or, The Christian missionary and the Muslim* was delayed

for three years. He was working in Isfahan when the book appeared in 1910. It is a comprehensive guide that Rice intends will 'help the young missionary' to 'deal in the most sympathetic and effective manner with his Muḥammadan brother' so as to impart 'religious instruction' (p. xliv). It is 511 pages long (including preface and four appendices) and is divided into three parts. The first, 'Personal elements', contains three chapters; the second, 'The Muḥammadan controversy. Consideration of general principles', has seven chapters; the third, 'A systematic attempt to deal with the chief points at issue between Christianity and Islam, in accordance with Oriental ideas', contains 10 chapters. Each chapter is subdivided with headings, subheadings, and numbered and lettered lists. A cellular structure and detailed analytical table of contents reflect its function as manual more than monograph. Rice presents his premise in the introduction proper, that Muslims have been fooled by a false faith, are thus full of false pride, and need to be exposed clearly and convincingly to the flaws in their system of belief (for the sake of their own salvation as much as any advantage to the Church). Rice thus proposes the best way to 'make a successful argument' to the potential convert (p. xlvi), and he describes this mission in chivalric, church-militant terms as a modern crusade, evoking the great age of battle between cross and crescent, which Rice sees as very much alive in his own time – he writes of 'spiritual warfare', if not militancy (p. xlvi).

Part 1, ch. 1, 'The Muslim', begins with questions of what it is about the Muslim character and psyche that might dispose them against the Gospel (here he acknowledges that missions among Muslims had thus far brought only negligible results). Answers are: Muslim pride that comes from an assurance of Paradise with no incentivising doctrine that salvation can be lost through sin to compensate for such fatalism and optimism, thus separation of faith from morals; ignorance of history, geography, science and world affairs, although some Muslims have been turning towards Western education; superstitiousness and a willingness to go the way of idolatry and heterodoxy; and bigotry and insularity that go well beyond every believer's certainty that their creed is correct. Rice balances the perceived negative traits with positive ones, such as that the strengths of Islam derive chiefly from its claim to truth as the 'final and complete revelation of God to man' (p. 12) and from its correspondences with Judaism and Christianity. Nevertheless, Islam is a 'half-truth' or an 'incomplete' or 'perverted one' (p. 13).

Rice makes a concession shared by many Christian writers of the time, that Islam has a certain coherence that precludes mysteries such as the

Trinity and the Incarnation, and avoids confusions or conflicts such as those related to the divine nature of Christ. The God of the Qur'an is 'indulgent' and does not deny human passion or require humans to atone for their baser natures (p. 13). By contrast, what Rice calls 'self-denial' is a virtue and marker of Christian supremacy (p. 16). Although Islam and Christianity align on several central tenets, such as that there is only one true God, Islam begets 'oppression and injustice' whereas Christianity has fostered 'equitable rule' (p. 16). Rice concludes ch. 1 by conceding the failure of Christian mission among Muslims on account of, among other issues, a lack of missionary mobilisation on the one hand and Christian hypocrisy on the other.

Ch. 2, titled 'The missionary', pivots from the Muslim other to the missionary self. Here Rice states that missionaries must be equipped with particular qualities and skills, and several times cites as a worthy example of missionary virtue Henry Martyn (1781-1812; *CMR* 20, 89-111), the Anglican missionary who died young while serving as an East India Company chaplain and was well known for his religious devotion and linguistic prowess.

Ch. 3, 'Inquirers and converts', considers in two segments what in Islam may be unsatisfying to questioning, curious or sympathetic Muslims and advances what in Christianity will appeal to them and attract them to convert. One argument Rice makes is that Islam encourages stagnation in life and does not give Muslims true knowledge of God. Since Paradise is given such emphasis in the Qur'an – as Rice sees it, more than guiding principles for a good life or outlines for understanding and having a relationship with God – the promises of 'sensual joys and pleasures' in the afterlife overshadow any earthly ethic (p. 47). Rice cites the case of an Iranian man who sought out a missionary to say that none of his earnest pourings over of the Qur'an had equipped him with a 'way of life' (p. 47). The chapter concludes with the story of another 'Persian inquirer' who was never baptised but had reportedly come around to the truth of Christianity by acknowledging the miracles of Christ (p. 77).

Part 2 of *Crusaders* turns from the personal to principles. In ch. 1, it claims that controversy can be necessary and efficacious if it is handled correctly by the missionary, while the Bible is sufficient to counter controversialist attacks. However, tougher targets for conversion will only be alienated by questioning Muḥammad's ethics and example or by casting doubt upon the divine origins of the Qur'an. For this task, a subtler form of argument is required in which missionaries should adopt the 'meekness and gentleness' of Christ (2 Corinthians 10:1) in tense encounters. The aim cannot be to cow adversaries or to shame their faith but to attract them

to the 'tender love and awful majesty' of the Christian God as revealed in the Gospel (p. 84).

In ch. 2, Rice explains the 'difficulty of dealing with Orientals' and the consequent need for 'special equipment' (p. 85). He emphasises that Muslims are prejudiced against infidels and exhibit racial as well as religious prejudice against the missionary. But most Muslims are not systematic in their exegesis or rigorous in their theology, and so the missionary must adopt Muslim 'modes of thinking' whilst remaining Christian in 'mind, heart, and sentiment' (p. 94).

In ch. 3, Rice outlines four modes of argument available to missionaries according to the circumstances of each Christian-Muslim encounter: the evidence of the senses; arguments from reason (popular with philosophers); arguments from tradition (preferred by religious scholars); arguments from revelation (common among Sufis). He adds that arguments should be both concise and careful, filled to the brim with allegory and analogy, and appealing to the emotions and senses because Muslims tend to be sensuous. Having established these modes of argument, in ch. 4 he deals with 'methods of arguing instances', such as by adducing proofs and denying contrary claims (p. 107).

In ch. 5, 'The use of the Qur'ān and the holy scriptures in controversy', Rice emphasises that intimate familiarity with the Qur'an is essential for the missionary, as is a command of Arabic and of local languages – this knowledge is a 'valuable weapon' (p. 111). Attacking the Qur'an will never work because, where Christians treat their scripture as manmade, Muslims treat the Qur'an as God's word perfectly and wholly revealed. However, as far as Rice is concerned, Muslims give their holy book 'excessive reverence' (p. 112). He advises a coaxing technique to entice Muslims away from Islam gradually, 'weaning' them from it (p. 112). Thus, using the Qur'an sparingly and gently can encourage them to recognise as many as 16 Christian doctrines, four of which deal with Christ. He touches on ways to introduce Muslims to Church tradition and the Bible and refers to missionary-crusaders possessing an armoury whose greatest weapon is the Bible itself, which is 'infallible' (p. 123).

Rice emphasises that to persuade dubious or unfamiliar Muslims of the authenticity of the Bible is the principal task of the missionary and will bear the best fruit (p. 123). This task can be expedited because the Qur'an itself attests to the authority and authenticity of the Bible. Ch. 6, 'Rules to be observed in conducting controversy', contains a number of recommendations, including not to agitate or anger an opponent, to keep the language of exchange simple, and to tailor every approach to the individual.

Ch. 7, 'Miscellaneous hints and cautions', contains advice for missionaries about what should not be done as much as what should be done. Here, Rice joins the degenerationist narrative that Islamic states and regions are fading or quite dead, an attitude that pervaded Victorian popular culture and lasted well into the 20th century. He counsels that precedence should be given to the Gospel and that the substance of every discussion with Muslims must be on a Christian footing: 'We have not come to the country to listen to these eulogies of a corrupt system', his use of the term 'eulogy' symptomatically bearing implications that Islam is dying (p. 132). Furthermore, he is emphatic that any appeal to temporal power is a road to nowhere: do not extol the spread and breadth of Christianity, the higher number of Christians relative to Muslims, or the wealth and power of Christian powers compared with the 'weakness and decay' of Islamic nations (p. 139). His argument is that missionaries should adhere to the substance of scripture and Christian tradition.

Part 3 of *Crusaders* is the most robust of the three, accounting for well over half of the book. It begins with a lengthy quotation from Richard Chenevix Trench (1807-86), later Archbishop of Dublin and Glendalough, asserting the importance for the Christian evangelist of having 'the fullest understanding of what he was to oppose and how he was to do it' (p. 144) – a clear impetus for the mission statement of this book.

In ch. 1, Rice enumerates the strengths of the Christian position. He rejects the idea that the Bible is redundant for Muslims and instead argues that reading it will be enriching for them, will create no contradiction with possession and veneration of the Qur'an, and, among its other qualities, can arm Muslims with a fuller and clearer plan for salvation. Rice notes the importance of dispensing with the theory of abrogation (that the laws of the New Testament supersede those of the Old and are abrogated in turn by the laws of the Qur'an), and he denies another notion that can be disruptive to mission, that the biblical text has been corrupted. Rice argues that this popular Muslim accusation is impossible partly by stating that, just as God promised to 'guard the Qur'an from corruption' (p. 188; see Q 15:9), He could only have worked in the same way to preserve the purity of the Gospel. Rice combats the idea that the 'existing scriptures are inferior substitutes for the divine originals' (p. 190), arguing that, while it is true that the teachings of Christ were not written and collected immediately, it is also the case that the Qur'an was not compiled in perfect or complete form during the lifetime of the Prophet. Missionaries should reject the accusation of abrogation, corruption and inferiority by stressing that multiple Qur'an chapters, as well as Muḥammad himself, attest to the

truth of all Abrahamic scripture and cast it as a sin to reject any of them. The chapter closes with responses to four scriptural elements that might give credence to the corruption theory from a Muslim perspective.

In ch. 2, 'Mystery in religion. The Trinity', Rice points out that Muslims themselves allow for mysteries when they acknowledge or even celebrate that God is 'incomprehensible and unfathomable' (p. 205). The doctrine of the Trinity, as well as the divine Sonship of Christ, can be treated in much the same way. They are truths revealed and left unexplained: the 'secret things' belong to God; comprehensible matter is given over to the children of God (p. 205; Deuteronomy 29:29). The second and third sections state that human understanding of the Trinity may be sufficient for knowing its truth and its essential workings but human knowledge can only be imperfect and incomplete, given the finite human intellect and the limitations of human thought and language. Rice uses the metaphor of light penetrating lattices in a mosque or canvases in a bazaar: people are portioned radiance and warmth and can work all day thanks to the light, but they cannot 'grasp or imprison' the totality of light (p. 207). Neither the Trinity nor the divine Sonship of Christ should be hindrances to conversion simply because they escape reason. For Rice, the correct attitude to take towards the mysteries of faith – for both Christians and potential converts from Islam – is one of 'humble, reverent submission' because authority demands the 'obedience' that 'springs from a willing heart' (p. 211). Submissiveness and receptiveness to enlightenment are, in fact, qur'anic virtues: 'interpretation' of the holy book belongs to God alone (p. 212; Q 3:7).

Certainly, Rice acknowledges that the idea of a triune God presents a stumbling block for Muslims in light of the Islamic doctrine of the absolute unity of God as well as explicit qur'anic rejections of trinitarianism (p. 212; Q 4:169; Q 5:77). Quoting William Muir (*CMR* 24, 666-96), Rice claims that the Prophet had at most a 'singularly dim and meagre' acquaintance with Christianity (p. 216; Muir, *The life of Mahomet and history of Islam. To the era of the Hegira*, London, 1858, p. 19). He discourages missionaries from trying to overexplain the Trinity and instead encourages them to impart to Muslims the need for 'reverent recourse' to the scriptures and the pleasure of submitting to the 'sacred mystery' (p. 217). On one particular front, kinship can be stressed: Christianity and Islam are both fiercely against idolatry; the concept of a 'plurality of gods' is a true 'horror' to the Christian as much as to the Muslim (p. 218).

Rice opens ch. 3, 'God the Father. Christian and Muhammadan conceptions of God', by unpicking any further alignment between the Christian

and Islamic conceptions of God. Some would have it that the God of the Old Testament and the God of the Qur'an are 'nominally the same' as they share virtually identical attributes (p. 231). But the two are, for Rice, as unalike as light and dark. He argues that the Islamic creed is either 'erroneous' or 'deficient' in its treatment of the one true God on each and every count (p. 232), and he repeats the trope that Muslims are primed to be fatalistic. Indeed, he argues that Muslims are even more predestinarian than Calvinist Christians partly because their promised Paradise is so sensuous, rich and indulgent (even debauched). Sunnīs believe that no Muslim will be 'finally left in hell' because 'the minimum requisite for a Muslim' to be a 'true believer' and thus entitled to Paradise is recitation of the declaration of faith (p. 234), and all Muslims are off the hook, so to speak, because even the gravest sinners will not burn or suffer or remain in hell forever, and some sects hold that none of their own can enter hell at all. Muslims are therefore deficient in their understanding of guilt and sin. The absence of atonement is also a major deficiency.

Rice goes on to argue that the doctrine of Incarnation elevates Christianity above Islam because, in Christ becoming human, God has gifted the 'supreme manifestation of divine love' to believers (p. 239). He encourages missionaries to tell Muslims that to conceive of God in the sense of father gives to the believer all the comfort and safety and tenderness that God the Father has to offer. Christians have better access to God because he is the Father, a figure familiar to humans.

In ch. 4, 'The Lord Jesus Christ', Rice grapples with several themes. The historical record regarding Jesus may be unclear, he acknowledges, but Jesus's suffering and martyrdom upon the cross are fundamentally true and an 'historical fact' witnessed firsthand (p. 251). Belief in the crucifixion is the 'missing link' from the Islamic creed, which Rice attributes to the frailty and vanity of the Prophet himself, who could not bear to think of an Abrahamic prophet being murdered by men and abandoned by God. Muḥammad 'could not tolerate' the 'ignominy' and 'horror' of the scene of the cross, which stood in such glaring contrast to the miraculous deliverances granted, according to the Qur'an, to Noah, Lot, Saleh and Shuʿayb. In his so-called ignorance of Christianity, the Prophet was unaware of the beauty and triumph of the cross and that it inspired followers to 'bow before Him in adoration' (p. 254; Philippians 2:8-11). The crucifixion was foretold, and was both a catalyst and a culmination of the divine economy, so the qur'anic account of Christ 'perverts' the truth and the salvific function of the Passion event (p. 259). In a lengthy section on the person and work of Christ, Rice argues in respect to His second coming promised in

the Gospels and the Book of Revelation, that the Qur'an echoes the Gospel of Matthew in speaking of a 'sign' of the advent of the 'last hour' (p. 261; Q 43:61). Islam lowers the rank of Christ to that of other prophets or ordinary mortals by having the Christ-figure rise with the second coming, only to die later; his declaration that Allāh is his true Lord is also a clear perversion of truth and the dignity of Christ (p. 261; Q 43:64).

Ch. 5, 'The Holy Ghost', is a brief discussion about the conflation, or confusion, within Islam of the Holy Spirit and the angel Gabriel. Rice here advises missionaries to disentangle and clarify each element in discussion with Muslims. He advances an ideal way to inform potential converts about the true nature of the Holy Spirit and its operation in the Trinity.

In ch. 6, 'The Christian religion', Rice explains and responds to less polemical positions held by some Muslims towards Christianity. For example, he rejects the idea that Islam is right for Muslims just as Christianity is right for Christians, as well as the idea that perplexity excuses indecision among Muslims in coming round to Christian truth. He meets the criticism of the absence of criminal and civil law codes in the Gospels with a forceful rebuke, contending that Islamic justice comes hand in hand with despotism and that *sharīʿa* is indiscriminate and draconian. Some Muslims note 'poverty' in Christianity in its lack of daily ceremonial prayer, both public and private (p. 338), to which Rice responds that Christianity does in fact involve collective and individual ceremonial prayer (though admittedly less repetitiously and strictly than in Islam). He adds that only prayers from the heart are meaningful. He also anticipates and responds to the Muslim claim that the absence of fasting, pilgrimage, jihad and injunctions or prohibitions from Christian life demonstrates the supremacy of Islam.

He goes on to defend Christianity against Muslim accusations of extremism and excess, a common trope in turn-of-the-century British literature (it prevails today). Many contemporaries of Rice and his Victorian forerunners traced a perceived tendency to absolutism and ferocity among Muslims back to the Prophet.

In ch. 7, 'Muḥammad', which is a substantial 57 pages long, indicating the significance of its subject, Rice is not interested in debating the 'character and virtues' of the Prophet apart from a few references to acts of violence, looting and hypocrisy attributed to him. Rice's main interest is in Christian arguments against the 'alleged divine mission' of Muḥammad (p. 366), and among the 10 he cites is the absence of biblical prophecies predicting his arrival and oracular revelations. Rice then turns to Islamic arguments in favour of Muḥammad's mission, including the miracles

ascribed to him, such as his splitting of the moon (Q 54:1-2). This chapter approaches Islam more on its own terms, giving voice to Muslim theological and historical defences of the faith and of the Prophet. It gives credit to Muḥammad for his 'phenomenal successes against superior forces', among other virtues, and his being the 'only prophet for that dark age' (p. 419). Yet the 'phenomenal success' of Islam is not necessarily a triumph because 'its success was due to the sword', whereas Christianity flourished by spreading the word of God (p. 418).

Ch. 8, 'Islām', is comparatively short, largely repeating material covered earlier, including the 'vaunted superiority' of Islam (p. 421), the origins of and rebuttals to Muslim inquiries regarding Christian hostility towards Islam, the 'present decay' of Islam (p. 424), and compulsion in religion or the 'true spirit of Islām' (pp. 525-8). After stating that 'No other prophet was told to kill people simply because they refused to accept his message' (p. 429), Rice defends the killing campaigns waged by Moses and Joshua: one defence is that Old Testament prophets were killing 'idolaters' whereas Muḥammad was inflicting war upon the 'innocent' (Christians and Jews) (p. 430). Otherwise, Rice is circumspect with respect to the Prophet, since he sees that it is counterproductive to attack him. Ch. 8 nonetheless affirms the popular Western contention that Islam breeds compulsion and fanaticism. The Qur'an makes jihad an 'incumbent duty' for all Muslims and, as Rice sees it, a desire for all-out holy war is harboured in the hearts of the vast majority of Muslims, with the exception of a few 'liberal-minded' believers (p. 425). The only reason why the West is saved from jihad is that it is only enjoined if and when there is a good chance of success.

Ch. 9, 'The Qur'ān', which is also short and repeats earlier arguments, focuses on Muslim veneration for the Qur'an. Rice again makes clear that to argue vigorously with Muslims against the Qur'an is more likely to produce antipathy than sympathy, and he again makes an appeal to the virtues of the missionary: 'kindliness, tact and skill' are needed if the work of conversion is to be productive.

The concluding ch. 10, 'Sundry matters', ranges over a number of topics, including the sinlessness and humanity of the prophets and a half-hearted rejection of the assertion that Islam is spreading in England.

Published well after the heyday of the CMS and when it had become clear that Christian mission in Palestine, Iran, Iraq and the Sudan had achieved only negligible success, *Crusaders of the twentieth century* gives a fascinating insight into the missionary mindset. A call to a new and probably more liberal generation of missionaries working among Muslims in their own lands, it is more than reflection or dialectic: it is a guidebook to

have in hand and to put into use. Divided more or less equally between theology and methodology for mission, it was written and published to equip the early 20th-century missionary – the modern crusader – with what was thought at the time to be necessary to win Muslim converts.

It is noteworthy that Rice virtually never refers to empire or even to state or diplomatic relations. His desire is clearly conversion by persuasion rather than by coercion. Though his crusading metaphor brings to mind the sweeping clash between East and West, crescent and cross, he only rarely refers to such ideas once the work is underway. He deals in direct encounters between individual Muslims and Christian missionaries, many made in the private sphere as well as public.

SIGNIFICANCE

Crusaders is included in indices and reading lists in missionary works but was only reviewed in any detail in one: the 1910 issue of the *Missionary Review of the World*. There the reviewer expressed appreciation for its encyclopaedic quality and called it an 'ideal text-book' for training missionaries with a robust understanding of 'what Moslems believe and what they deny' (p. 797). The reviewer adds that, at least from a 'practical standpoint', Rice rivalled the work of his contemporary William St Clair Tisdall, whom he cites. But *Crusaders* is not a fierce polemic and contains far less of a fighting spirit than the most influential of Tisdall's anti-Muslim works, *The religion of the crescent* (London, 1895), even though in this review it is acclaimed as having as much merit as Tisdall's *A manual of the leading Muḥammadan objections to Christianity*, which had been published six years earlier in 1904. Despite this strong praise, *Crusaders* appears to have made little impact upon later missionaries, among whom it is not mentioned.

Rice remains rather an obscure figure in the history of the CMS, and *Crusaders* was probably not widely read. Nonetheless, it offers a wealth of anecdotal data as well as insights into the *modus operandi* of Church of England missionaries in the waning British Empire after the turn of the 20th century. It deals in well-worn tropes in its attempt to distil the Muslim other down to an interpretable, orderable and winnable type so that Christian mission can find success.

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Katherine Laura Jennings

Ṭālibuddīn

Muḥammad Bakhsh

DATE OF BIRTH 1866
PLACE OF BIRTH Jagrawan, Ludhiana, British Punjab
DATE OF DEATH 2 December 1917
PLACE OF DEATH Nolakha, Lahore

BIOGRAPHY

Ṭālibuddīn was born in 1866 into a Muslim family in Jagrawan, in the Ludhiana district of the British Punjab. He converted to Christianity at the age of 15 and was baptised by the Muslim convert, the Revd Aḥmad Shāh, on 24 May 1882. His birth name was Muḥammad Bakhsh, but after his conversion he was named Ṭālibuddīn. He graduated from Forman Christian College and was the first person in north India to obtain a BA degree.

He studied theology at Saharanpur theological seminary, north of Delhi, and served as pastor at the Nolakha Church in Lahore from 1897 to 1917. He also served for a period as the moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church. He was highly proficient in both Urdu and Persian and served for several years as the editor of the magazine *Taraqqī aur Tajallī*. He was a poet and produced many Christian poems and worship songs, which are still sung in Punjabi churches. He died at Nolakha, Lahore, in 1917.

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Muʿjizāt-i Masīḥ, *Zinda Maṣīḥ aur Anājīl-i arbaʿ*, and other works

DATE 1889-1908
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Urdu

DESCRIPTION

Muʿjizāt-i Masīḥ ('Miracles of Christ'), which focuses on the miracles of Christ, is one of Ṭālibuddīn's most significant extant works. He explains that belief in miracles, which is shared by Indian Christians, Muslims and Hindus, has been challenged by scientific research, but he responds to this by asserting that the miracles attested in Christianity are real. The status of a miracle can be judged on the evidence of the senses, mathematical and scientific evidence, and personal evidence. Concerning the miracles mentioned in the Bible, he argues that, just as people believe in the historical facts and testimonies recorded there, in the same way they should believe in the miracles of Jesus. He further elaborates that no other religion gives guidance in the way the Bible does about obedience to God, hell and heaven, salvation and sin, and relating to others in society and in the family.

Zinda Maṣīḥ aur Anājīl-i arbaʿ ('The living Christ and the four Gospels'), published in 1906, is another of Ṭālibuddīn's major works. Comprising 10 chapters in 242 pages, its substance comes from R.W. Dale's *The living Christ and the four Gospels* (1890), though it is not merely a translation but rather a discussion of the main points in Dale's book. It deals with issues that satisfy the doubts not only of Muslims but also of scholars in the West who try to attack the Gospels.

In response to attacks when ideas arising from Darwin's theory of evolution started to circulate, the book responds to those who tried to prove that the Gospels are fake or not based on solid evidence or were not written by the authors to whom they are attributed (pp. 3-5). It speaks of people having different types of personal experience of Christ as their Saviour and the role of prayer: prayers might take a long time to be answered but that teaches steadfastness in faith. It also speaks of the identity of the

living Christ and his deep relationship with humankind. It talks about how believers not only see God through Christ but also see God in Christ. Ṭālibuddīn argues that Christians do not believe in Christ because the Gospels are authentic but are certain of the historical authenticity of the Gospels because they believe in Christ. The Gospels are the means to encounter the Christ who is already known to believers.

Khudā kī hastī ('The existence of God'), published in 1908, comprises six chapters over 95 pages. It explains how books have been written by atheists to try to damage the image and existence of God, first in Europe and then in Asia. People who read them in order to criticise them often come to believe the arguments contained in them. The existence of God is fundamental not only in Christianity but also in Islam and Hinduism, so this book speaks on behalf of these three religions in India. In it, Ṭālibuddīn offers philosophical and theological insights about the existence of God.

Sīrat-i Masīḥ ('The life of Christ') is of an unknown date. It consists of eight chapters and in it Ṭālibuddīn narrates the story of Jesus's nativity in a way that Muslim and Hindu readers can understand and so benefit from. He explains that the reason for Jesus's coming to earth was to bring changes in human behaviour. He gives the biblical and historical facts that prove that it was not a normal birth and also argues that there is a huge difference between Christian views and the views of idol worshippers. The latter try to associate God with nature and consider nature to be as powerful as God, but in Christianity the power of God is the ultimate power.

Ṭālibuddīn goes on to discuss the social, religious and political situation at the time of Jesus's birth and how he accomplished His mission in three years. He describes the character of Jesus as a human and explains that He was very much aware of His task on earth. He loved humankind throughout His life but the foremost quality of His character was His love for God the Father. Jesus was proved to be sinless and faultless, which is the true strength of His character.

Ṭālibuddīn wrote many articles for the Urdu Christian journal *Nūr Afshān*. One of them was 'Khudā aur fitrat' ('God and nature'), which appeared in 1899. Here, he writes about trying to understand the existence of God through nature and revelation. He argues that, when people try to understand God through nature, it is very possible that they will start denying His existence. But those who experience God through revelation can have a real understanding. In the process of experiencing revelation, believers prove their love for God by loving humanity as God's creation, though understanding the Creator and connecting with Him is only

possible through revelation, which is the word of God sent to humanity through the prophets, the Bible and the Holy Spirit. Revelation also leads to hope, life and eternity.

Other articles in which Ṭālibuddīn promoted and extolled the Christian faith include 'Murāsalāt: Bā'ībal ke mukhālif jhuṭe' ('Letters. The opponents of the Bible are false') and 'Qismat' ('Fortune'). Ṭālibuddīn speaks here about the three major issues in Indian society: caste, fortune (or fate) and cultural practices. He specifically mentions the role of fortune, called by Muslims *naṣīb* and by Hindus *lekh* or *bhag*, as important in their religious practices. Later, he compares the beliefs of Europeans with those of Asians and concludes that, since Europeans are free from such false notions and superstitions as these, they use their own abilities and work hard to accomplish the goals and tasks in their lives.

Among Ṭālibuddīn's other publications are *Tārīkh-i Bā'ībal* ('History of the Bible'), *Muqaddamah-i mu'jizāt-i Masīḥ* ('Introduction to the miracles of Christ'), *Ḥaqīqat-i Masīḥ* ('The truth of Christ'), *Khudā kī hastī aur ḥāl-i mushkilāt* ('The reality of God and the solution of problems') and *Tafsīr Mati* (a translation of a commentary of the Gospel of *Matthew*), as well as Christian poems published in *Nūr Afshān*.

SIGNIFICANCE

Ṭālibuddīn highlighted many Christian themes that were common to Islam. This not only fostered understanding between the two faiths but also promoted respect, dialogue and understanding within Indian society. At the same time, he was careful to emphasise the particular features within the two religions that made Christianity unique. His focus on the life and miracles of Christ offered spiritual encouragement and inspiration and his writings played a vital role in preserving and promoting the cultural heritage of the Punjabi Church in the British period and beyond.

PUBLICATIONS

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Ṭālibuddīn, *Zinda Maṣīḥ aur Anājīl-i arba'* ('The living Christ and the four Gospels'), Anarkali, Lahore, 1906
Ṭālibuddīn, *Khudā kī hastī* ('The existence of God'), Anarkali, Lahore, 1908
Ṭālibuddīn, *Sīrat-i Masīḥ* ('The life of Christ'), Anarkali, Lahore [s.d.]

STUDIES

Wherry, 'Classified list of books in the Urdu language suited to Moslem readers'
'Silsila Mashahir-e-Qoom', *The Masihi* (June 1924) 4-13

Urfa Naseer John

Imāmuddīn Shahbāz

DATE OF BIRTH 1844
PLACE OF BIRTH Zafarwal, Indian Punjab
DATE OF DEATH 1921
PLACE OF DEATH Sialkot, Indian Punjab

BIOGRAPHY

Imāmuddīn, known by the pen-name Shahbāz ('King of the eagles'), was born in 1844 into a Muslim family in Zafarwal, a town in the east of present-day Punjab in Pakistan. His conversion and baptism were the result of work by the Church Missionary Society. He first learnt about Christianity at the age of ten, when he listened to missionaries preaching, and, in 1866 at the age of 16, he was baptised by Robert Clark in Amritsar. The words in the Qur'an concerning the Day of Judgement, 'Every mortal must necessarily go to hell; it is obligatory on God to send all men once to hell, and afterwards He may pardon whom He will' (Q 19:70-2) were an essential reason for his leaving Islam.

A gifted thinker and poet, Shahbāz wrote a number of Christian poems in Urdu in which he compared Christian and Islamic teachings, including the concepts of forgiveness of sins, the new identity in Christ, life with and without Christ, the call to repentance and the struggle with sin. The following couplets express his deep sense of confidence in salvation through Christ that expels the fear of death and the grave:

Jo shaks Masih munaji ka hai muqir
Dar us ko phir kahan raha munkar nakir ka.
Na qabar ki na mot ki parva hai usay,
Daman hai pakra jis ne meray dastgir ka.

(A person who believes in Christ the Saviour
Cannot fear being interrogated by angels.
He does not worry about death and the grave
Who holds the hand of my Master.)

Munkar and Nakīr, mentioned in the first couplet, are the two angels who, according to Muslim belief, interrogate the dead in the grave. Shahbāz makes a word play on their names by contrasting the *muqīr* (one who 'confesses' or 'acknowledges'), here referring to the one who confesses Christ, with Nakīr, who interrogates the deceased to determine their fate. In the second couplet, he continues that such a person does not care about

qabr ('grave') or *maut* ('death'), since they are clinging to Christ, who is *dastgīr* ('helper', 'protector', 'guardian').

Shahbāz was ordained a Presbyterian minister and was the first Indian moderator of the United Provinces Synod (1901-2). In 1822, noting the potential in poetry and song for promoting the faith, the presbytery set up a committee to prepare a metrical translation of the Psalter. Having become known after winning a poetry competition in July 1880 (announced in the Christian periodical *Nūr Afshān*), Shahbāz was chosen to be part of the project, working on translation of the Psalms, for which he was able to draw on his knowledge of Hindi, Urdu, Persian, Arabic and Sanskrit in addition to his own Punjabi. For this work he was awarded an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree by Tarkio College in Missouri.

Shahbāz died in 1921 and was buried in the town of Sargodha, in present-day Punjab in Pakistan. The *Triennial report of the Board of Foreign Missions of the United Presbyterian Church of North America, 1919-1921* (Philadelphia, 1922) states: 'At his funeral there were present not only Christian friends who bore testimony to his fruitful life but many non-Christians of the city who added their words of praise and appreciation.' This statement attests not only to the efforts Shahbāz put into developing positive and healthy relations with Muslims but also to the impact he made on others.

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Yousaf Sadiq and Eric Sarwar

WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Punjabī zabūr: desi ragan vich
'Psalms in Punjabi with local melodies'

DATE 1908
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Punjabi

DESCRIPTION

Shahbāz made a metrical translation of the whole Book of Psalms into Punjabi set to indigenous Indian music in the latter years of the 19th century. It was published in 1908 with the title *Punjabī zabūr: desi ragan vich*. He employed several languages in addition to Punjabi, including Hindi, Urdu, Persian, Arabic and Sanskrit.

As a former Muslim, it was natural for him to draw on his past religious experience when he was translating, with the result that the Punjabi psalms contain terms that would be familiar to a Muslim. These include *sunna*, *fajar* and *khabis*, and also *fatwā* (Ps. 149), *kufar* (Ps. 74), *umma* (Pss 28, 47, 56, 62, 72, 78, 81, 85, 95), *subḥān* (Ps. 17), *mu'min* (Pss 31, 81), *Ibrāhīm* (Ps. 47), *ghafūr* (Pss 7, 60), *ghaffār* (Ps. 41), *raḥmān* (Pss 9, 17, 40, 48, 65, 78, 86, 119, 138), *raḥīm* (Pss 18, 62, 75, 116, 145), *Illāhi* (Pss 8, 71, 119), *ya-Illāhi* (Pss 19, 73, 105), *al-Qadīr* (Ps. 22), and *Rabb ul-ʿālamīn* (Ps. 143). The term *Allāh* is used in Pss 18, 35, 37 and 106, and *Allāh taʿālā* in Ps. 12, and the qur'anic name for Jesus, *ʿĪsā*, occurs in Ps. 95.

SIGNIFICANCE

Punjabī zabūr have continued to play a vital role in the worship of Pakistani and Indian Christians of Punjabi background since they were published. They are central to church services and are known widely through performances and recordings. The Muslim terms, which form an integral part of them, contribute an additional layer of resonance to the Christian text.

PUBLICATIONS

[Imāmuddīn Shahbāz], *Punjabī zabūr: desi ragan vich*, Benares, 1908

STUDIES

E. Sarwar, *Psalms, Islam, and Shalom. A common heritage of divine songs for Muslim-Christian friendship,* Minneapolis MN, 2023
Sadiq, *Contextualized psalms*

Yousaf Sadiq

Ernest F. Ward and Phebe E. Ward

Ernest Fremont Ward and Phebe Elizabeth Cox; Phebe Elizabeth Ward; Phebe Elizabeth Cox Ward

DATE OF BIRTH Ernest, 25 April 1853; Phebe, 7 October 1848
PLACE OF BIRTH Ernest, Geneva IL, USA; Phebe, Ontario County NY, USA
DATE OF DEATH Ernest, 3 November 1937; Phebe, 1 September 1910
PLACE OF DEATH Ernest, Hermon CA, USA; Phebe, Seattle WA, USA

BIOGRAPHY

Ernest Freemont Ward was the son of an abstractor of titles in Geneva, Illinois. After finishing studies at the Chicago Commercial College, he worked in his father's office. His mind was changed when he had an experience of sanctification at a Free Methodist camp meeting in 1878. Phebe Elizabeth Cox was the daughter of a farming family. Born in Ontario County, New York, she was brought up in Cary, Illinois, and worked as a teacher in local schools. Various dates are given for her birth, though in her own diary she records 7 October 1848. Ernest and Phebe first met at the St Charles camp meeting and discovered a common interest in missions, so they corresponded and met again at the Silver Lake camp meeting. They were encouraged to go as a missionary couple to India by Albert Benjamin Norton, a holiness missionary who was working there. They married in 1880 and travelled to India using money Phebe had saved as a teacher. They initially called themselves the Pilgrim Faith Mission and themselves raised funds for their support; only later were they formally recognised as missionaries of the Free Methodist Church. They arrived in India on 16 January 1881 and made for areas that today include the states of Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and Chhattisgarh. After a year learning languages in Ellichpur (Achalpur), they started their mission work in Burhanpur.

The Wards continued there until 1887, when they moved to the mission station in Ellichpur, among the Korku people. After a furlough in the United States, they returned to India and pioneered mission work in

Raj Nandgaon (Rajnandgaon) from 1893 to about 1900. After this, they spent short periods in a number of mission stations: Gondia (Gondiya), Khairagarh, Sanjan, Yeotmal (Yavatmal) and Wun (Wani), before working in Darwah (Darwha) from 1906 to 1910. This was when they wrote *Echoes from Bharatkhand*.

Phebe died in 1910 and Ernest returned with his eldest daughter, Ethel, to a mission station in Umri from 1911 to 1917. In 1914, he married Elizabeth Tucker, a fellow missionary, but she died the following year. He was briefly sent back to the Wun and Yeotmal mission stations before his final furlough and his last missionary position at the Darwah mission station from 1921 to 1927, when he retired from missionary service after 45 years in India.

The Wards were part of the Wesleyan-Holiness Movement, and so their primary aim was to make converts to Christianity. While their initial work was evangelistic, particularly involving street preaching in the bazaars and selling religious literature, the onset of a major famine in Raj Nandagaon in 1897 led them to help to feed people and ultimately take in children who had been orphaned by the famine. One important convert of theirs was Narayan Waman Tilak (1861-1919), a Marathi poet of Hindu background, who became a major Christian hymn writer for Marathi Christians.

Ernest Ward helped to found the Indian Holiness Association on 17 January 1910 and was also involved with the Pentecost Bands as they spread into India. The Wards frequently spoke at camp meetings and conferences during their furloughs, teaching on holiness and raising money for missions in India.

MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Primary

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Echoes from Bharatkhand

DATE 1908
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

This was the only book written by Ernest and Phebe Ward about their mission experience in India. The introduction, by the Revd W.A. Sellew, explains that they wrote it in order to inform Free Methodist Church members in the United States about mission in India and to help raise money for their mission, since one half of their denominational salary went to pay for the tuition of their three daughters at college in the United States. The book comprises 176 pages in 16 chapters, including a map of their mission field and 23 photographs. The main parts associated with Islam are ch. 7 on 'Mohammedanism' by Ernest Ward, and ch. 8, 'A trophy

of grace' by Phebe Ward, which together make up 22 pages of the work. There are occasional references to Islam in other parts, but it primarily deals with Hinduism and general missionary life in late 19th-century India.

Ch. 7 presents an overview of the 'facts' about Islam from the perspective of a Wesleyan-Holiness evangelist missionary. The opening sentence typifies Ward's attitude towards Islam, 'One-fifth of the inhabitants of British India are followers of the false prophet' (p. 64), and elsewhere Islam is presented as an empty, works-focused faith that was created by human beings. While the prohibitions against pork and alcohol are noted as positive elements, in general the Indian form of Islam is presented in a negative light. Much of the chapter is taken from an article in *The Times of India* of 14 November 1906, written by an English reporter who was going on Hajj in disguise.

Ch. 8, which is more personal, is about Jaywerbee, the widow of a muezzin from a high-caste family in Raj Nandagon who became a cook for the mission compound as it struggled to deal with the famine and a large number of orphans. In the process, she and her young son converted to Christianity against the wishes of her husband's family. Phebe Ward tells this story with great sensitivity and respect. Jaywerbee joined the mission due to financial hardship and the need to support her son during the famine. She proved invaluable to the Wards over a number of years and through observing their faith and care of the orphans, and listening to their message, she became a Christian against the wishes of her husband's family. She was openly baptised and spoke of her faith in public. Eventually her son also became a Christian and entered the mission school.



ETHEL WARD AND JAYWERBEE

Illustration 24. Jaywerbee with the Wards' eldest daughter Ethel

SIGNIFICANCE

The work would only have had limited influence because it was read mainly by conservative Wesleyan-Holiness believers, mostly those who were already part of the Free Methodist Church. It provides insight into the way Islam was perceived by the Wesleyan-Holiness tradition in the early 20th century, and how a Christian such as Ward appears to have passed on popular attitudes about Islam without questioning them, even though he must have met Muslims regularly. Further, ch. 8 gives insight into the situation of a Muslim woman in India in the late 19th century and the dynamics that led her to convert to Christianity, which included discussing spiritual issues such as sin and holiness with Phebe Ward in the evenings, and witnessing both healing and Christian social ministry to victims of famine. The work also provides insight into the way her Muslim relatives tried to prevent her conversion by isolating her and attempting to keep her son away from her, and even threatening her with physical violence.

PUBLICATIONS

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Robert A. Danielson

Flora Annie Steel

Flora Annie Webster Steel; F.A. Steel

DATE OF BIRTH	2 April 1847
PLACE OF BIRTH	Sudbury, Middlesex (now west London)
DATE OF DEATH	12 April 1929
PLACE OF DEATH	Minchinhampton, Gloucestershire

BIOGRAPHY

Flora Annie Steel was a writer of mainly fictional works primarily set in India, where she lived for over 20 years. She was born in Sudbury to George Webster and his wife Isabella in 1847, who moved their family to the Scottish Highlands in 1856. She was one of eleven children and, owing to the family's limited finances, she received no formal education but instead educated herself from old philosophical and medical books. She was baptised a Presbyterian, but she formally joined the Church of England when she was 16. When she was 20, she married Henry William Steel and travelled with him to India, where he worked in the Indian Civil Service. They lived there until 1889, moving to different places in the Punjab and spending considerable time in Kasur, south of Lahore.

During her time in India, Flora was involved in a range of activities, hosting her husband's colleagues and visitors, directing and staging plays and providing medical help to local women. In 1884, she became an Inspector of Schools in the Punjab and served on the Provincial Education Board from 1885 to 1888. In this capacity, she discovered that the University of the Punjab was selling degrees and made this known. Her honesty helped her to foster strong relationships with local Indian men and women, but it also caused tension with British government officials.

Flora wrote many stories set in India, including a long succession of novels. Christians and Muslims feature in many of these, and their religious loyalties are integral parts of their motivation, though they usually emerge as rounded individuals. The major work in which religion is prominent is her novel *On the face of the waters*, which she wrote after a return to India in 1894 to carry out research on the 1857 Uprising. Published in 1896, it depicts the events that led up to and formed part of the Uprising through a large cast of Christians, Muslims and Hindus. The main

characters are Kate, a Christian who is married to a British officer, and Jim Douglas, who dresses like an Indian, speaks local dialects and seems part of local culture. Through them and the many characters who surround them, Steel shows both sides of the events of 1857 and implies that it was too complex to allow blame to be apportioned easily. Thus, the Muslim character Mohamed, who is certain that 'religious war' is the only means of retribution for 'past horrors' enacted by the Raj (London, 1897, p. 308), exclaims after a British defeat, 'The lord Christ and the Lord Mohammed sat over the world striving, each for His own[. …] And I saw the Lord Christ weep, knowing that justice was ours' (p. 313). But he is alone, because the other Muslim and Hindu characters around him show their unease at his zealotry.

On Henry's retirement in 1889, the couple returned to Britain, where Flora continued writing, including her two books *India* and *India through the ages*. She later wrote her autobiography, *The garden of fidelity*, which was published posthumously. She died in her daughter's house in Minchinhampton, Gloucestershire, on 12 April 1929.

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

India and *India through the ages*

DATE 1905, 1908
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

While she does not state her purpose clearly, Steel evidently intends these two descriptive works as objective accounts of the history of India. She avoids comparisons and judgements, and she appears concerned to create a picture of the main political currents that shaped the history of the country without any detailed reference to religion as a force in society. Rather than enter into debate over the justness of actions she leaves matters open for the reader to decide. She does not take sides, and is as ready to identify the British as responsible for losses of life, status and possessions as anyone else.

Published in 1905, *India* was aimed at a general readership with text by Steel and illustrations by the artist Mortimer Menpes (1855-1938). In 1903, Menpes had made illustrations for a book with text by his daughter Dorothy on the durbar held in Delhi that year to celebrate the coronation of King Edward VII. Steel's book followed the same format as this and was also published by Adam and Charles Black.

India, which is 215 pages long and divided into 19 chapters, is written with no signs of strong cultural or religious bias and with insight into the history and culture of the country. For example, in ch. 5, 'The great Moghuls', Steel writes with appreciation about the Mughal emperors Bābur and his grandson Akbar, whom she calls 'the most striking figure in Indian history' (p. 55) and about whom she wrote a novel, *A prince of dreamers* (1908). In ch. 6, 'The Western rulers', she raises the question of whether Robert Clive (1725-74) and Warren Hastings (1732-1818) were 'double-dyed scoundrels' (p. 59) and sums up the Uprising of 1857 with an attempt at impartiality: 'It was at once a death throe and a birth throe, a record of the heroism of both races [Indian and British], an expiation on both sides for many evils in the past. It had to come' (p. 60).

Ch. 8, entitled 'Mahommedanism', is really about what Steel calls the 'debased' Muslim communities she has discovered in Delhi and Lucknow, and contains almost nothing about teachings or religious practices. She remarks that all Muslims in India, who, like the British, are of alien descent, have so fully absorbed Hindu ways that 'all, without exception, while refusing to eat food from the hands of the One-God-worshipping Christian, take it freely from the idolatrous Hindu' (p. 74). Further, she incisively comments on their half-knowledge of a noble past that will not return: they are haunted by 'a certain sadness of decay, a clinging to past traditions, a feeling that they have come down in the world', so that when you go to visit them, 'even the gold-tissue tunic in which the head of the clan turns out to receive you, is frayed and worn' (p. 75). But they have not faced up to this reality, so 'hard at work, some patriarchal household may be seen busy stitching away at caps or embroidering shoes. Such work is the refuge of the decayed Mahommedan courtier' (p. 76). It is the women who have suffered most, particularly those left by the death of a husband but who try to keep up appearances: 'The Mahommedan woman of good family is often a compendium of all the most Christian virtues. Her patience is phenomenal' (p. 78).

Their religion offers Muslims little consolation. Heaven, with its 'eternal procession of sensual pleasures', has little appeal for staid middle-aged

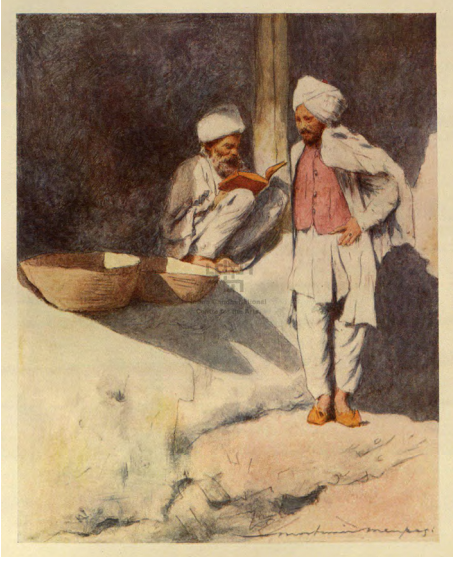


Illustration 25. A learned man in Peshawar

men, while festivals 'are mostly of rather a funereal character' (p. 79). In a word, 'the Mahommedan is not at his best in India. His star is not in the ascendant, and his position wars with his religion' because Islam teaches about 'conversion by the sword if need be, and an almost fierce intolerance of the idolater' (p. 80), though this is precisely what Indian Muslims, with their power over the state removed, can no longer do. Steel says nothing about Sayyid Aḥmad Khān or others who were working to bring Indian Islam into relation with the reality she depicts, though she does concede in the last sentence of the chapter that 'there are no better men and women in India than some Mahommedans' (p. 80).

Ch. 17, entitled '1857', is a sustained reflection on the Uprising, or 'great Mutiny', from the point of view of actions by the British that caused it. The cynical annexation of whole regions of the country by the East India Company was legally dubious, but it was the attempt to import European morality that tipped the balance: 'In the old days we had taken our money, justly or unjustly, and gone on our way. Now we stayed to criticise, to inquire, to amend and alter the way in which that money had been made' (p. 185). This was inspired by religion:

> 'God is on our side, let His enemies be scattered.' Against that conviction naught avails; not even truth. And this belief, almost fanatical in its yearning to 'gather the heathen into the fold,' had come to India with the wave of Evangelicalism which about this time literally swept the services. (p. 187)

The actual shape it took was welfare reforms that conformed to European standards: 'Missionaries were coming out in shoals, girls' schools being started, *zenana* classes thought of, and, naturally, with the advent of English ladies a great outcry was raised regarding the position of women' (pp. 188-9). Then, when the Revolt erupted, British army officers, most of whom could not speak their men's languages (p. 189), acted incompetently. Her final assessment is that the British brought the disruption and bloodshed on themselves (p. 195). Throughout the whole chapter there is no mention of religious motivation behind the Indian soldiers' actions, which Steel portrays as a reaction to successive indignities and injustices.

Steel's crisp accounts tend to reduce the aspects of Indian life she describes to straightforward and sometimes over-simple sketches. This is certainly true of her depiction of Muslims, who appear to be paralysed by their inability to see that they no longer enjoyed their former supremacy and to meet change with initiative. She writes movingly about their tragic decline, but shows no awareness of the movements that had been vying to revive Islam and give it a place in the changing order.

First published in 1908, covering the history of India from around 2000 BCE down to the 1857 Uprising in 366 pages, *India through the ages. A popular and picturesque history of Hindustan* went through several editions and reprints. The fifth edition came out in 1920. It comprises three parts, 'The ancient age', covering the years up to the first Muslim invasions in 1001, 'The middle age', continuing to the death of the Emperor Aurangzeb in 1707, and 'The modern age', continuing to the Uprising of 1857. It becomes more detailed as it moves closer to the present, focusing more on particular individuals than on general history. It is presented as no more than 'a compilation from published works', though no sources are identified.

The first part, acknowledging the importance of Islam in Indian history, concludes with the briefest of biographies of Muḥammad (pp. 78-9). Here, Steel characterises him as 'melancholy, silent, fond of desert places, solitude, and dreamy meditations, and possessing a 'religious excitability [that] was of the most acute character, and passed at times into attacks of epilepsy' (p. 78). So, 'small wonder if, having in his mountain solitude seen, or thought he had seen, a vision of the Great Unity which men call God, he should have claimed inspiration, and claimed it militantly' (p. 79). From these experiences Islam quickly developed, though 'it is doubtful for how much of the Mahomedanism of today the seer-prophet of A.D. 610 is really responsible' (p. 79). Steel attributes a measure of sincere religious sensibility to Muḥammad without conceding that he actually experienced divine revelations.

The second part traces the successive waves of Muslim invaders of India from the 11th century onwards. In her dramatic, epigrammatic style, Steel describes the approach of Timur's armies as follows:

> There is one cry of terror which from time immemorial has echoed out over the wide wheatfields of Northern India. [...] 'The Toork! The Toork!' rises the cry, and in an instant jewels are torn off and hidden, everything that can be concealed [is] concealed. (p. 123)

But Indians had learnt to react in this way through repeated experience: 'How many times had not this knot of horsemen appeared, done their worst, and disappeared, leaving behind them miserable, dishonoured women, maddened by the sight of their murdered husbands, and the very dead boy-babies at their breasts' (pp. 123-4).

The insistent pace of the narrative slows when Steel comes to Babar (Bābur), 'the most romantic figure of Indian history' (p. 154), and his successors. As in *India* from just a few years earlier, she focuses her admiration on Akbar, 'a man of imagination, of genius' (p. 171), noting the

appearance of three English travellers with a letter from Queen Elizabeth I in 1586 (pp. 185-6) but saying nothing about the Jesuits with whom Akbar debated religion. This part ends with the rule of Aurangzeb (r. 1658-1707), who granted ports around the coasts to British commercial companies, apparently without realising the implications. The concession of Calcutta with permission to erect fortifications round it 'was practically the beginning of the end' (p. 219).

In the third part, the story is largely told by tracing the growing strength of European powers in India and the clashes between them, and then focusing on Robert Clive (1725-74), to whom Steel devotes two chapters, and Warren Hastings (1732-1818). The opening up of the country to all and sundry in the early 19th century by the cancellation of the East India Company's trade monopoly and improved travel between Britain and India 'combined to produce such a change in that country as was bound to create alarm, distrust, and resentment, amongst the most conservative people in the world' (p. 335). Outbreaks of violence and local uprisings forced the British to react with force, and their continuing annexations of land, the appearance of Christian missions and the growing strength of English culture – 'tales of the mem-sahibas, and the sahibs' command that all servants should attend family prayers' (p. 351) – created unease among Indians. The events of the 1857 Uprising are recounted in some detail, leading to the annexation of India by the British crown. Steel leaves open the question of whether or not the result since has been better government (p. 361).

SIGNIFICANCE

The major point of distinction in both these books is their objectivity. Without pretending to be anything but British, Steel traces events and their results with honesty and candour, attributing praise and blame to all who deserve it, though often reporting judgements expressed by others rather than voicing her own.

Religion does not play any large part in either of the books. But the supreme importance of the early Muslim Mughal rulers, and mainly the Emperor Akbar, to the social and cultural enhancement of Indian society cannot be missed. In the same way, in the earlier book, *India*, the poignant account of the decline of Muslim noble families in the aftermath of the 1857 Uprising and their tragic inability to recognise the reality of the predicament they are in includes some of the most memorable passages in either work. Steel does not explore the inspiration of Islam that lies behind the Mughal rulers' energy or its constraint upon the unchanged

attitudes of the dispossessed nobles, though she does not disguise it as a major force in either the earlier mobility or the later immobility of Indian Muslim history.

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Chiante Duncan

ʿAbdullāh Chakrālavī

Maulvī ʿAbdullāh Chakrālavī, Ghulām Nabī

DATE OF BIRTH 1850s or 60s
PLACE OF BIRTH Chakrāla, Mianwali district, Punjab
DATE OF DEATH 1916
PLACE OF DEATH Chakrāla

BIOGRAPHY

ʿAbdullāh Chakrālavī was born into a devout Muslim family in the small town of Chakrāla, in the Mianwali district of the Punjab. He was given the name Ghulām Nabī ('Servant of the Prophet'), though later, as his views about the true meaning of Islam changed, he renounced this. Details of his youth are sparse, though he is said to have spent time in Delhi, where he may have been influenced by Sayyid Aḥmad Khān (Mertoglu, '"Direkt vom Koran inspiriert"', p. 14). When he returned home, he taught in the madrasa founded in 1882 by his cousin, who had been initiated into various Sufi orders. He performed the duties of *khaṭīb* and prayer leader there for 14 years (Sumbal, 'Ahl al-Quran movement', pp. 93-4).

Sometime in the late 1890s, Chakrālavī moved to Lahore as imam of the Chiniyan Wali mosque. He also became involved in the Ahl-i Hadith, a group that keenly supported the sayings of Muḥammad as the key instrument in Qur'an interpretation. In 1899, he published his first volume of *Tafsīr*, in which he made use of Hadith in his exegesis of the scriptural text (Qasmi, *Questioning the authority*, p. 127).

From about 1900, Chakrālavī's deliberations over what it meant to believe that God was one led him to change his position and reject the Hadith as an authority alongside, and in some respect replacing, the Qur'an (Sumbal, 'Ahl al-Quran movement', p. 94). His decision to change his name from Ghulām Nabī to ʿAbdullāh ('Slave of God') is indicative of the decisiveness of his mental and spiritual move. An outward expression of this is that he started to lead the mosque prayers in a new way, using only what the Qur'an taught as a guide to how they should be conducted, but in doing this he offended the mosque elders and they expelled him from his position.

Behind this risky experiment was a reaction to the excessive veneration of Muḥammad among many Muslims that risked exalting him to effective divine status, constituting the sin of *shirk*, association of another being with God. It led Chakrālavī to insist that Muḥammad (and all the prophets before him) was emphatically a human and no more, maybe a model to be followed, but a man whose only distinctive function was to relate the revealed messages he was given from God.

Chakrālavī began to correspond with a variety of Muslim scholars who challenged his ideas, including Muḥammad Ḥusain Baṭālvī (c. 1840-1920), a prominent member of the Ahl-i Hadith. In 1902, they debated their differences over the status of the Qur'an and Hadith, after which Mīrzā Ghulām Aḥmad, the founder of the Aḥmadiyya, wrote a critique of the arguments they exchanged, observing that both were too extreme in their claims (*Review of the debate between Batalavi and Chakrhalavi*, p. xiii).

However, not everyone disagreed with Chakrālavī's views. In 1903, Shaykh Muḥammad Chittī (d. 1911) sponsored a new mosque in Lahore with Chakrālavī as imam and, in the same year Chakrālavī founded Ahl al-Qur'an ('The people of the Qur'an') and started a journal, *Ishāʿat ul-Qur'ān* ('Publicity about the Qur'an'), through which he could communicate his thinking. This continued to be published sporadically until 1932, 16 years after his death (Qasmi, *Questioning the authority*, p. 131).

In 1905, Chakrālavī set out his ideas about prayer based on the Qur'an alone in a treatise entitled *Burhān al-Furqān* ('Proof of the Criterion'), though this provoked hostile reactions (Qasmi, *Questioning the authority*, pp. 138-43). In 1906, he published *Tarjamat ul-Qur'ān bi-taṣrīf ayāt ul-Furqān* ('Interpretation of the Qur'an by readapting the verses of the Criterion'), also known as *Tafsīr ul-Qur'ān bi-l-Qur'ān*, ('Exegesis of the Qur'an by the Qur'an'), in which he further set out his views about the pre-eminence of the Qur'an and its self-sufficiency in yielding its teachings.

In contrast to Chakrālavī's firm advocacy of his views, when the government of Punjab conducted a census in 1911 and Chakrālavī urged members of Ahl al-Qur'an to register under that name rather than as Sunnīs or Ahl-i Hadith, only 271 people did so. This is a plain indication of the limit of his influence and success (Qasmi, *Questioning the authority*, p. 145). Another is that Chakrālavī's son rejected his father's teaching and remained a strong supporter of Ahl-i Hadith. When Chakrālavī became aware of this, he disinherited his son.

Towards the end of his life, he returned to Chakrāla, where he died in 1916. Ahl al-Qur'an continued to exist for a while, though it gradually declined and disappeared (Qasmi, *Questioning the authority*, p. 145).

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John Chesworth

WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Works of Chakrālavī

DATE 1903-9
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Urdu

DESCRIPTION

While he was widely known for his idiosyncratic and extreme views about the Qur'an and Hadith, Chakrālavī was not remembered for any participation in debates about Christianity or involvement with Christians. Nevertheless, a few of his works show signs of what may be some interest in this strong current of intellectual activity in 19th-century South Asia, which must have affected almost everyone. They are worth considering from this point of view, though since they have either not survived or are very difficult to find, no definite statements about them are possible.

Chakrālavī is known for a work entitled *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'* ('Stories of the prophets'), which presumably traced the line of prophetic witnesses to God from Adam to Muḥammad in accordance with orthodox Islamic doctrine as stated in the Qur'an. While this work was a contribution to a genre that stretched back almost to the origins of Islam, it is possible that it contained comments about Jesus and biblical prophets that responded to claims Chakrālavī may have heard directly from Christians.

It was a time-honoured tradition for works in the *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'* genre to incorporate details from the Bible about prophetic figures that supplemented and gave substance to the bare details about individual

prophets given in the Qur'an, where no more than the names are given in some cases and, apart from Joseph and a few others, little is said about any. Heated debates were going on in South Asia about the nature of Jesus and the claims made for him by missionaries and other Christians during Chakrālavī's lifetime, and also Chakrālavī's own view was that the prophets neither possessed supernatural powers nor were infallible, even though, somewhat conflictingly, they were able to perform miracles (Qasmi, *Questioning the authority*, p. 135). It is therefore possible that his portrayal of Jesus in this work included explicit and extended denials of his divinity and discussions about the claim that he was saved by God from death on the cross, as is referred to in Q 4:157. So, as it reiterated the traditional stories of the line of Islamic prophets, Chakrālavī's *Qaṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ* may have taken into account debates that were current in South Asia.

A work that appears to address the belief that the Bible had been abrogated by the Qur'an is *Radd al-naskh al-mashhūr fī kalām Allāh al-ghafūr* ('Refutation of the well-known abrogation of the word of God the All-forgiving'), which was published in 1909. Chakrālavī maintained on grounds of logic and consistency that, since God had revealed the Torah, Gospel and other books, He also protected them and ensured they were not changed or damaged. It was more or less taken for granted by Indian Muslims in the 19th century that the books of the Bible had been both corrupted by their custodians and superseded by the Qur'an. Hence the force of the adjective *mashhūr* (well-known) in this title, with its connotations of 'widespread', 'notorious' and 'well-established'. This book appears to be a denial of this widely accepted claim.

SIGNIFICANCE

The possibilities that can be inferred from the scant evidence provided by these two titles (and maybe a few others), combined with what is known of Chakrālavī's doctrinal outlook in his later years, are that they may have taken into account points contested in debates that were being conducted in north India during his lifetime, and that they contained Chakrālavī's own marginal and incidental contributions to them. If this is so, it shows that differences between Christians, led by missionaries from the West, and loyal Muslims were known in and had an effect on all parts of Indian society, even the most distant guardians of Islam.

PUBLICATIONS

ʿAbdullāh Chakrālavī, *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ*, Lahore [n.d.]

ʿAbdullāh Chakrālavī, *Radd al-naskh al-mashhūr fī kalām Allāh al-ghafūr*, Lahore, 1909

STUDIES

Qasmi, *Questioning the authority*

David Thomas

Theodore Leighton Pennell

DATE OF BIRTH 1867
PLACE OF BIRTH Clifton, Bristol
DATE OF DEATH 23 March 1912
PLACE OF DEATH Bannu, India (present-day Pakistan)

BIOGRAPHY

Theodore Leighton Pennell was born in Clifton, Bristol. His father died when he was nine and he was brought up by his widowed mother. As a boy, he was an avid reader and enjoyed scientific pursuits and water-based activities. In 1884, he began to study medicine at University College London, where, like his father, he won a number of gold medals. He was made a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons before the age of 25. While studying medicine, he was active in the University College Working Lads Institute, which encouraged boys and young men in both education and physical pursuits as well as leading them in Bible studies.

In 1890, with strong encouragement from his mother, he applied to the Church Missionary Society (CMS) to work in India, in preparation for which he purchased Bibles in Urdu, Pashto, Punjabi and Persian, and also began Urdu lessons. He proved to be an excellent language student, eventually mastering Pashto, Punjabi along with Urdu, and also gaining some competence in Arabic.

Arriving in Karachi in 1892, Pennell and his mother made their way to Dera Ismail Khan, where he began his medical work among the various Pathan tribes that inhabited the forbidding mountain ranges that form a barrier between Afghanistan on the west and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and the North-West Frontier Province of what is now Pakistan on the east.

As he began his medical work, he soon realised the need for a hospital. He travelled extensively throughout the area, offering medical clinics. Wherever he stopped he accepted the hospitality of that tribe, so becoming acquainted with their life, customs and rivalries. He always travelled unarmed, though no member of any of the Pathan tribes, among whom the Afridis, Wazirs and Mahsuds were dominant, would ever do this. He saw that robbery, murder, feuds, blood revenge and inter-tribal warfare, combined with their understanding of honour (*'izzat*) and shame (*sharm*)

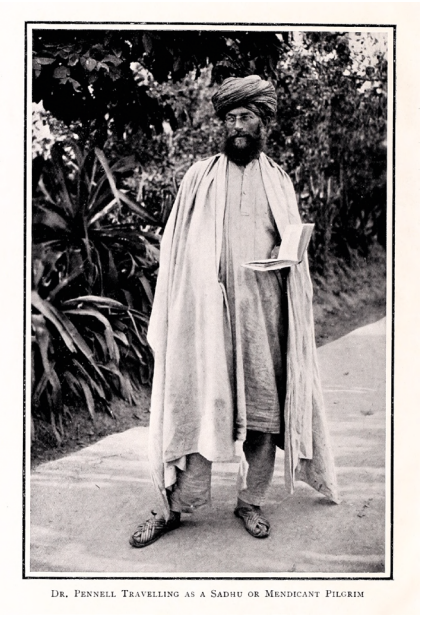


Illustration 26. Theodore Leighton Pennell dressed as a Sadhu

and their 'blindly fanatical following of Islam' ('Islam in Afghanistan', p. 134), were characteristics of Pathan tribal life. Nevertheless, in *Among the wild tribes of the Afghan frontier* he wrote: 'My plan was [...] to put myself entirely in their hands, and let them see that I was trusting to their sense of honour and to their traditional treatment of a guest for my safety' (p. 23). He always adopted the dress of the tribe he was visiting, and he adopted the dress of a *sadhu*, a Hindu 'holy man', when he travelled in India (in 1904). Presenting himself as such a figure better enabled him to learn about and come to understand the mystics of Hinduism and Islam.

He eventually chose Bannu, at the head of the Tochi Valley, as the location for his hospital. With his mother, he moved there in 1893 and, using their own money, they built a rudimentary hospital, which in later years was gradually extended. In 1895, he also founded a boarding school for boys there, in which he played an active role.

Alongside medical work, as soon as he had sufficient grasp of Pashto, Pennell began preaching in the bazaars and went on tour, sometimes using a magic lantern to illustrate his talks. Often, however, during his preaching and his medical work, he faced opposition from Muslims. The mullahs would frequently incite people against him and his companions, as well

as denouncing the medicine and care he was offering. Nevertheless, there were those who chose to embrace Christianity, for which some paid the price with their lives.

While it was obvious to the Afghan tribes themselves that Pennell had a high regard for them, he was at times scathing of some of their behaviour. He was not afraid to use the word 'fanatical' when he described their allegiance to Islam or to refer to the tactics of their mullahs as 'bellicose'. He was also aware that engaging them in debate in matters over which Christianity and Islam were at variance presented many challenges, one of which was their understanding of the topic and their distinct method of argument. Pennell deliberately tried to adopt this method, though often it was the converts from Islam who were able to present a sound response.

Neither Pennell nor his mother took many breaks from their work and, after 16 years, following an extensive period of illness, he went to England in 1908. While he was there, his mother died in India. On his return to India, he married Dr Alice Sorabji from a converted Parsee family and together they continued the hospital work as well as travelling to offer medical clinics, where Alice provided medical assistance to the women (after her husband's death she wrote his biography, *Pennell of the Afghan frontier*). In 1909, Pennell was very sick again and almost died, though he recovered. He continued to travel extensively with his medical clinics as well as preaching Christianity to the various scattered and hard to reach tribes. In 1912, a patient with a serious disease was admitted to the hospital. Pennell's assistant contracted this disease and passed it on to Pennell, who died on 23 March 1912, aged 45. Christians, Hindus and some Muslims gathered to honour a man they held in high esteem.

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Among the wild tribes of the Afghan frontier

DATE 1909

ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

Pennell's main work about his engagement with Muslims and Islam was *Among the wild tribes of the Afghan frontier. A record of sixteen years' close intercourse with the natives of the Indian marches*, first published in 1909. He also published two articles on this topic, 'The tribes of the North-West frontier' and 'Islam in Afghanistan', though the material contained in them is largely included in the book. It comprises 25 chapters in 318 pages and includes photographs, maps and, in some editions, an index (references here are to the 1922 edition). It records Pennell's deep involvement with Afghans of different tribes as he went about his medical work, though a main topic is the school he opened in Bannu (in present-day north-western Pakistan) for boys from all religious backgrounds and his deep involvement in its running, while in chs 17, 18 and 19 he gives an account of his involvement with Hindus and Sikhs. The last two chapters set out the insights he gained about the nature of Christian work among Afghan Muslims and outline possible future strategies.

Three chapters are particularly concerned with individuals who converted to Christianity and the challenges and opposition they faced from their countrymen. They are entitled 'A tale of a talib', 'Alum Gul's choice' and 'The story of a convert'. Further personal stories are contained in 'Frontier episode' and 'Rough diamonds'. 'The tale of a talib' recounts the kidnap of a religious student who converted to Christianity and Pennell's attempts to rescue him. While the student eventually returned to Islam, he was instrumental in the conversion of a mullah to Christianity. 'Alum Gul's choice' tells of his family's opposition to his conversion, which

included imprisonment and attempted poisoning, his subsequent escape and his family disowning him. 'The story of a convert' tells how Jahan Khan, despite his animosity towards the English and Christianity, became Pennell's Pashto-speaking body servant and learnt to read through a Pashto version of the Gospels, which affected his life. After he was set upon by Muslims, who beat him and attempted to strangle him, he declared himself a Christian. He was baptised in Bannu and then returned to Afghanistan, where apostasy was a capital offence, carrying a stock of Pashto Gospels. His uncle, who was a mullah, told him to flee and he went with his wife to the Arabian Gulf to work as a missionary. They later returned to Afghanistan, where they became medical missionaries.

While references to Islam are found throughout the book, they are particularly direct in the two chapters entitled 'The Afghan character' and 'Afghan traditions', and to a lesser extent in 'Border warriors', 'Afghan mullahs' and 'Afghan women'. In 'The Afghan character', Pennell outlines the Afghan understanding of honour and shame, which reflects Islamic values intertwined with local interpretations.

The following incident reflects Pennell's experiences with mullahs. One in Bannu

> would frequently give public lectures which were tirades against all Christians, and missionaries in particular, telling the people that if they died in the mission hospital they would assuredly go to hell, and all the mission medicine they drank would be turned into so much lead, which would drag them relentlessly down, down to the bottomless pit and very much more in that strain. (sixth edition, 1922, p. 86)

One morning this mullah was brought to the hospital.

> We did not ask him awkward questions, but admitted him at once and I think our Christian assistants throughout his long and dangerous illness showed him particular attentions, and nursed him with special care. They never taunted him with his former attitude to us, but strove, by the exhibition of Christian forbearance and sympathy, to give him a practical exposition of what Christianity is. When he left the hospital he thanked us in the presence of his disciples, offered a prayer for blessing on the hospital, and is now one of our staunchest friends. (p. 87)

Of his many experiences in the bazaar, Pennell documents this one, which provides an insight into his response to frequent challenges to his faith:

> Then will come the Mullah of the village, with his Quran under his arm and his rosary in his hand, and with a very sanctimonious and superior kind of air. He has come to see that the faith of the flock is not endangered, and



Illustration 27. Out-patients being treated at the Mission Hospital in Bannu

> is followed by a number of his talibs or students, whose great desire is to hear a wordy battle between the Padre and the Mullah, and to see the former ignominiously defeated [... T]he refusal to answer questions would be assumed to imply inability to do so, and would be taken by the audience to indicate defeat. What really impresses the people would not usually be our arguments, but the patience and courtesy with which we meet, or ought to meet, the endeavours of our opponent to make us lose our temper. According to Eastern ideas the mere stroking of the beard is supposed to indicate irritation arising from the inability to answer the questions, and if the inexperienced disputant incautiously puts his hand to his beard, his opponent will most probably show off his advantage by pretending to apologize to him for having made him lose his temper. (pp. 101-2)

Regarding the status of Afghan mullahs among their communities, Pennell writes:

> Where the Mullahs are almost the only men who can lay claim to anything more than the most rudimentary learning it is only natural that they should have the people of the village entirely in their own control[. ... T]he Mullah becomes an integral part of Afghan life, and as he naturally feels that the advance of mission work and of education must mean the steady diminishing of his influence, he leaves no stone unturned to withstand the teaching of missionaries and to prejudice the minds of the people against them. (p. 114-15)

In the chapter on Afghan women, Pennell describes the purchase of wives and the ease of divorce for men as '[t]he two greatest social evils from which the Afghan women suffer' (p. 195).

In chs 24, 'Deductions', and 25, 'A forward policy', Pennell makes some incisive and perceptive points about the most appropriate aims and work of Christian mission in this region. Among these, he emphasises that efforts to convert and baptise converts should take a secondary place to Christians living exemplary lives, expressing in the principles they follow what their faith stands for and creating an atmosphere of care and compassion. Strikingly, he also recognises that Muslims, and also Hindus, already possess invaluable teachings from their own traditions.

> The Mussulman has given a witness to the Unity of God and the folly of idolatry which has been unsurpassed in the religious history of the world, and he has qualities of devotion and self-abnegation which the Christian Church may well desire to enlist in her service rather than to ignore or decry. (p. 300)

This is the soil in which he sees that a distinctive eastern form of Christianity could grow, different from that of the West because of the environment in which it develops, though just as authentic and fruitful. Above all, this growth will occur if Christians, particularly 'Friars', can show examples of Christianity that will appeal to the people they serve (pp. 302-4). Mission, then, is not primarily about proclamation but about witness.

He adds a final story to illustrate this point, about a landowner in the district of Bannu who became a Christian and then witnessed his home being burnt and attempts being made to dispossess him of his land, though the courts supported him and these were restored. His sons and grandsons were all Christians and some of them worked as doctors. When Pennell visited one grandson, he saw him having a meal prepared for 200 poor people, descendants of the very tribesmen who had burnt his grandfather's house (pp. 309-10). Pennell observes briefly, 'This is an example of what may be accomplished in a fanatical frontier district through the agency of medical mission work carried on by an Indian Christian' (p. 310).

SIGNIFICANCE

There is little that is new in Pennell's book. Its significance lies in the accounts it contains of Islamic belief and practice as expressed among the Afghan tribes, and how it was lived out in their tribal context, especially with reference to their understanding of 'honour' and 'shame'. It also highlights the role of the mullahs and the extent to which they exercised their authority and power. In many cases, it was they who instigated the often vicious attacks on the British Government bases and representatives, on

Pennell himself and those assisting him, and also on the Hindus who were the shopkeepers and administrators in the region.

Among the wild tribes details many of the baseless and 'unable to prove' declarations that the mullahs made, not only about Christianity but also about the medicine that Pennell dispensed and the medical practices he employed.

Another point of significance is the book's detailing of the ways in which Muslims tried to prevent any of their own from showing interest in Christianity and ostracised any who did show such interest, as well as the steps they took to restore honour, as they saw it, when one of their number became a Christian. Not all converts were killed, as the example of Jahan Khan shows. Not only did he become a staunch friend of Pennell's but he was also for a time a missionary in Bahrain and, upon his return, learnt enough medicine to maintain a medical clinic in an area that had initially been hostile to Pennell, both his medicine and his ministry.

Pennell's final recommendations about the most appropriate form of mission among the Afghan tribes he knew – to demonstrate examples of compassion and care above focused attempts to make individual conversions – signal fresh thinking about the purpose and performance of the work in which numerous Europeans in India were involved. It is echoed by other missionaries in this period, whose experience taught them that the model of proclaiming the Christian message as they perceived it must be supplemented by sensitivity towards the people with whom they engaged, their experiences and, importantly, the beliefs they already held.

PUBLICATIONS

T.L. Pennell, *Among the wild tribes of the Afghan frontier. A record of sixteen years' close intercourse with the natives of the Indian marches*, London, 1909 (3 editions), subsequent editions 1912, 1913, 1914, 1922, 1927 (although these are called editions, it is probable that all except the 1922 publication were reprints); 12350717 (digitised version available through Harvard Library)

T.L. Pennell, 'The tribes of the North-West Frontier', *Imperial and Asiatic Quarterly Review and Oriental and Colonial Record*, 3rd series 30 (1910) 88-103

Pennell, 'Islam in Afghanistan'

T.L. Pennell, 'Onder de wilde stammen op de grenzen van Afghanistan De Aarde en haar Volken', in SL, 1917, 129-68 (Dutch trans., selections); 22473 (digitised version available through Project Gutenberg)

Ruth J. Nicholls

Claud Field

Claud Herbert Alwyn Faure Field

DATE OF BIRTH 1 April 1863
PLACE OF BIRTH Clifton, Bristol
DATE OF DEATH 14 March 1941
PLACE OF DEATH Hove, East Sussex

BIOGRAPHY

Claud Field was an Anglican clergyman and a missionary for the Church Missionary Society (CMS) in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. He studied at Cambridge University and earned a BA in Classics (1884), an MA (1888) and a variety of awards, including the Chancellor's English Medal (1882), the Members' Prize (1885) and the Seatonian Prize (1908). His ministerial career began with his ordination as a deacon at Rochester and then as a priest the following year (1889), during which time he served as curate at St Andrew's in Lambeth until he was commissioned by the CMS to a missionary posting at Peshawar (at the time, part of India's Punjab province). For nine of the years spanning 1892-1903, he served out of the CMS Peshawar mission station, marrying Julia Däuble, daughter of CMS missionary Carl Gustav Däuble, in 1894. He returned home to serve in London at St Paul's, Onslow Square, and then Holy Trinity Church, Lincoln's Inn Fields, until 1906. Very few further personal details about him are known, though his literary and linguistic career took off from this time. His first book, *Heroes of missionary enterprise*, published in 1908, was the first of over a hundred authored and translated texts involving work across a variety of languages, including English, Hindustani, Persian, Arabic, Pashto and Russian.

Field's missionary posting in Peshawar spurred him to research and experience that would result in publications covering Christian missionary work among Muslims, the culture and literature of the Afghan people, Islamic mystics and saints, and translations of notable works by the philosopher, theologian and mystic Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī (1058-1111). His own works on Christian-Muslim relations within the missionary context include *Heroes of missionary enterprise* (1908) and *With the Afghans* (1908). In *Mystics and saints of Islam* (1910) he examines, among other

historical figures, the lives of Muslims such as Rabīʿa of Baṣra, Ibn Sīnā, al-Ghazālī and Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī. Of his translated works, Field contributed to an edited collection, *Wisdom of the East*, the editors of which expressed the hope that 'these books shall be the ambassadors of goodwill and understanding between East and West', and further, 'that a deeper knowledge of the great ideals and lofty philosophy of Oriental thought may help to a revival of that true spirit of Charity which neither despises nor fears the nations of another creed and colour' (*The alchemy of happiness by al Ghazzali*, trans. C. Field, London, 1910, p. 6). Field contributed two translations to the series, *The confessions of al-Ghazzali: translated for the first time into English* (1909) and al-Ghazālī's *The alchemy of happiness* (1910). In 1911, he published *A dictionary of Oriental quotations* (*Arabic and Persian*), which organises English translations (not necessarily his own) alongside an alphabetical list of Arabic and Persian maxims.

Although he produced a large body of authored and translated works, this prodigious writer, proficient linguist and advocate for Islamic and Afghan literature has left only a small footprint in later scholarship.

MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Primary

C. Field, *With the Afghans*, London, 1908

E. Stock, *The history of the Church Missionary Society. Its environment, its men and its work*, London, vol. 3, 1899, p. 360; vol. 4, 1916, pp. 203, 209, 212

CMS, '1243, Field, Claud Herbert Alwyn – age 29', in *A register of missionaries and native clergy, 1804-1904*, London, 1905, p. 246

Secondary

Art., 'Field, Claud Herbert Alwyn Faure', in J.L. Dawson, ACAD. A Cambridge Alumni Database; ACAD – A Cambridge University Database: Contents

WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Heroes of missionary enterprise

DATE 1908

ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

In *Heroes of missionary enterprise. True stories of the intrepid bravery and stirring adventures of missionaries with uncivilised man, wild beasts, and*

the forces of nature in all parts of the world, which is 335 pages long and includes 24 full-page illustrations, Field organises the Christian missionaries (his 'heroes') according to four geographical divisions: 'In the regions of snow', 'In lands of the sun', 'In India and the East', and 'In the isles of the sea'. Missionaries who worked among Muslim populations or encountered Muslim figures are placed within the 'In India and the East' category and included in narratives spanning India, Central Asia and East Africa. In his preface, Field acknowledges sources from missionary records covering 300 years and from materials published by both the Church Missionary Society and the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (p. 8). His choice of the word 'hero' for the missionaries he includes – they are all men – implies that the settings and population groups among whom they worked presented extraordinary and often fatal challenges to them, and indeed the majority of the groups portrayed in the book are shown to be antagonistic to the missionary and the Christian faith he represented. From the outset, Field compares the Christian missionary to the figure of Prometheus in Greek myth sacrificing his place among the gods in order to bring fire to 'primaeval cave-dwellers', further specifying Muslims when he adds, 'Like the Hebrew prophet, [missionaries] confront idolatry and Islam' (*Heroes*, pp. 7-8).

Stories of violence by Muslim individuals and groups against the missionaries, Christian converts and British soldiers reinforce an antagonistic and violent depiction, while descriptions of 'Moslem barbarity' (p. 197), 'haughty Moslems' (p. 231) and the rapaciousness of 'all the Afghans' (p. 250) add further condemnation. While Field also contrasts these representations with occasional references to what he terms 'a respectable Mohammedan' (p. 214), an 'open-minded' emir (p. 219), and the 'boasted hospitality of Mohammedans to strangers' (p. 196) the overall narrative creates a dark impression of Muslim locals. Muslims whom Field commends in his narratives are those who convert to Christianity, such as Dilawar Khan of Peshawar (pp. 248-9).

The depictions of Muslims given in *Heroes of missionary enterprise* contrast with impressions in Field's later books, even though they are based on the same sources. Though published in the same year as *Heroes* and incorporating some of the same narratives, *With the Afghans* (1908) presents a slightly more congenial picture of Muslims, and the later *Mystics and saints of Islam* (1910) highlights well-known Muslims and Islamic poems as admirable. It is clear from the preface, footnotes and contents of *Heroes* that Field took both research material and textual content for it from Church Missionary Society publications, including a book entitled

Stranger than fiction (probably the book of this name by John Joseph Halcombe, London, 1873), and Robert Clark's sketch, 'Dilawar Khan' (probably *The Punjab and Sindh missions of the Church Missionary Society*, second edition, London, 1885, pp. 181-3).

The appearance of the term 'uncivilised man' in the subtitle of the book makes clear that Field identified Christianity with civilisation. *Heroes of missionary enterprise* represents a contribution to the argument that the spread of Christianity brought with it the spread of 'civilisation'. In the preface, Field asserts that 'What takes place in the individual takes place in the nation. Blood-stained and foul idolators are found sitting at worship, clothed and in their right mind' (*Heroes*, p. 8), making a comparison through the brief allusion to Mark 5:15 and Luke 8:35 between converts and the Gerasene demoniac whom Jesus both heals and civilises and also commands to talk publicly about his changed self. Comments in the text indicate general approval of British governance over India and, after elevating Dilawar Khan's example as a convert to Christianity and officer in the Queen's Corps of Guides, the text includes Khan's last reported words, 'Tell the Sircar [government] that I am glad to die in their service' (*Heroes*, p. 249). In *Heroes*, un-Christianised people are also un-civilised. Therefore, all groups are made better by the civilising forces that Christian missionaries introduce through their hard work, persistence and patience.

Field's depth of grassroots knowledge deriving from his nine years spent in Peshawar reveals itself most notably in the chapter dedicated to the Revd Robert Clark (1825-1900), the founder of the CMS mission station at Peshawar. While other chapters of *Heroes* limit their narrative to the activities of the particular missionary in focus, Field elaborates his chapter on Clark with more extensive historical background and quotations from periodicals written during his own time of service in Peshawar, as well as from Clark himself. Throughout chapters pertinent to Christian-Muslim relations, the text only sparingly mentions Muslims in a positive light (such as acknowledging their hospitality and 'considerable liberality'), though it does include a notable instance in which Muslims of Urmia became jealous of a school begun for Nestorian boys and argued successfully to have their young men taught there as well (pp. 223-4).

SIGNIFICANCE

While *Heroes* covers a wider geographical span than Field's personal expertise, it is significant that he informs his readers that he is a 'sometime C.M.S. missionary in the Punjab' (title page), thus claiming a measure of trustworthiness for his book. For contemporary readers who would want

to know about Christian-Muslim relations, *Heroes* served as a historical record of the late Victorian impetus to view Christian mission as concomitant with a civilising mission to needy people. In his later works, Field attributed more personal dignity to Muslims and notable Muslim figures of history by expressing admiration for Afghan literature and the Muslim theologians and saints about whom he wrote.

PUBLICATIONS

Claud Field, *Heroes of missionary enterprise. True stories of the intrepid bravery and stirring adventures of missionaries with uncivilised man, wild beasts, and the forces of nature in all parts of the world*, London, 1908, Philadelphia PA, 1908, repr. London, 1913, 1927, Charleston SC, 2010; 008415540 (digitised version available through Hathi Trust)

With the Afghans

DATE 1908
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

With the Afghans, which is 208 pages long, was first published in 1908. Chs 1-4 provide context and background by covering Afghan history, culture and religion, while chs 5-7 cover mission work and its ramifications in Peshawar and the wider region of the North-West Frontier (the area covering India's northern border with Afghanistan). Chs 8-11 focus on narratives of notable Afghans, as well as an Afghan uprising against British and Sikh soldiers, and chs 12-14 discuss Sufism and Afghan poets and fables. Field recognises that not all Afghans are Muslim, noting that some tribes, most notably the inhabitants of Kafiristan, have not accepted Islam. Accordingly, the majority of his discussion addresses general Afghan issues.

It is in ch. 4 on 'The religion of the Pathans' that Field offers an overview of the teachings and sects of Islam. He identifies religious customs that are unique to the tribes of Afghanistan, such as smearing the blood of a goat or sheep on a doorpost to avoid sickness, confessing sins on the head of a cow and sending it into the wilderness, and punishing blasphemy with stoning to death. He calls such customs 'bastard Judaism' (p. 73). In addition, in ch. 12, 'Persian influences on the Afghans: Sufism', he discusses mysticism in Islam. The title page does not mention a year of publication,

though comments in the text indicate 1908 (pp. 13, 80, 82). The mention of *Heroes of missionary enterprise* on the title page indicates that Field wrote *With the Afghans* later in the year.

Regarding Christian-Muslim themes, the preface identifies *With the Afghans* as a missionary text. As in *Heroes of missionary enterprise*, Field couples Christian mission with civilising mission, as in his declaration: 'Grim and uncompromising, the mountains of Afghanistan rise abruptly from the Peshawar plain to bar the expansion of civilisation and Christianity' (p. 77). But at the same time he openly admits admiration for the culture and thought that lie beyond Afghanistan's mountains, and he is led by his personal affinity for poetry and philosophy to identify Sufism as a bridge between Christians and Muslims. Extolling the poetry of Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī (1207-73), about whom he declares, 'The higher and better side of the Muhammadan mind cannot be understood without some acquaintance of this remarkable writer' (p. 184), Field also discusses the theologian and philosopher al-Ghazālī, as well as the Persian mystic 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (1077/8-1166). He reports hearing quotations from the writings of these Sufi figures in the bazaars of Peshawar, though not the mosques, locating their influence in the cultural more than the religious sphere.

Through his emphasis upon Sufi poetry and thought and his accounts of missionary journeys among outlying villages, mosques and bazaars, Field promotes dialectical rather than antagonistic interaction between missionaries and Muslims. In addition, chs 13, 'Afghan poets', and 14, 'Afghan fables', further this theme. However, alongside this, *With the Afghans* includes evidence of hostile behaviour by Muslims towards missionaries, such as stoning, threats of violence and mockery. In the overall picture, it is Christians who favour dialogue and Muslims who are antagonistic. The text does not state whether Christian missionaries show hostility towards Muslims.

Gentler in tone than *Heroes of missionary enterprise*, this slightly later work demonstrates a deeper respect for the local culture and for elements of Islam, evidenced by its references to Afghan literature, Sufi poetry and philosophy, and the Qur'an itself. In the Qur'an, Field admires 'the incomparable rhythm of the Arabic language at its purest, and the magic potency which the Oriental has always attached to the arts of reading and writing', adding, 'it is no wonder that every Mohammedan repeats exultantly the opening words of the second chapter, "This is the Book! There is no doubt

in it'" (p. 62). This respectful mention of the Qur'an and Muslim admiration for it mark a shift from his earlier work. Continuing this trend, his treatise on Islamic mystics and saints and his contributions to the *Wisdom of the East* series show increasing admiration for Muslim historical figures and their theological, artistic and philosophical endeavours.

SIGNIFICANCE

In line with previous missionary writings related to the Church Missionary Society Peshawar mission station, such as those of Robert Clark, T.P. Hughes and Worthington Jukes, Field's *With the Afghans* both suggests that the Afghan people had 'Israelitish origins' (pp. 3, 19) and also identifies Peshawar as the pivotal springboard from which Christianity would spread into Afghanistan and Central Asia. Likewise, the text repeats the appraisal frequently made by missionaries of Afghans as hospitable, brave, athletic and possessing hardy constitutions, and adds that, if they are converted to Christianity, they make good missionaries. Field's darker assessments of the Afghans, also echoing previous missionary writings, are that they are guilty of bigotry, oath-breaking, misogyny and thievery. It is, however, Field's admiration for Muslim philosophers, mystics and poets, and for Afghan literature that represents the more individual traits of *With the Afghans*. It offers insight into the history of the Afghans and of Afghanistan itself, with the cycle of empires, armies and emirs that comprise the region's tumultuous history. As a scholar and linguist, Field includes proverbs, lines of poetry and vernacular phrases in Pashto, offering a further avenue, in addition to the translations of Afghan fables and poetry, for the Afghan voice to be heard among his readers.

PUBLICATIONS

Claud Field, *With the Afghans*, London, 1909, repr. Charleston NC, 2010, Norderstedt, 2020; withtheafghans00fieluoft (digitised version available through Archive.org)

STUDIES

F.E. Wilcox, 'Brief résumé of the origins of missions to Muslims in the Northwest Frontier province (Pakistan)', *The Moslem World* 42 (1952) 97-103

Mystics and saints of Islam

DATE 1910
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

Mystics and saints of Islam, which is 215 pages long, is intended as a compilation of biographies of various Sufi ascetics, theologians and poets. It devotes the majority of its 16 chapters to individual figures. In the preface, Field explains that most of the character sketches are his translations of essays written by Alfred von Kremer, Pavet de Courteille and A.F. Mehren. He claims authorship only for the two chapters on al-Ghazālī and Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī. In the four appendices (pp. 192-215), he addresses Christian-Muslim relations directly and highlights points of connection between Christians and Muslims (the review in *The Moslem World* 2 [April 1912] 202 attributes appendices 3 and 4 to Field, and says further that appendix 4 appeared in the *Church Missionary Review* and was reprinted in *The Moslem World* for April 1911).

Of the four appendices, the third and fourth, entitled 'Christian elements in Mohammedan literature' and 'Christ in Mohammedan tradition', specifically address Christian-Muslim themes. In the third appendix (pp. 202-7), Field explains Islamic sayings in light of biblical verses and provides Christian readers with apologetic points for engagement with Muslims. Progressing through examples from the writings of the historian al-Ṭabarī (d. 923), al-Ghazālī, the poet Saʿdī Shīrāzī (1210-91/2), Niẓāmī Ganjavī (c. 1141-1209), Rūmī and others, Field finally states that some converts have come to Christianity after passing through a 'stage of Sufism' (p. 207). The fourth appendix (pp. 208-15), which is very probably by Field, examines passages by Muslim writers in which Jesus has a higher standing than in the Qur'an, adducing sayings of Muḥammad collected by al-Bukhārī as well as referring again to the writings of al-Ṭabarī, al-Ghazālī, Saʿdī Shīrāzī and Niẓāmī Ganjavī. Asserting that there is evidence for shared beliefs between Christians and Muslims regarding Jesus in these writings, the book closes with: 'An open-minded Moslem perusing the above passages in the original Persian and Arabic (and many might be added) would certainly gain a far higher conception of our Lord than from anything he would find in the Koran' (p. 215). For Field, if Muslims were to study figures and texts such as these carefully, they would encounter a high view of Jesus and, if Christians studied the material carefully, they would encounter points useful for missionary engagement with Muslims.

In *Mystics and saints*, unlike his other two works, Field was not writing for missionary purposes but was intending to demonstrate that 'the roots of [Islamic] mysticism are to be found in the Koran itself' and are not 'a late importation into Islam' (p. vii). Accordingly, discussion with missionary implications is relegated to a small portion of the book (the two appendices and the two chapters on al-Ghazālī and Rūmī).

SIGNIFICANCE

Intended as a resource on mystical Islam, the relevance of *Mystics and saints* to Christian-Muslim relations lies in the points of connection it identifies. Those include: similarities between al-Ghazālī and Thomas à Kempis, St Augustine and Descartes; perceptions of the love of God; elevated views of Jesus; biblical accounts that appear in Muslim writings; Sufi phrases that 'sound' Christian; and compatible doctrines such as the sinlessness of Jesus and Jesus's return at the Last Judgement. Positive appraisals of Islam and Muslims centre on admiration for the philosophy and poetry of notable figures as individuals.

Sadly, there are few signs that the work was much used, although new printings have appeared in recent years.

PUBLICATIONS

Claud Field, *Mystics and saints of Islam*, London, 1910, repr. Boston MA, 2006, Delhi, 2009, Charleston SC, 2010, Hamburg, 2013, Srinagar, 2015, Frankfurt am Main, 2020; 24314 (digitised version available through Project Guttenberg)

STUDIES

Review and Expositor: An International Baptist Journal 8/3 (July 1911) 457-8

'Book Reviews', *The Moslem World* 2 (April 1912) 202

Candis Berends

British historians on Islam in South Asia

BIOGRAPHIES

This entry presents ten British historians who lived and worked for varying periods of time in India. Six were colonial administrators, four were with the military, and all pursued scholarly historical interests. They wrote on aspects of life and history in South Asia, touching to a greater or lesser degree on matters pertaining to the interaction between Muslims and Christians, or at least between Indians, including Muslims, and the British in South Asia, including Christians. Some, such as Henry Sullivan Jarrett (1839-1919), are known as translators of historical works written by others rather than as original authors; they reflect the interest in and capacity for gaining proficiency in the languages of India that is a feature of both historians and missionaries who immersed themselves in this land, its peoples, cultures and religions. Others, such as William Brereton Birch (1841-1910), about whom little information is available, have not contributed much of significance, and very often little more than the odd article, such as his 'Muhammad' (1876). They are individuals whose works reflect historical values and offer objective and respectful assessments of Indian Islam and Muslim, a combination that gives accuracy to accounts and observations, especially where Indian writers and scholars are drawn upon. The views they express on this matter are there to be discerned, though they are not substantial enough to warrant separate entries for each of them.

Robert Orme was born in Travancore, India, on 25 December 1728. Educated in England, he returned to India in 1742 and from then on worked as a British civil servant and historian. Returning to England in 1760, he lived for much of the rest of his life in London, where he produced his major works. Well regarded by his peers, he is notable for an Asian history that did not focus solely on the colonial powers. Gaining renown as a scholar, he was appointed the first official historian of the East India Company in 1769. He died in Ealing, London, on 13 January 1801.

Born in Merthyr Cynog near Brecon, South Wales, in 1762, **David Price** volunteered for the army of the East India Company in 1780, which eventually led him to a career in the civil service in India. He became proficient in Persian and developed historical interests, which led to several

publications, along with translations. He died at Watton House, Brecon, on 16 December 1835.

Charles Stewart was born in County Antrim in 1764. He had a career as a British colonial officer and Oriental scholar in India. After retiring from the army in 1808, he became professor of Oriental Languages at the East India College, Haileybury. In 1821, he was awarded the gold medal of the Royal Asiatic Society in recognition of his academic output on India, both his own historical writings and translation work. He died in Bath, Somerset, on 19 April 1837.

William Erskine, who was born in Edinburgh on 8 November 1773, had a career in administration in Bombay. He became proficient in Persian, and this led to considerable translation work. He is also known for his two-volume *History of India*, which was published posthumously. He died in Edinburgh on 8 May 1852.

Henry Miers Elliot, who was born in London on 1 March 1808, had a career in administration in India, where he learned Arabic and Persian, and amassed a collection of papers and manuscripts mostly of a commercial, legal or general historical nature. He commenced a multi-volume history that was subsequently published posthumously in reduced form. He died in Simon's Town, Cape of Good Hope, on 20 December 1853.

Born in Dunbarton, Scotland, on 6 October 1779, **Mountstuart Elphinstone** followed a career in the British administration of India, retiring in 1827 as lieutenant-governor of Bombay. He also spent some time in Afghanistan. He was the author of many books on the religions of the Indian sub-continent. He died in Hookwood, Surrey, on 20 November 1859.

James Talboys Wheeler was born in Oxford on 22 December 1824. From 1858, he had a career as a historian, teacher and bureaucrat in the British Raj. Among his many publications, he produced a four-volume *History of India*. He died in Ramsgate on 13 January 1897.

Little about **William Brereton Birch's** origins and education is known. He had a career in the British army from 1858 to 1890, retiring with the rank of colonel in the Bengal Staff Corps in 1890 and dying in 1910. He was well versed in Islam, as his publication discussed below indicates.

Born in Madras on 17 June 1839, **Henry Sullivan Jarrett** was a British colonial officer in India with senior administrative posts following on from his time in the army. He died in East Grinstead, Sussex, on 15 April 1919.

Born in London on 16 December 1854, **John David Rees** had a career as a colonial administrator in British India from 1875, also serving as translator of Tamil, Telugu, Persian and Hindustani. Back in London, he was a Member of Parliament from 1906 to 1910 and 1912 to 1922 and an advocate of the British Raj. He died in London on 2 June 1922.

MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Robert Orme

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W.W. Wroth, art. 'Orme, Robert', in *DNB*

S. Tammita-Delgoda, art. 'Orme, Robert', in *ODNB*

K. Karttunen, art. 'Orme, Robert', in K. Karttunen, *Persons of Indian studies*, 2017, online; https://whowaswho-indology.info/4490

David Price

D. Price, *Memoirs of the early life and service of a field officer on the retired list of the Indian army*, ed. E. Moore, London, 1839 (see biographical references)

S. Lane-Poole, art. 'Price, David', in *DNB*

S. Lane-Poole, revised R.S. Simpson, art. 'Price, David', in *ODNB*

K. Karttunen, art. 'Price, David', in Karttunen, *Persons of Indian studies*, 2017, online; https://whowaswho-indology.info/4876

Charles Stewart

C.P. Stewart, *Historic memorials of the Stewarts of Fothergill, Perthshire, and their male descendants*, Edinburgh, 1879

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

British historians on Islam in South Asia

DATE 1763-1910
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION
While most of the authors discussed here did not make direct references to Christianity and Islam, their works contain material of at least some relevance to understanding the history of Christian-Muslim relations in India during the 19th century. Together, these works often comprise, or at least include, sweeping grand histories of India. They provide a fundamental framework for understanding Islam in India and indirectly relations between Indian Islam and British Christianity. Some provide a respectful and objective overview of the history of Islam, including a sympathetic historical narrative of Muḥammad and a succinct summary of Islamic faith as an introduction to the period of Islamic rule in India. Narratives of encounters with and experiences of Indian Muslims usually show respect and appreciation, and offer positive assessments of Muslims in the Indian context.

Robert Orme's (1728-1801) *A history of the military transactions of the British nation in Indostan* (1763) commences with a dissertation (pp. 2-29) on the political and social 'establishments', or organisational and administrative arrangements, pertaining to Muslim rule in India with which the 18th-century British Raj had to contend. Within a predominantly secular work of military history, this section provides some tangential information about Christian-Muslim relations. A second volume, under the same main title, which was published posthumously in 1861, is devoted entirely to continuing the military history. Of greater relevance is Orme's *Historical fragments of the Mogul Empire* (1782), in which he addresses historical

matters and concerns from 1659 onwards. As the title suggests, it is a selective account and discussion, though it does give glimpses into the context of relations between Christians and Muslims in India at the time.

David Price's (1762-1835) *Chronological retrospect, or Memoirs of the principal events of Mohammedan history, from the death of the Arabian legislator to the accession of the emperor Akbar* is a three-volume work, published between 1811 and 1821. A sweeping history, it gives accounts of events involving Muslims and activities pertinent to understanding the times and contexts that set the scene for interaction between Indian Muslims and the British. In 1829, Price also published his translation from Persian of the autobiographical *Memoirs of the Emperor Jahangueir* (Jahangir, r. 1569-1627).

Charles Stewart's (1764-1837) interest in India and its history is reflected primarily in three works of translation. These are *The Tezkereh Al Vakiat* (1832, 1904), *The Mulfuzat Timury* (1830), and *Travels of Mirza Abu Taleb Khan* (3 vols, 1810). His own contribution is his *History of Bengal* (1813), although, as he acknowledges, it is still substantially a work of translation from Persian historians, together with references to European writers (Preface, p. ii). A sweeping historical overview, Stewart treats his original source material (Asian language documents) with great respect. He notes problems from a Western perspective (what a modern audience might call an academic viewpoint), but also acknowledges the strengths, reliability and usefulness of his sources. Stewart's stance towards religion is quite secular and neutral. The fact that there are multiple references to this book in modern histories of Bengal and Bangladesh indicates that it is still regarded, respected and quoted as an authoritative and important work on the subject by European and Asian writers.

William Erskine (1773-1852) published *Memoirs of Zehir-Ed-Din Muhammed Baber* (1826), a work that had been partly translated from the original Turkic dialect by John Leyden and completed by himself making use of a Persian translation. It contains a history of Tamerlane, the founder of the 14th-century Timurid Empire (roughly equivalent to modern-day Afghanistan), together with reflections and observations by the author of the work, the Emperor Bābur (r. 1526-30), who founded the Mughal Empire. Erskine is perhaps better known for his own *A history of India under the two first sovereigns of the house of Taimur* (2 vols, 1854), published

posthumously. Erskine's biographer in the *Oxford dictionary of national biography* remarks that it is 'the only history of India which has been written by a thorough Persian scholar' and, further, it is 'marked throughout by good sense, accuracy, and impartiality' (*ODNB*, 1901, p. 192).

H.M. Elliot and J. Dowson (eds), *The history of India as told by its own historians*, comprises eight volumes published between 1867 and 1877. Henry Elliot's (1808-53) early death meant that the work is a posthumous compilation of his collected manuscript translations of Indian historians, together with Dowson's editing; hence the dual ascription.

Vol. 1 (1867, 541 pages) contains, according to Dowson, mainly introductory material. Dowson also records that he updated Elliot's earlier draft because newer material had become available (*History*, vol. 2, p. v). Written in 1869, vol. 2 (579 pages) addresses the beginning of Islamic rule in India, with each chapter focusing on one of nine Indian historians (their religious affiliations are not specified in the source, but they are most likely Muslim). Vol. 3 (1871, 627 pages) features a further ten historians and covers the years 1260 to 1398. Vol. 4 (1872, 563 pages) comprises 14 chapters, some including material from historians named in earlier volumes while others draw on unnamed sources, covering at least ten historians in all.

Vol. 5 (1873, 575 pages) covers the period of the Afghan dynasty from Humāyūn (r. 1530-40) until the 38th year of Akbar's (r. 1556-1605) reign in 1594. Completed in 1875, vol. 6 (574 pages) continues and finishes Akbar's reign. The 19 chapters of this volume are attributed to various writers. Vol. 7 (573 pages) to the beginning of the reign of Muḥammad Shāh (r. 1719-48). This volume, in which all translations are made by Dowson, includes 23 chapters from 19 historians. Completing the series, vol. 8 (1877) includes a general index. The majority of the text consists of translated passages, meaning that Elliot's and Dowson's attitudes towards Muslims must be evaluated by analysing their choice of the extracts they thought would represent the 'Muslim' voice as communicated by the 'Muslim' historian.

Mountstuart Elphinstone (1779-1859) published *The history of India* in two volumes in 1841. The first volume contains a section (Book V) entitled 'Mahometans', which is an historical sweep from the emergence of Islam in Arabia to the 'establishment of a Mahometan government in India' (p. 489). This section includes an adequate, albeit limited from today's perspective, summary of the Muslim faith. Similarly, in his earlier *An account of the kingdom of Caubul* (1815), Elphinstone makes little more

than passing reference to Islam as a religion, although there is a section on 'Dervish, Saints and Holy Men'. Elphinstone's approach is overall respectful and objective.

J. Talboys Wheeler's (1824-97) *The history of India*, vol. 4, Part 1, *Mussulman rule* (London, 1876), provides a normative summary of early Islam in ch. 1. However, the focus of this work is 'the record of collision between two races, the Turks and the Hindus' (p. 1) in the context of the predominance of Islam during the 500 years from the 11th to the 15th centuries, following which came the era of the Moghul Empire, from the 16th to the middle of the 17th century. In vol. 6, part 2, *Moghul Empire – Aurangzeb* (London, 1880), Wheeler gives a biography of Aurangzeb, 'under whom the Moghul Empire reached its zenith' (p. vii) and a summary of his rule. There is little about Islam *per se* but much, again, about Muslim rule in India and its effect on the Hindu population.

William Brereton Birch (1841-1910) published his 28-page essay on Muḥammad in the *Calcutta Review* in 1876. He presents a sympathetic biography of the Prophet in an objective style that is free from any overt hostility or theological assumptions. Much of the text relies on a variety of British, French and German 19th-century scholarship. It thus departs from more traditional accounts based on theological rivalry, favouring instead a more modern, academically objective, or judgement-neutral, perspective.

As noted above, Henry Jarrett (1839-1919) is included not on account of any works he authored himself, but for his work of translation, notably vols 2 (1891) and 3 (1894) of *The 'Ain-i-Ākbari* (*Ā'īn-i Akbarī*) by Abūlfazl 'Allamī and his 594-page translation from Arabic of Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī's *Tārīkh al-khulafā'* ('The history of the caliphs', 1881).

Written in the style of a travelogue, John Rees's (1854-1922) short (37 pages) *Notes of a journey from Kasveen to Hamadan* (1885) is a narrative of experiences and encounters in a light journalistic style. It reveals the author's delight in the encounters he experiences, and his respect and appreciation for the Muslim culture and people he discovers. He notes that Christian missionary success 'is confined as elsewhere in Persia to the conversion of Armenian Christians into Protestant Christians. One of these converts, when pressed to explain the distinction, stated that it chiefly consisted in this, that the former bathed in oil and the latter in water' (p. 30). By comparison, his *The Muhammadans, 1001-1761 A.D.* (1894) is a work that focuses

on the history of Muslims in India. Written in a more accessible style than other comparable works, it gives a very positive assessment of Muslims in India, their contribution to empire, their qualities and strengths. He remarks that they are 'possessed of a splendid history' (p. 179) and concludes that 'it must be allowed that the Queen-Empress has no more loyal subjects in India than these' (p. 180).

In his *India. The real India* (1910) Rees gives a simple summary of the origins of Islam, with references to Islam in the Indian context that are religiously quite neutral and objective in tone. The thrust is that of a sweeping grand history. He notes the rise of the 'All India Moslem League' as a counterpoint to the 'Hindoo Congress', observing that one of the objects of the league is the 'promotion of loyalty to England and of an attitude of readiness to fight for the British Government' (p. 227). His *Modern India* (London, 1910), published by invitation in the series 'The British Empire', provides a relatively succinct and broad encyclopaedic exposition. There is a passing reference to the social life of Muslims ('Mohamedans') in ch. 12, from which some inferences can be drawn about interactions between Muslims and Hindus and, obliquely, between Muslims and Christians at the time.

These works either ignore contemporary religious sentiments, for example the superiority of British Christians towards Indian Muslims and others, or else endeavour to transcend them with approaches marked by scholarly objectivity and neutrality. In this respect, they represent a 'secular' academic demeanour in respect to religious aspects of Indian history. While this means that there is little explicit about Christian-Muslim relations in them, they provide a reliable background framework within which to understand Christian-Muslims relations in South Asia in the 19th century.

SIGNIFICANCE

The relevance and worth of the individual works for the purposes of recording and understanding the history of Christian-Muslim relations vary. Although they can seem tangential, they are perhaps more significant when they are looked at together. Their authors wrote from a Christian context or perspective, albeit more cultural and contextual than overtly religious or theological. The works, as a set and as representative of a wider genre of historical interest and observation, contribute to a broader background understanding of events and contexts within which relations between Christians and Muslims were located.

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Douglas Pratt

Cambridge Mission to Delhi

At a meeting in Cambridge on 29 November 1876, attended by 34 resident members of the University of Cambridge at which the Secretary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG) was present, it was agreed to send graduates to strengthen Christian missionary work in Delhi. A committee was formed, known as the Cambridge Committee, to implement this. During the Uprising of 1857, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel compound in Delhi, which had been opened in 1853, had been attacked and its residents, including two Cambridge graduates, killed. Another Cambridge graduate, Thomas Skelton (d. 1915), who was recruited to reopen and rebuild the mission, had gone there in 1859 but he left in 1863 to teach at Bishop's College, Calcutta. The SPG were eager to station more missionaries in Delhi to expand the mission's work, while the past involvement of Cambridge graduates in the SPG Delhi mission commended it to members of the University as an appropriate choice for their financial support.

The idea of recruiting Cambridge graduates for missionary work and of supporting them financially dated from 1872, when on the second Sunday in Advent B.F. Westcott (d. 1901), Regius Professor of Divinity, preached a sermon on 'The universities in relation to missionary work'. This called for a new approach to spreading the gospel in India, one that respected the religions already present and did not try to impose a European form of Christianity onto 'men who are wholly different from us' (Westcott, *Some points*, p. 32). Westcott called for 'a clearer understanding of, and a livelier sympathy with' the existing faiths, combined with a better appreciation of Christianity's 'social power' that focused less on converting individuals than on improving – 'converting' – a society (p. 30). Recognising that God was already active in India and that it had lessons to teach as well as lessons to learn, this approach would 'meet' and not 'shun' what is 'most powerful' in the region (p. 39). Westcott wanted East and West to blend, not the one to replace the other. So, indigenous workers, who would be as much Hindu as they were Christian, and 'more intensely national than those who are not Christian' (p. 39), should be equipped to carry out this task. This offered a different vision from the 'minutemen' of Thomas Babington Macaulay (1800-59), who in his *Minute on Indian Education* of 1835 envisioned a form of education in India that would produce a class of

Indians who were English in all but their skin-colour. Westcott's vision was to train indigenous evangelists who would 'follow the religious instincts and satisfy the religious wants of Hindu and Mohammedan' (*Some points*, p. 39) so that a new Alexandria might arise on the banks of the Indus or Ganges. The aim would be to graft 'Christian doctrine onto Indian thought' (Chatterjee, *Indian secularism*, p. 113).

It was this sermon by Westcott that inspired several members of the university to contemplate forming a mission. The first step, on 8 February 1875, was to establish the Cambridge Graduates Mission Aid Association, which would increase, deepen and centralise 'interest in mission work in the university' (J.J. Halcombe, *Mission life*, vol. 6, Part 1, London, 1875, p. 260). Among those involved, Edward Bickersteth (1850-97), fellow of Pembroke College, regularly corresponded with Thomas Valpy French (1825-91; *CMR* 24, 338-44), whom he had met in childhood.

French, who had been working with the Church Missionary Society in India since 1851, first mentioned the idea of a celibate community or brotherhood of Cambridge graduates working in north India in a letter to Bickersteth in 1875. While on furlough in England, French read a paper on the proposed mission at the Cambridge Graduates Mission Aid Association on 16 February 1876. Soon, the abandoned compound in Delhi owned by the SPG was identified as a location for a mission that would reach out to educated Hindus and Muslims. Joseph Lightfoot (1828-89), Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity at Cambridge and an enthusiastic supporter of the initiative, saw Delhi as ideal. In a sermon preached on St Andrew's Day, 30 November 1876, he remarked enthusiastically that the very name 'Delhi [...] had a thrilling interest for English hearts' as the 'the immemorial city of Hindoo tradition' and 'the chief stronghold of Mohammedan power [...] the seat [...] of the most splendid [...] Oriental monarchies', while the 'blood of Cambridge martyrs cried [...] out for revenge, the noble revenge' of preaching 'the gospel of love' ('The father of missionaries', in *Sermons preached on special occasions*, London, 1891, 38-54, pp. 49-51).

It was decided to work in collaboration with an established mission agency. Through French's affiliation and Bickersteth's strong family link, CMS was initially approached, though the society disliked the idea of a celibate brotherhood as well as personnel reporting to them through another agency which would also recruit them (Bickersteth, *Life and letters*, pp. 34-6; see also E. Stock, *The history of the CMS*, London, 1916, vol. 3, pp. 151-2). Nor did CMS's low church ethos sit comfortably with the high church sentiments of most of the Cambridge Committee. After talks with

CMS failed to reach an agreement, the Cambridge Committee turned to the SPG, owners of the compound in Delhi, and almost a year after the 29 November 1976 meeting, the formal partnership scheme was approved on 1 November 1877 (Pascoe, *Classified digest*, p. 626, citing SPG Standing Committee Book V). The Cambridge Committee would fund the mission while the SPG would provide missionary stipends, and the Cambridge Mission to Delhi (as the former SPG mission became known) would assume responsibility for St Stephen's High School, which the SPG had established soon after it began work in Delhi. A sub-committee of three professors would recruit candidates. The first two recruits were Bickersteth and John D.M. Murray (d. 1894) of St John's College, who reached Delhi in December 1877. He fell ill and was invalided home in 1880, though Bickersteth remained until 1883 and became head of the mission.

Bickersteth's writings contain some references to Islam, though it was George Alfred Lefroy (1854-1919) who made work with Muslims his main concern. Born in County Down, where his father was Dean of Dromore, Lefroy was a student at Trinity College, Cambridge. He was ordained in 1879 and joined the Cambridge Mission to Delhi that year, rising to become Bishop of Lahore in 1899 and Bishop of Calcutta in 1912. He studied Arabic, the Qur'an, Islamic theology and Urdu, which he spoke fluently enough to be able to switch to Urdu in his first sermon as bishop to the delight of 'the large number of Indians present' (Montgomery, *Life and letters*, p. 129). He spoke at the First Missionary Conference on behalf of the Mohammedan World, Cairo, 1906, on 'Preparation of workers for work among Moslems' (H.H. Montgomery, *Methods of mission work among Moslems*, New York, 1906, pp. 211-30) and, in 1907, he was one of the seven bishops who produced *Mankind and the Church*. Montgomery's chapter on 'Work among Mohammedans' in V.H. Stanton, *The story of the Delhi Mission*, is mainly about Lefroy's regular debates with Muslims on a range of topics. While these resembled traditional *munāẓarah* debates, they appear to have been conducted with courtesy and respect.

Robert Reynold Winters (d. 1891) succeeded as head of the mission when Bickersteth had to return to England in 1883 due to ill health. A graduate of Oxford University, Winters had served with the SPG in Delhi since 1860. His wife Priscilla (d. 1882) established St Stephen's Community House for women in 1862 and a *zenana* mission in 1863 to teach women, including Muslims, reading, writing, arithmetic and some handicrafts, followed by twice-weekly Bible studies. The house accommodated seven workers and had its own chapel. Priscilla Winters also began the Delhi Mission's medical work in 1867, initially as an open-air dispensary.

When Winters died in 1891, Lefroy became head of the Delhi Mission and, when he became Bishop of Lahore in 1899, he was succeeded by Samuel S. Allnutt (d. 1917), who had joined the mission in 1879, at the same time as Lefroy. F.J. Western (d. 1951), a Cambridge graduate who had joined the Delhi Mission in 1904, succeeded Allnutt as head in 1918. In 1928, he became Bishop of Tinevelly and, from 1940 to 1951, he was General Secretary of the Mission to Delhi based in London.

Between 1909 and 1911 several members of the Brotherhood, including Western, formed a separate community in the compound, where they attempted to follow the lifestyle of Hindu sannyasins, wearing dhotis, sleeping on mats and subsisting on very little food. S.E. Stokes (d. 1946), son of an American Quaker industrialist, who led this brief experiment, left to marry a 'wife from the Kotgarh Christian community', and settled in her village (O'Connor, *Clear star*, p. 137). Known as 'Satayananda Stokes', he served on the All-India Congress Committee in 1921 and was jailed for his membership.

In 1896, S.A.C. Ghose became the first Indian to be ordained at the Cambridge Mission to Delhi. A St Stephen's graduate, he taught philosophy there in 1899-1910 and 1913-18, becoming C.F. Andrews's (on whom see below) 'earliest friend in India' (O'Connor, *Clear star*, p. 34). He had a reputation for standing up for the equal treatment of Indians within the church and college. G.A. Purton, a graduate of Clare College, Cambridge, joined the mission in 1896, together with Basil Westcott, B.F. Westcott's youngest son. Westcott and Purton died in India in 1900 and 1912, respectively. Influenced by Alexander Duff's 'downward filter theory' of educating an Indian elite to lead Christian mission, Allnutt and Lefroy reconstituted the high school as an undergraduate college affiliated to the University of the Punjab from 1882. Allnutt was principal of the new college from 1881 to 1898 and became a fellow of the university in 1895.

After Lefroy, the next member of the Cambridge Mission to contribute in a significant way to missionary thought on Islam and to Christian-Muslim relations was Charles Freer Andrews (1871-1940), a fellow of Pembroke College since 1893, who joined the mission in 1904 after serving at Pembroke College's London mission (1896-9) then as vice-principal of the Cambridge Clergy Training School (1899-1902), later renamed Westcott House. A close friend of Basil Westcott, he saw himself as replacing him at the Cambridge Mission. More than any other member of the mission, he was influenced by F.D. Maurice's (1805-72) thought about Christian socialism and translated Westcott's missiology into practice. He was vice-president of St Stephen's College from 1907 to 1914 and a fellow of Punjab

University from 1908 to 1913. In this year, he took leave to visit M.K. Gandhi (who called him 'Christ's faithful apostle' after his initials C.F.A.) in South Africa, where he went at the suggestion of G.K. Gokhale (d. 1915), his friend in the Indian National Congress. In 1914, he left the Delhi Mission to join Rabindranath Tagore's learning community at Santineketan (Visva-Bharat University from 1918; Andrews became vice-president in 1938). He thought that Tagore was more interested in bridging East and West than St Stephen's, and that the Delhi mission had departed from Westcott's vision.

Andrews had strongly supported S.K. Rudra's appointment as first Indian principal of St Stephen's College in 1906, with more involvement in running the college by Hindu and Muslim faculty members. Andrews severed his ties with the Cambridge Mission on 16 August 1914 and also tendered his resignation as a priest. He had openly criticised the Anglican Church's collusion with colonialism when he preached at Lahore Cathedral on 5 May 1914 and he also wanted to work with the most disadvantaged, rather than with elites. In fact, Lefroy filed Andrew's resignation away, regarding it as impetuous.

Some years later, in November 1936, while Andrews was staying with the Brotherhood in Delhi during negotiations with the colonial Education Department to allow Indian students to pursue graduate studies in Australia, the Metropolitan Bishop, Foss Westcott (B.F. Westcott's fifth son), assured him that he was able to resume his ministry. On 24 November, Andrews 'once more celebrated holy communion in the church he loved' (St Stephen's) and recommenced ministry in the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon. Affirmation of some of the articles of the Creed that troubled Andrews, almost all linked with his engagement with Islam, was no longer required. He wrote a number of articles on Islam before 1914 and also treated it in his 1908 book, *North India*.

During the early years of the Cambridge Mission in Delhi, Isaac Taylor, Canon of York Minster, wrote an article entitled 'The great missionary failure' (1888), in which he argued that most missionaries were poorly educated clergy who enjoyed a higher social standing in India than they would have at home, and whose lifestyles and 'first class' travel alienated them from the people they were trying to evangelise (*The Fortnightly Review* 50 [1888] 488-500, p. 500). He suggested that celibate missionaries would be more effective and, as Andrews also later argued, he thought they should live 'among the natives exactly as the natives live' (p. 496). Andrews called this the 'Franciscan ideal' (*North India*, p. 182). The controversy that followed Taylor's article may have helped the Cambridge Mission to recruit

its better-educated, celibate missionaries, because by 1892 the Cambridge Committee had sent them ten ordained men, of whom many were to become bishops. Taylor commended the Universities' Mission to Central Africa and the Oxford Brethren at Calcutta, who 'live lives of [...] simplicity [...] austerity [...] and self-denial' (p. 497), but he did not specifically mention the Cambridge Mission to Delhi. Eugene Stock (d. 1928) defended the role of married missionary couples, arguing that 'there is no better missionary than a good missionary wife', and denied that the University's missions merited more praise than the CMS ('The Church Missionary Society's financial accounts: a reply,' *The Church Mission Intelligencer* 13 [December 1888] 746-51, p. 751).

In 1922, when the University of Delhi was established, St Stephen's became a constituent college and remains part of the university today, with a reputation for high academic standards. Responsibility for the mission itself, including St Stephen's, was transferred to the Archdeaconry of Delhi in 1943 and is now within the Church of North India. The Cambridge Mission opened St Stephen's Hospital in its compound in 1885. Today it is one of the largest private health care providers in Delhi.

The Cambridge Committee continued to support the mission until it united with the SPG in 1969. The Brotherhood registered under the name of the Delhi Brotherhood Society in 1973. The last British member died in 2013.

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Writings by members of the Cambridge Mission to Delhi

DATE 1882-1910
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

The *Life and letters of Edward Bickersteth* (1899), compiled and edited by his brother Samuel Bickersteth (1857-1937), shows that, before Bickersteth left Delhi in 1883 (having started the Cambridge Mission to Delhi there in 1877), he had developed an interest in evangelism among Muslims. While references to Islam in the book are brief, they suggest that he laid a foundation on which others, especially George Lefroy, would build. On 1 September 1881, in a letter to B.F. Westcott, he states that Muslims, to whose religion 'love is almost unknown', enjoy 'controversy', although this 'did them no good' because it got nowhere (p. 60). He goes on to describe how a Wahhābī habitually used John's Gospel in his bazaar preaching in order to refute the Bible, and how he once heard a *maulvī* confound one of his catechists when the *maulvī* claimed that Jesus's words 'There are

some standing here who will not taste death' (Matthew 16:28) were historically inaccurate. His comment is that 'it sometimes so happens that [Muslims] have the best of it' (p. 60). Writing in the *Mission Field* (the SPG magazine) for 1 June 1882, he expresses the view that bazaar preaching was ineffective, partly because the crowd could not be controlled and partly because the preachings tended to degenerate into unproductive exchanges. He also recounts how a Muslim schoolteacher had assured him that, at the Agra debates between Karl Pfander (d. 1865; *CMR* 24, 188-236) and Muslim scholars in 1854, the superiority of the Qur'an over the Bible had been proved (p. 188), making the point that the Muslims went away from the debate convinced that they had won (though Bickersteth did not think they had), which is why he believes that controversy does not do Muslims any good. In *The story of the Delhi Mission*, V.H. Stanton comments in the same way that the better-educated Muslims whom the Cambridge Brothers wanted to reach did not attend bazaar preaching and could best be approached and spoken with elsewhere (p. 32).

In the Agra debates, the Muslim participants had drawn on works of biblical criticism by European scholars, including several Deists who wrote sympathetically about Islam. Bickersteth thought it would be better to talk with small numbers and to steer away from 'metaphysical points' to matters of daily living, and that an ideal venue for this was the 'place for conversation attached to the mosque' (*Life and letters*, p. 61) because, even if Christians entered uninvited, Muslims would nonetheless invite them to remain and would show them the courtesy demanded by the rule of hospitality. However, Bickersteth also began to raise funds to build a preaching hall with evangelism among Muslims in mind.

Thomas Valpy French, a co-founder of the Cambridge Mission, had supported Pfander in the Agra debates and called him his 'master in missions' (Birks and French, *Life*, vol. 2, p. 323). But he reached a similar conclusion to Bickersteth about controversialist encounters and called instead for personal contact and 'sustained and steady influence' rather than 'statements' that 'violently shock [Muslim] prejudice' and lead to 'ridicule and disgust' (Birks and French, *Life*, vol. 1, p. 56). Nevertheless, French relates that he preached with Bickersteth 'under the Jama Masjid walls' in Delhi (French, 'Bishop of Lahore's journal of his third visitation, Delhi, 1882', *Mission Field* (1 July 1882) 211-14, p. 213).

In this *Mission Field* report, Bickersteth notes how the shrine of a Sufi saint was being maintained by Hindus and describes shared Hindu and Muslim reverence for Sufi saints as a 'curious incident' of convergence between Islam and Hinduism, but also of Islam 'being the loser' in the

process because it was compromising its strict monotheistic doctrine (Birks and French, *Life*, vol. 1, p. 66; Bickersteth, 'A cold weather tour near Delhi', p. 188). Bickersteth thought that Hinduism's greatest weakness was its insistence on the 'impersonality of the Supreme Being', which 'seems to be frequently forgotten by those who argue that, owing to its theory of incarnations, the system of Hinduism is far nearer to Christianity than that of Islam' (Birks and French, *Life*, vol. 1, p. 67). On Islam, speaking at the Cambridge Graduates Mission Aid Society in March 1883, he argued that, while it had not 'been without influence for good', particularly by promoting charity, brotherhood, divine unity and sobriety and rejecting idolatry, in denying Jesus's incarnation it 'places an impossible barrier' between God and creatures (Bickersteth, *Life and letters*, p. 68). He thought that Islam's 'moral code and its practice' were 'lower than that of Aryan nations' and chided some for minimising its vices to 'justify a verdict almost wholly in its favour' (Bickersteth, *Life and letters*, p. 69). Bickersteth did not fully subscribe to Westcott's vision of a meeting of East and West that would produce something of a synthesis, tending to a more traditional attitude in his ideas about planting Christianity in India and of a one-way civilising mission.

As an Irish Anglican, George Lefroy's upbringing was less evangelical than Bickersteth's and he appears to have been more influenced by Westcott's Alexandrian theology. Lefroy chose Muslims as his main field of mission and, early in his career, learnt Urdu and Arabic, and studied the Qur'an, 'many Moslem classics' and 'the best and most generous books on the Christian side' (Montgomery, *Life ... of George Alfred Lefroy*, p. 63). In the paper he gave at the First Missionary Conference on behalf of the Mohammedan World held in Cairo in 1906 (Lefroy, 'Preparation of workers') he stresses the need for specialist training, which he also calls for in 'Islam. Its merits and failures', his contribution to *Mankind and the Church*, pp. 281-300. Missionaries to Muslims, he says, need to study Arabic, the Qur'an, commentaries, the Hadith (knowledge of which was specially lacking), Islamic literature and theology. In addition to accounts of his preaching in Montgomery's *Life ... of George Alfred Lefroy*, his main contributions were his chapters in *Mankind and the Church* and his occasional paper *Mahomedanism, its strength and weakness* (1894).

Lefroy's contribution to *Mankind and the Church* (Part V), the collection of papers by seven missionary bishops, which represents his most mature thinking on the relationship between Christianity and Islam, was edited by H.H. Montgomery (d. 1932), who served as episcopal secretary

of the SPG from 1901 to 1919. There is some overlap between this and his *Mahomedanism* (1894). Montgomery remarked that unlike many missionaries who quickly turned from Muslims 'to those of another faith' (*Life ... of George Alfred Lefroy*, p. 17), he persisted in his engagement with Islam. Montgomery noted that readers would probably find the chapters on Lefroy's 'relations with Moslems' (chs 6-9) of ' permanent value' (p. viii). Ch. 9 summarises 'Mahomedanism. Its strength and weakness', and his contributions in *Mankind and the Church* ('Islam. Its merits and failures', pp. 281-300, and 'Suggestions for work among Moslems', pp. 301-8).

Lefroy took up bazaar preaching soon after he had learnt enough Urdu, but he quickly experienced the same problems of unruly audiences that had plagued Bickersteth, and even mentioned an unsympathetic police officer who was reluctant to provide protection (Montgomery, *Life ... of George Alfred Lefroy*, p. 72). However, on one occasion, when there was insufficient time to reply to a point raised by a bystander, he was invited to continue the discussion in the mosque, where he had already held several conversations before. There, he found about 300 people assembled and a desk piled high with 'books for discussion on a grand scale' (p. 73), and he then became engaged in a four-hour session on alleged discrepancies in the Gospels. This gathering became a regular event, with audiences of up to a thousand listening to speakers on prearranged topics ranging from 'the nature of sin, the Person of Christ, the miracles of Christ and of Mohammed' (Stanton, *Story of the Delhi Mission*, p. 33). Once the preaching hall in the mission compound, named the Bickersteth Hall, had been opened in 1890, the venue switched from the mosque to there. Lefroy did not attempt to bring his arguments to any particular conclusion but 'referred his opponents: to the "tribunal" of their conscience' (Stanton, *Story of the Delhi Mission*, p. 34), although the conversions of Gul Mahomed, who was later ordained, and of the 'blind moulvi' Abdul Massih, who had been a 'bitter opponent' of Lefroy's preaching for years (Montgomery, *Life ... of George Alfred Lefroy*, p. 80) are both recorded. Lefroy describes a meeting in the Bickersteth Hall on 7 August 1895 at which a 'poor looking Eurasian' stood up and announced that he wished to become a Muslim, at which Lefroy turned to his Muslim co-speaker, saying 'if he wants to profess Mohammedanism the mosque opposite is the place' (Montgomery, *Life ... of George Alfred Lefroy*, p. 101). Lefroy assumed that the man had been planted by an aggressive association, 'which had much influence in the Punjab' (p. 101). A week later, he reported that when he used William Muir's *The Corân. Its composition and teaching and the testimony it bears*

*to the Holy Scripture*s (1878; *CMR* 24, pp. 680-4) during the debate, his Muslim responders 'marshalled a lot of Arabic scholars against him'. He was unable to find answers for them and described the incident as 'not outwardly a success' (p. 102). Muir's work argued that the Qur'an was a composite and also unintelligible book that was almost wholly dependent on earlier sources.

Stanton explains that the value of Lefroy's exchanges with Muslims was not to be judged by the number of converts but 'by the better mutual understanding which has resulted', since this lessened the 'deeply rooted prejudice' against Christianity that Muslims 'inherited from past ages' (Stanton, *Story of the Delhi Mission*, pp. 38-9). According to Jeffrey Cox ('George Alfred Lefroy', p. 69), the lack of converts discouraged Lefroy from continuing these debates and the Muslim press routinely dubbed them 'disasters for Christianity'. In his later writings, Lefroy expressed doubt as to whether confrontation was the best method in mission outreach to Muslims, wondering whether it produced in those who did convert 'the right frame of mind' ('Preparation of workers', p. 225) because converts were often very hostile towards their former religion. He compared the earlier controversialist style with 'throwing brick-bats' at Muslims 'in the form of truth' ('Suggestions', p. 304) and he welcomed what he described as the more Christlike spirit represented by the writings of the Muslim convert Ṣafdar ʿAlī (d. 1899; *CMR* 24, 765-80), who not only declined to attack Muḥammad but called him a schoolmaster who had brought him to Christ ('Preparation of workers', p. 226). He thought that Ṣafdar ʿAlī's writing was more generous and large-hearted than most of that written by earlier converts.

Lefroy identified as Islam's main strengths its insistence on God's unity ('Islam. Its merits and failures', p. 284), devotion in prayer (citing a letter from C.F. Andrews describing 15,000 worshippers in the courtyard of the main mosque in Delhi, 'Islam. Its merits and failures', p. 287), its strong sense of solidarity and brotherhood that transcended nationality and race, and its 'firm belief in revelation' ('Islam. Its merits and failures', p. 281). He also praised Islam's reverence for the Qur'an, which, together with Muslims' care not to take God's name in vain, he said put Christians to shame with respect to their treatment of the Bible. On the other hand, Islam's weaknesses included Muḥammad's treatment of women, especially the way in which he 'freed' himself 'from laws laid down for all others' regarding women, his marriage with Zaynab and his 'affair' with Mary the Copt (Montgomery, *Life ... of George Alfred Lefroy*, p. 99). Lefroy

characterised Islam's conception of God as one of 'sheer power and will' ('Islam. Its merits and failures', p. 294) and saw this as 'arbitrary' and lacking in 'tenderness, truth and holiness' (pp. 290-1). It denied any 'correspondence between God's nature and ours' and encouraged Muslims to submit passively to misfortune.

More generally, Islam did not look on humans as God's fellow workers, although references in the Qur'an to God's mercy and compassion, even if they were borrowed from Judaism and Christianity, should not be dismissed as lacking in any 'real meaning' since they 'became [...] genuine convictions' held by Muḥammad ('Islam. Its merits and failures', p. 294). Lefroy saw a correlation between the Muslim view of God and the 'Oriental despot' (p. 290) and claimed that Muslim governments hindered moral progress, although he liked what he saw as Islam's tendency to produce men who were 'manly' (p. 290). Islam mingled 'traces of the Holy Spirit' with errors and 'the craft and power of the devil' (Montgomery, *Life ... of George Alfred Lefroy*, p. 98). Yet Christians should not reject whatever is judged wholesome in Islam because the Church could benefit from it. Rather, this should be complemented with the larger truth that Lefroy believed Christianity represented, thus liberating Islam from 'error and falsehood' ('Islam. Its merits and failures', p. 290).

Lefroy enjoyed a close relationship with the younger missionary C.F. Andrews, who joined the Cambridge Mission in 1904. Lefroy had shifted towards a fulfilment theology, also embracing more of Westcott's vision of a synthesis between religions and cultures rather than attempting to replace all other religions with a Western version of Christianity. During his decade of formal missionary work between 1904 and 1914 and continuing after he left the Cambridge Mission, Andrews developed these concepts further. Before he became intimate with such Hindu leaders as Rabindranath Tagore and Mohandas Gandhi, for which he is widely known, he formed close friendships with two eminent Muslims in Delhi, Zaka Ullah (Zakaʾullāh, d. 1910) and Nazir Ahmad (Naẓīr Aḥmad, d. 1912), both of whom were involved in the Aligarh movement, which was promoting progressive social and theological interpretations of Islam. Andrews described this as 'new Islam', a 'renaissance of reformation' (O'Connor, *Clear star*, p. 160). Although his biography of Zaka Ullah appeared only in 1929, he began writing it in 1912 and within it drew on several articles he had written earlier. The 'Introductory Memoir' (pp. vi-xvi) to the book by Nazir Ahmad testifies to the strength of Andrews and Zaka Ullah's friendship:

> If Musalmans and Christians could learn to love one another as these two friends have already done, then the time would soon arrive when the followers of both religions would begin to chant the following lines of the poet, 'I should become one with you/and you would become one with me/I should be the body/and you would be the soul'. (p. xvi, written shortly before Ahmad's death)

Andrews's view of Islam is mainly to be found in his *North India* (1909) and the short article 'The inner spirit of Islam' (1910). In *North India*, part of a series on 'English church expansion' published by A.R. Mowbray, in ch. 6, 'The Punjab and Islam' (pp. 120-36), Andrews describes the work of ʿImāduddīn ('Imāduddīn Lāhiz, d. 1900; *CMR* 24, 506-41) and Valpy French. ʿImāduddīn, a Muslim assistant in the Agra debates of 1854, converted to Christianity in 1866. As Andrews saw it, his writings against his former faith after he became a Christian represented a 'by-gone period when men dealt and received blows unsparingly, and [...] saw everything without the medium of neutral tones and softening lines' (*North India*, pp. 123-4). For his part, Valpy French, like Henry Martyn, saw his 'life-work' as being to reach Muslims in 'the Mohammedan lands' and to die there (p. 128). Andrews also referred to ʿImāduddīn's friendship with Ṣafdar ʿAlī, who had helped to bring him to Christianity. However, these men had dealt with 'old Islam', whereas a 'new Islam' was emerging in India that embraced modern science, social ideals and aimed 'at the highest Western culture' (p. 131). It regarded Islam's injunctions as 'suited to the age when the religion appeared' but not of 'ultimate authority' (p. 133). Andrews had often visited Aligarh, where the movement was centred in the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College (founded in 1877), and was much impressed by the 'silent changes [...] taking place in Islamic thought and practice' (p. 131). The spirit of the new Islam was very different from that of old Islam, which caused many *'ulamā'* to denounce the college at Aligarh. Andrews increasingly shifted to seeing the Christian task as being to encourage new Islam and also the reform movement within Hinduism, rather than to dismantle and replace these religions, citing an unnamed writer who argued that commonalities existed between Islam, Judaism and 'Unitarian Christianity' (p. 132). Further, his closest Muslim friends had shown him 'kindness and courtesy' and given him an understanding of Islam's 'power at its best in moulding character and in creating an atmosphere of reverence' (p. 135).

Convinced that genuine friendship across faith boundaries was the prerequisite for any effort at Christian witness, Andrews increasingly found

that he already perceived the presence of Christ in his Muslim friends as he saw in their lives 'what Christ's own character must have been like in its meekness and humility' (O'Connor, *Clear star*, p. 167, citing a 1910 paper). For him, it was beyond question that his Muslim friends should convert to Christianity in order to enjoy a relationship with God and he remained committed to communicating his personal faith convictions and talking about his spiritual experience, but this would be within a two-way exchange.

In 'The inner spirit of Islam', which he wrote in 1910, Andrews sees in Islam promising signs of 'revival and renewal' (p. 173). He says his unnamed Muslim friend in Delhi (Zaka Ullah), who treated him like a son and not a foreigner, had taught him to see Islam with a 'new appreciation', and recalls that the poet-Prophet of Arabia touched the soul of his countrymen and women in a way they had never experienced before. Even though he thinks the earlier suras of the Qur'an are nobler than the later, even in the latter the 'passion' and 'poetry' (p. 174) sometimes shine through. It is when Islam sinks back into a prosaic legalism that it needs to be reminded of its own inner spirit. Missionaries, however, need to abandon controversy. Points of fact and of misunderstanding may be clarified, but the best witness is lives full of love, a living church. Christians should invite Muslims to sit with them and hear the beautiful names of God in Christianity just as Christians hear the names given to God in Islam. In at least two places, Andrews cited Philippians 4:8, adapting Paul's reference to 'whatsoever things are true, honourable and just' to include Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam (*North India*, p. 225, and in a letter to Gandhi cited in Sykes and Chaturvedi, *Charles Freer Andrews*, p. 310). Speaking at an early session of the Tambaram Missionary Conference in 1938, he accepted the validity of sincere conversion from one faith to another but not conversions that denied any truth in what had gone before, disagreeing with Gandhi that 'conversion is never appropriate' (p. 310).

In his address on 'Inter-racial reconciliation' at Tambaram (*Addresses and other records*, London, 1939, pp. 92-9), Andrews holds that the task is not to replace what already exists but to enrich it as part of mutually enriching exchange. He cites doctrinal difficulties as well as his criticism of Christianity's collusion with colonialism, the failure to nurture an independent Indian church and disrespect for India's cultural and religious heritage as contributing to his decision to leave formal missionary work and hence depart from the Cambridge Mission to Delhi. He particularly had issues with the concept of sacrificial, substitutionary atonement and

with limiting incarnation to the life of Jesus, and wanted to extend incarnation and the atonement from a single event to the whole of human life, 'indwelt by God – his visible Image, his Logos' (Sykes and Chaturvedi, *Charles Freer Andrews*, p. 111). Thus, Andrews points to the *Logos spermatikos* of Clement of Alexandria as already present in other religions.

On Trinity Sunday 1914, Andrews found himself unable to recite the Athanasian Creed (Sykes and Chaturvedi, *Charles Freer Andrews*, p. 323), and he increasingly spoke of Jesus as 'Son of Man', which he thought symbolised the unity of humanity and Christ's presence in all people, especially in those who suffer oppression and poverty; he also thought that the Cambridge Mission to Delhi was too committed to the trickle-down theory of mission and was insufficiently focused on challenging the causes of poverty and oppression in India. Although he did not specifically discuss Islam's stance on Jesus's incarnation and death, given his conviction that Muslims as Muslims were already members of 'what he called the larger Church of Christ, the Church of aspiring Humanity, the Church of Him who is the Son of Man' (O'Connor, *Clear star*, p. 202), it is likely that his difficulty with these doctrines was linked to his belief that Muslims such as Zaka Ullah enjoyed an intimacy with God that was unmediated by the acceptance of Jesus's death as an atonement for their sins. Later, Andrews came to look on the creeds as 'the endeavour to put into words a divine experience' that cannot be expressed (Sykes and Chaturvedi, *Charles Freer Andrews*, p. 236).

SIGNIFICANCE

Westcott's ideas that informed the founding of the Cambridge Mission to Delhi are easier to see reflected in the work and writings of Andrews than in those of Bickersteth and Lefroy. However, while Bickersteth's missiology had more in common with the dominant thinking of the 19th century, that non-Christians must become Christians if they were to stand in a right relationship with God, Lefroy shifted towards a more conciliatory, less confrontational view that affirmed value in Islam and ended up close to J.N. Farquhar's (1861-1929) fulfilment view. So, he thought that what was good in Islam could be taken by Muslims into their Christian faith, which was the 'larger truth' ('Islam. Its merits and failures', p. 290). However, despite Westcott's call for cultural synthesis and mutual respect, Bickersteth's and Lefroy's works both contain some Orientalist assumptions about European superiority. Conversely, Andrews condemned what he called the 'racial feeling' that most missionaries took for granted. In 1913, Andrews experienced this racist attitude for himself when, together

with the Indian principal, he tried to increase the number of non-Anglicans, including Hindus and Muslims, on the managing body of St Stephen's College but was blocked by the SPG sub-committee, which 'refused to invite Rudra to some of their meetings' (O'Connor, *Clear star*, p. 210).

Lefroy formed personal relations with Muslims, as Andrews did later, which was unusual at a time when missionaries were likely to speak disrespectfully of Islam and sometimes attracted hostility (this may have been why Lefroy requested police protection). Lefroy's obituary in *The Times* remarks that Muslims had invited him into their mosques and 'held the late Metropolitan in especial esteem' (cited in Cox, 'George Alfred Lefroy', p. 57). But, while he jettisoned some conventional ideas about Islam's inadequacy, he sounds very much like the majority of missionaries when he criticises the Muslim concept of God and claims that the will of the God of the Qur'an is arbitrary and that Islam fails to elevate moral life. Despite being impressed by the sight of Muslims at prayer, he also asserted that prayer in Islam is 'fearfully mechanical' (Montgomery, *Life ... of George Alfred Lefroy*, p. 98). It fell to Andrews to implement Westcott's ideas more completely, even though this took him away from the Cambridge Mission, where even the principal of St Stephen's College had felt obliged to disclaim the fulfilment of Westcott's dream in the college', and opted instead to Westernise it (O'Connor, *Clear star*, p. 219).

Andrews helped J.N. Farquhar to prepare *The crown of Hinduism* (1913) for publication and sympathised with Farquhar's fulfilment theology, but he ended up rejecting the necessity for a 'voluntary replacement of one faith with another within an individual', aiming rather at wider social and human transformation (B. Robinson, *Christians meeting Hindus*, Eugene OR, 2011, p. 14). For Andrews, India was itself a 'source of light and truth' (Sharpe, 'Legacy', p. 118) and there could never be one-way traffic culturally or religiously between East and West. Kenneth Cragg wrote that Andrews was 'constrained by India to rely on the person and story of Jesus widening, by inherent right, into the consciousness of other faiths as already correspondent to their souls' desire' (*Troubled by truth*, p. 33). Cragg himself spent a career struggling to understand how a Christian can balance convergence and divergence between Islam and Christianity and affirm that God speaks through both without becoming the author of confusion (see J. Smith, 'Balancing divergence and convergence', in D. Thomas [ed.], *A faithful presence*, London, 2003, 29-41).

There is no evidence that Andrews ever engaged in the type of exchanges or debates that featured in the earlier history of the Cambridge Mission. Christians such as he, who welcomed the reformist Muslim agenda of the

Aligarh movement, also attracted criticism from others for whom 'Islam reformed is Islam no longer' but 'something else' (E. Baring, *Modern Egypt*, London, 1916, p. 229). Baring (Lord Cromer, 1841-1917; *CMR* 17, 393-403), William Muir (1819-1905; *CMR* 24, 666-96) and others rejected any reform as illegitimate – Islam would be whatever they said it was even if Muslims did not recognise the Islam that was presented to them.

The later missionary L. Bevan Jones (d. 1960), whom E.F.F. Bishop compared with Charles Andrews, admired Ṣafdar 'Alī's writings in the same way that Lefroy and Andrews did, and also argued that the controversial approach produced people who converted to an intellectual system often without experiencing the movement of the spirit in their hearts. He asserted that controversy touched minds, not hearts or souls, and often resulted in bitter attacks on converts' former co-religionists (Bishop, 'Tribute to the memory of Lewis Bevan Jones', *The Muslim World* 50/4 [1960] 303-4, p. 303). He preferred a soul-centred approach, close to French's and Ṣafdar 'Alī's among others (Jones, *The people of the mosque*, London, 1932, p, 240). Like Andrews, Jones also questioned whether converts needed to subscribe to the details of Christian doctrine as formulated in the classical creeds, which he saw as human attempts to express in fallible language the mystery of God's nature and truths that are best experienced rather than articulated. Ultimately, God's nature cannot be reduced to any number nor can it be said this was exhaustively revealed in Jesus. Jones thought that discussion between Christians and Muslims focusing on 'the phenomenon of spiritual experience, his and ours' was the most productive type of exchange (Jones, *Christianity explained to Muslims*, Calcutta, 1938, p. 93), echoing in this Andrews's conclusion to his 1910 article 'The inner spirit of Islam'. Lefroy may have influenced Jones's insistence that Christians stress the 'why' not the 'what' or content of Christian belief, since he cites him and acknowledges Lefroy and French as placing generations of Christians in their debt.

Andrews's reference to Christian Unitarians and Muslims as sharing common ground suggests that he may have had something in common with some of the 18th-century Deists who attempted to reconcile Islam and Christianity by rejecting the substitutionary interpretation of the atonement and the doctrine of the Trinity, and even shifted towards accepting the possibility that Jesus did not die on the cross. They also saw much of the New Testament as the product of later Christian thought. The Muslim participants in the debate at Agra in 1854 actually consulted some of these Deists' works on biblical criticism. This fellow-feeling might

remove Andrews from a position that Trinitarian, Nicene creed-affirming Christians would entertain.

Andrews was aware that those whom he 'knew and loved' would see him '"as a heretic of the most dangerous kind" led astray by his "pro-Indian bias and infatuation"' (O'Connor, *Clear star*, p. 194). On the other hand, he always regarded himself as a Christian and remained a priest in good standing within the Anglican communionto the end of his life. As painful as this was, Cragg says that, for Andrews, 'the inner dimension was [...] always resolutely Christian [...] ripened by sharp experiences of redefinition' (*Troubled by truth*, p. 33). His insistence on the importance of friendship shifted away from focusing on systemics or abstract systems – the encounter of Christianity as a system with Islam as a system – towards contact on a personal level. Theology was important for him, but action took priority.

This has been characterised as a paradigm shift in missionary thinking away from a 'Synoptic [Gospel] approach' with its 'emphasis on sin and forgiveness' to a 'Johannine approach' that stresses Christ 'as the Light and Life of all mankind', which Andrews translated 'into a program of social action' (Giorgiov, 'Charles Freer Andrews', p 129). Cultivating the ability to tolerate diversity and even paradox may be more important than resolving all that divides the two religions, especially if doctrines are seen to be tentative and limited by human fallibility. This may resonate with more recent calls to set aside arguments about doctrines, the Bible, the Qur'an, Jesus and Muḥammad in favour of collaboration on social and moral issues of common concern centred on love of God and neighbour. Such sentiments are expressed, for example, by the *Common Word* initiative that takes its cue from Q 3:64 (for *A Common Word*, see https://www.acommonword.com/the-acw-document/).

Jones was the founding principal of the Henry Martyn School of Islamic Studies, an ecumenical study centre in Lahore, in 1930. Now the Henry Martyn Institute in Hyderabad, India, this organisation remains committed to the type of approach to interfaith relations that Andrews and Jones pursued. Its praxis programmes operate in the areas of community development and conflict resolution.

From its beginning in 1877, members of the Cambridge Mission to Delhi engaged in innovative and creative thinking on Christianity in relation to Islam.

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STUDIES

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E.J. Sharpe, 'The legacy of Charles Freer Andrews', *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 9/3 (1985) 117-21

Sykes and Chaturveda, *Charles Freer Andrews*

Clinton Bennett

William Irvine

DATE OF BIRTH 4 July 1840
PLACE OF BIRTH Aberdeen
DATE OF DEATH 3 November 1911
PLACE OF DEATH London

BIOGRAPHY

William Irvine was born in Aberdeen on either 5 July 1840 (Sarkar, 'William Irvine', p. xiii) or 4 July 1840 (Knight, 'Irvine, William', p. 345). As a child, he moved with his widowed mother to London. Later, as a clerk at the Admiralty, he performed well in the examination for the Indian Civil Service in 1862 and earned a commission to the North-Western Provinces. He arrived in Agra in 1863, and remained in the same province for the duration of his career in India. His professional duties dealt with provincial regulations for rent and revenue, but the chance examination of a collection of papers from a ruling family in Farrakhabhād awakened in him an interest in Indian history. He learned Persian and Hindi and began collecting manuscripts pertaining to the Mughal period.

Returning to Britain in 1888, he devoted his time and energy to the study of Indian history, all the while adding to his collection of manuscripts through a 'Muhammadan' scribe in India, whom he employed to find and copy relevant works. Fascinated by the Mughal period, he embarked upon a large-scale, minutely detailed history of the Mughal Empire from the death of Aurangzeb in 1707 to the fall of Delhi to Lord Lake in 1803. However, 'so conscientious a workman was he, so many sources of information did he consult, and so often did he verify his references' that his slow progress only allowed him to complete a portion of this work before his death (Sarkar, 'William Irvine', p. xvi). He did, however, contribute chapters, articles and papers to various periodicals, based on the material he had collected.

Two other works also absorbed much of Irvine's time and energy: his translation of Niccolao Manucci's *Storia do Mogor* and his own *The army of the Indian Moghuls, its organization and administration* (whilst he uses the spelling 'Mughals' in his *Later Mughals*, here he uses 'Moghuls'). In his obituary of Irvine, J. Kennedy observes that, if he had been able to complete his history of the Mughals, he would have been known mainly for

that work, though, since he did not finish it, he was known for his work on Manucci's *Storia* ('William Irvine', p. 303).

Irvine survived his wife, Teresa Anne, by ten years and left a son and daughter. He died in 1911 and was buried with his wife in Barnes, London.

MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Later Mughals

DATE 1911

ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

Irvine left *Later Mughals* unfinished when he died, and it was completed by his friend and fellow historian Jadunath Sarkar. Vol. 1, which is 432 pages long, does not bear a year of publication, though it must have been published in 1922 or shortly before because vol. 2, which is 392 pages long, was published in that year. Vol. 1 covers the reigns from Bahadur Shah (Shāh ʿĀlam I Bahādur, r. 1707-12) to Rafi-ud-darjut (Rāfiʿuddarajāt, r. 1719) and Rafi-ud-daulah (Shāh Jahān II, r. 1719), while vol. 2 covers the reigns of their successors up to the departure of the Persian invader Nādir Shāh (r. 1736-47) from Delhi in 1739. There are no sections devoted particularly to Muslims or Islam in what is mainly a military history and, in his accounts of the Mughal emperors, Irvine does not appear to regard Islam as a major element in either their characters and personal lives or their military and political decisions. He does, however, include occasional anecdotes about Muslims and, in some footnotes and conclusions to stories, he refers to Muslim customs and matters of faith and also personal comments connected with Christian-Muslim relations and explanations

of Islamic theology or tradition (e.g. vol. 1, pp. 69, 76, 80, 97, 136-7, 319, 394-6; vol. 2, pp. 97-8, 127).

Rather than direct commentary on Muslims and their faith, Irvine's most obvious gesture towards Christian-Muslim relations is his reliance upon and attitude towards Muslim sources. He frequently cites 'Muhammadan' writers, sometimes acknowledging their works as valid accounts though at others expressing uncertainty about their value, as in 'Although coming from Muhammadan sources, there is another version [Kamwar Khan, *Tazkirat-us-salatin-i-Changhtaiya*] of the facts…' (vol. 2, p. 116). Occasionally, he even notes their reliability in correcting Western scholars: when he discusses his research about the Mahrattas he declares, 'What I have to say about it is derived mainly from Grant Duff, though I may occasionally be able to correct or give greater precision to his statements from Muhammadan sources not available to him' (vol. 2, p. 155). In vol. 1, Irvine's editor Sarkar identifies five 'special points' in Irvine's history and names one of them as 'the introduction of new matter from contemporary Muhammadan sources' (vol. 1, p. 121), while the list of sources (vol. 1, pp. 122-4) includes a good number of works by Muslims.

SIGNIFICANCE

The significance of *Later Mughals* lies in its use and acknowledgement of Muslim writers. R.P. Dewhurst notes this distinctive feature in his 1924 review of *Later Mughals* when he observes that the two volumes 'furnish an interesting and convincing instance of the satisfactory manner in which it is possible for European and Indian scholars to co-operate' (p. 682). While Irvine occasionally demeans his Muslim authors through his use of qualifiers, his extremely frequent use of them attests to his generally high regard for the scholarship they represent. *Later Mughals* serves as a significant example of a European historian from a culturally Christian background engaging with Muslim historical works and incorporating them into his own work as valid sources.

PUBLICATIONS

Much of the material was initially published in *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, see details in Sarkar, 'William Irvine. A biography', p. xxx.

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STUDIES

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Candis Berends

Horace Arthur Rose

Horace Rose

DATE OF BIRTH 25 November 1867
PLACE OF BIRTH East Grinstead, Surrey
DATE OF DEATH 18 September 1933
PLACE OF DEATH Saint Brelade, Jersey

BIOGRAPHY

Not a great deal is known about Horace Rose, though the general outline of his career is clear and he left a not-inconsiderable amount of scholarly work about the Punjab under the British Raj. The son of a merchant who lived in Surrey, he was educated at St Paul's School, London, and Cambridge University. He entered the Indian Civil Service in 1886 and, over the course of his 32-year career, occupied increasingly senior administrative positions in the Punjab. In 1888, two years after his enrolment, he was promoted to Assistant Commissioner for the Punjab, becoming Deputy Commissioner in 1889. In 1901, he carried out a census in the region and, between 1902 and 1905, he was Superintendent of Ethnography. During this time, he published studies on female tattooing and customs across the North-West Frontier. From 1906 to 1913, he worked first as District Judge then as District and Sessions Judge, in 1911 producing a large compendium of Punjabi customary law in collaboration with the scholar Muhammad Shafi (1883-1963). In the First World War, he served in the Indian Army and attained the rank of Honorary Lieutenant Colonel.

He retired from military and civil service in 1913 and moved to Saint Brelade on the Channel Island of Jersey, where he died in 1933. He left as his main work a three-volume lexicon of Punjabi tribes and castes, which he had written between 1911 and 1914.

MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

'Islam. Notes on the religious history of Islam'

DATE 1911
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

Using two censuses of the Punjab carried out in 1883 and 1892, Rose intended *A glossary of the tribes and castes of the Punjab and North-West Frontier Province* as 'a compilation of raw material on which fuller and more systematic investigations may be based' (vol. 1, pp. i-ii). He does not seem to have completed it, but even so it consists of three volumes of 923 pages, 573 pages and 510 pages respectively, together with an index to vol. 1 and appendices to vol. 3. At the beginning of vol. 2, he points out, 'It is in contemplation to add to volume III, or to publish as volume IV, a subject-index to the whole of the present work together with appendices containing exhaustive lists of the numerous sections, sects and clans into which the tribes and castes of these Provinces are divided' (vol. 2, pp. i-ii). This did not materialise.

The work comprises a series of comprehensive accounts from the north-western parts of South Asia under British rule in vol. 1, and mostly brief alphabetical entries on the tribes, clans and sects living there in vols 2 and 3. In vol. 2, Rose gives a further hint of his purpose:

> The practical importance of an intensive study of the minutest data in the popular religion, folk-lore, traditions, survivals and superstitions cannot be easily exaggerated, and the present writer is convinced that nothing but a closer study of them will, for example, reconcile the apparently hopeless inconsistencies of the Punjab customary law. (vol. 2, p. iv)

This suggests that he was aiming to contribute towards providing a means of organising local legal customs into an ordered code that would form a basis for governing the region more efficiently. But he says no more about his purpose or motivation or how the material he has brought together can be used towards this end.

The main treatment of Islam comes in a substantial chapter in vol. 1 entitled 'Islam. Notes on the religious history of Islam' (pp. 489-675). In the severely factual accounts it contains, unaccompanied by evaluative comments or personal reflections, and in the demanding thoroughness of its treatment, this exemplifies Rose's approach throughout the work. The lack of any clear order within it may also indicate the frustration he communicates at the very beginning of his work:

> Fourteen years may appear a long time to have spent on this compilation, but the leisure of an official in India is necessarily limited and I feel that another four or five years might with advantage have been devoted to arranging my material better and completing various lines of enquiry. (vol. 1, p. i)

As might be thought appropriate, the chapter begins with a historical outline of Islam, with particular emphasis on Islam in India and the Mughal dynasty. But, tellingly, while it refers to the Emperor Akbar as tolerant and working 'to bring all religions into one comprehensive fold' (p. 499), it does not mention the well-known detail of Jesuit missionaries at his court, which could have provided an excellent example of the emperor's openness. This is followed by a section on Islamic theology (pp. 504-15), for which Rose makes clear that 'D. B. Macdonald's *Development of Muslim theology, jurisprudence and constitutional theory* (London, 1903) has been drawn upon freely' (p. 504). He briefly comments that, throughout Islamic history, the main tension has been between 'the authority of the Qurán and the various influences which sought to modify it' (vol. 1, p. 504), and goes on to give accounts of the four main Sunnī law schools and the theological currents in the early centuries of Islam. But, as though he thinks this history is not relevant, he quickly goes on to Sufism and, in the rest of the chapter, he focuses on the early development of Sufism, the major Sufi orders, Sufi thought and well-known Sufi leaders and Sufi shrines and hymns, always with the main emphasis on Sufism in South Asia. Nowhere does he make an assessment of Islam as a religious, political or cultural tradition, and he gives no hint of any personal views about it that he may have held.

SIGNIFICANCE

'Islam. Notes on the religious history of Islam' is an admirable achievement of collection and compilation, particularly of information about the history, beliefs and charismatic characters in the Sufi orders in northwest colonial India in the decades before and after 1900. It exhibits the

remarkable array of beliefs within groups that were regarded as Muslim and the particular character of Islam in this part of the Islamic world.

If it has any particular importance for the history of Christian-Muslim relations, this must lie in its being the product of a mind that took for granted that the differing legal traditions of the tribes and sects described in it could seemingly be brought into one coherent code. Rose's extremely brief mention in vol. 2 of reconciling the 'hopeless inconsistencies' he finds in the customary laws he has encountered suggests that the religious underpinnings that gave them their diverse and apparently contradictory characters could be dispensed with in the interests of organisational consistency and rational clarity. His few words belie true awareness of the crucial importance of religion in the life of Indian Muslims and its all-embracing hold on the actions as well as the beliefs of its followers, this despite his extensive knowledge of the culture in which he worked and lived. In revealing this attitude, he stands as a representative of a culture that could only clash with the culture it sought to control and bring into conformity with itself.

PUBLICATIONS

H.A. Rose, 'Islam. Notes on the religious history of Islam', in D. Ibbetson, E. MacLagan and H.A. Rose, *A glossary of the tribes and castes of the Punjab and North-West Frontier Province*, vol. 1, Lahore, 1911, repr. New Delhi, 1970, 1978, 1982, 1990, 1997, Lahore, 2007, 489-675; in.ernet.dli.2015.69651 (digitised version available through archive.org)

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STUDIES

Luchesi, 'One ritual – many stories. On making sense of a Hindu ritual', 17-44

Katherine Laura Jennings with the Editors

Church Missionary Society India missions

The Church Missionary Society started as the Society for Missions to Africa and the East, which was established by a group of evangelical ministers and laymen in the Church of England on 12 April 1799. In 1812, it changed its name to the Church Missionary Society, with its abbreviation CMS by which it is best known (for an overview of the society as a whole and its general attitudes to Islam, see 'CMS policy regarding Islam in and Muslims in Africa', in *CMR* 19, 340-7). From the beginning it was 'a voluntary society of the Church of England', working with the Church but not funded by it (Murray, *Proclaim the Good News*, p. 4). Bishops gave permission for where in their dioceses missionaries could work and missionaries remained under episcopal supervision.

CMS missionaries regularly sent reports of their work to the society's headquarters in London. Extracts from these appeared in CMS journals, including the *Church Missionary Gleaner*, *Church Missionary Intelligencer* and *Church Missionary Record*. In addition to this regular correspondence, missionaries were also expected to submit an annual report of their work. From 1886, these were published in edited form as *Extracts from the annual letters of the missionaries*, then in 1911 and 1912 as *Letters from the front*.

A valuable source of information about missionaries is the *CMS Register of missionaries and native clergy 1804-1904*, which includes brief biographical notices of all individuals listed by year of joining the society, with details of the places where they were stationed. The entries are also annotated with further information about individuals up until the 1960s. It has three sections: List I, Clerical and lay missionaries [male]'; List II, 'Female missionaries'; List III, 'Native clergy'.

The Church missionary atlas appeared in several editions during the latter part of the 19th century. Here, the eighth edition for 1896, which is the latest, is used. As well as providing detailed maps of the areas of the society's work, it also includes an introduction to each 'mission field' and statistics about the church.

The CMS in India had a number of 'native clergy' who worked in parishes, as many as 154 in 1894-5. In Madras and some other areas, all the parish work was done by them, especially after 1869 with the establishment of the 'native church-council system'. Their names appear in 'List III' of the *Register*. There was also a large number of 'native teachers' working

in CMS schools and colleges, 2,675 in 1894-5, as well as 'native lay agents (male and female)', who worked as evangelists and catechists, 3,305 in 1894-5 (*Church missionary atlas*, pp. 102, 105, 120, 136, 156).

No missionaries in India were allowed to work in territories controlled by the East India Company until the East India Company Charter Act of 1813, which permitted missionaries to work in these territories and established an Anglican bishopric in Calcutta, initially covering the whole of the Indian sub-continent, Burma, Ceylon, Australasia and parts of southern Africa (*Church missionary atlas*, pp. 98-9). Before that, in 1807 a corresponding committee of the CMS was started in Calcutta by three of the East India Company chaplains, including Henry Martyn (1781-1812; *CMR* 20, 89-111). They were given a grant to fund translation work and then 'for the employment of Native Christians as "readers"', including the convert from Islam ʿAbdulmasīḥ (1776-1827; *Register*, List III, 'Native clergy', no. 1, p. 297; see *CMR* 24, 136-47) to begin work as an evangelist in Agra (Stock, *History of the Church Missionary Society*, vol. 1, p. 182). Thomas Middleton (1769-1822), a High Churchman, who became the first Bishop of Calcutta in 1814, refused to license CMS missionaries to work in the diocese or to ordain 'native clergy'. According to Eugene Stock, he believed that 'the commission from the [British] State gave him no authority to do either', which meant that at this time CMS missionaries only worked in areas outside East India Company control, and local clergy, including ʿAbdulmasīḥ, were first ordained into the Lutheran Church. In spite of this impasse, the CMS gave £5,000 to Middleton's fund for the establishment of Bishop's College in Calcutta, matching the grants from the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel and the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (Stock, *History*, vol. 1, pp. 185-8). Middleton's successor, Reginald Heber (1783-1826), did license CMS missionaries and also ordained ʿAbdulmasīḥ, the first 'Native Clergyman', in 1826, while Daniel Wilson (1778-1858), who succeeded him as bishop in 1832 and remained in post for 26 years, was energetic in encouraging the work of the CMS (*Church missionary atlas*, pp. 99-100, 110). The first seven CMS missionaries were sent out between 1814 and 1816, two to Madras, two to Bengal and three, known as the 'Travancore trio', to Travancore and Cochin, which was outside East India Company control (*Church missionary atlas*, pp. 98-9).

In 1833, the East India Company charter was amended to create two new dioceses in Bombay and Madras, both under the Bishop of Calcutta (Murray, *Proclaim the Good News*, p. 60). Their bishops welcomed the CMS to expand its work and both were prepared to ordain CMS missionaries.

In 1850, the CMS was given 10,000 rupees by an officer of the East India Company army who had been involved in the annexation of the Punjab and Sindh in 1849, so that they could begin work there (*Church missionary atlas*, p. 123). This enabled mission stations to be established in Amritsar, Lahore and Multan. The early history of the mission in these areas is recorded by Robert Clark (1825-1900; *Register*, List I, no. 432, p. 84) in *Punjab and Sindh missions*(1885).

Further Anglican bishoprics were created for Lahore and Rangoon in 1877, and Travancore in 1879, then Chota Nagpore in 1890 and Lucknow in 1893 (*Church missionary atlas*, p. 103), where in many cases the first bishops to be appointed were CMS missionaries. The numbers of CMS workers in South Asia increased rapidly. In 1894-5, there was a total of 176 mission stations, 157 European clergy, 67 European male and female lay workers and 154 'native clergymen' (*Church missionary atlas*, p. 105). The *Church missionary atlas* gives a detailed history of the work of the CMS in the separate regions, together with several maps showing the locations of the stations (pp. 107-56). Medical work, including building dispensaries and hospitals, especially in remote areas and for women, and education through schools and colleges formed a large part of the mission. In 1894-5, the CMS was running 21 high schools and colleges, 89 Anglo-Indian vernacular schools, 1,137 vernacular schools, 9 divinity schools for training priests, 11 normal and training institutions offering vocational training, and 47 orphanages (*Church missionary atlas*, p. 105). Missionaries were also involved in evangelisation through open-air preaching at their station and 'itineration', travelling around, often over a period of several weeks, in order to extend the work of the mission. Work amongst women was seen as particularly important, leading to the founding of the Ladies' Female Education Society (FES, 1824-99), the Zenana Bible and Medical Mission (ZBMM, 1852-the present, now known as Interserve) and the Church of England Zenana Mission Society (CEZMS, 1880-1957). Female missionaries working for these societies visited Muslim and Hindu women living in purdah, enclosed from wider society. They cooperated with the CMS and their annual letters were included in *Extracts from annual letters*.

Work in India was mainly among Hindus, who formed the majority population, although some missionaries were particularly assigned to work in 'Mohammedan Missions' in Bombay, Calcutta and Madras, then later in Lucknow and Hyderabad (Sindh), areas with large numbers of Muslims. This led to the establishment of schools for Muslims, such as Harris School in Madras run by the Goldsmith brothers (Stock, *History*, vol. 4, pp. 120-1, 232, 245).

The CMS regions in India, with the dates of their founding, were:

> South India Mission (1814), including Madras, the Nilgiris, Telugu and Tinnevelly districts;
>
> Travancore and Cochin Mission (1816), including Kottayam and Mavelicara;
>
> Bengal Mission (1807), including Calcutta, Krishnagar and several outstations;
>
> North-West Provinces Mission (1817), including Benares (Varanasi), Allahabad, Lucknow, Agra and Aligarh, with Central Provinces;
>
> Western India Mission (1820), including Bombay, Hyderabad (Deccan), Nasik, Poona and Aurangabad;
>
> Punjab and Sindh Mission (1847), including Amritsar, Lahore, Peshawar, Kashmir, Karachi and Hyderabad (Sindh). (*Church missionary atlas*, p. 105)

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John Chesworth

WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Islam in CMS missionaries' reports, annual letters and other writings

DATE 1840-1912
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English and other languages

DESCRIPTION
Recognising the vastness of South Asia, the CMS divided its work into six regions. Most missionaries remained in one region for the whole of their time there, though they frequently moved around within it. The information about Islam they included in their reports, annual letters and articles, and the attitudes that can be inferred from them, are discussed here by region in chronological order.

When considering this material, it is important to bear in mind that, when they reached London, reports were often edited in the interests of promoting the work of the CMS as a whole. In consequence, 'difficult' views and opinions were often struck out. Further research to compare the print versions of missionaries' communications with the manuscript originals held in the CMS archives could give a more nuanced and, in some instances, an instructively different picture of experiences from the version that was published. Emma Wild-Wood addresses these issues further, albeit from the context of Africa, in 'The interpretations, problems and possibilities of missionary sources in the history of Christianity in Africa', in M. Frederiks and D. Nagya (eds), *World Christianity. Methodological considerations*, Leiden, 2021, 92-112.

South India Mission

Although the first CMS missionary to Madras on the south-eastern coast of India, Charles Theophilus Ewald Rhenius (1790-1838; *Register*, List 1,

no. 17, p. 4), arrived in 1814, the Mohammedan Mission was only started with the opening of the Harris School in Madras in 1856. Its purpose was to raise the level of education for Muslim youth, in accordance with which pupils were taught in 'Hindustani' (Urdu), Persian and Tamil as well as English (*Church missionary atlas*, pp. 140-1). Malcolm Goldsmith (1849-1940; *CMR* 24, 855-62) joined the Mohammedan Mission in 1872, working at the Harris School, and was joined there by his brother, Henry Goldsmith (1855-1907; *Register*, List I, no. 915, p. 192), in 1881. In addition to their work in the school, they held outreach meetings in a building they rented in the Triplicane district of Madras. In 1886, both their annual letters refer to this activity. Malcolm mentions frivolous challenges from newcomers in contrast to the seriousness of the regulars (Madras, 29 November 1886, *Annual letter*, 1887, 21-3, p. 22), whilst Henry refers to their own method of asking: '"Wherein lies the superiority of Mohammed over Christ?" [which] often sorely challenges our antagonists, while it gives us a good opportunity for telling forth the "virtues" of Him who has called us' (Madras, 18 December 1886, *Annual letter*, 1887, 43-5, p. 44).

Writing in 1887, Malcolm reports a threatened *fatwā* in reaction to 'an excellent *Tamil* (not *Hindustani*) tract for Mohammedans, which is a translation from a Bengali tract on the *Fatiha* or *First Chapter of the Quran*. I have done what I could to put this tract into the hands of Tamil speaking Mohammedans, and it is a hopeful sign of its power that they resent it as they do' (Madras, 25 November 1887, *Annual letter*, 1888, 367-9, p. 367).

Malcolm Goldsmith's annual letter in 1888 records two public discussions held with Muslims. The first 'with a Delhi *maulavi* Abdul Majid Sáhib' in which the subjects were Christian salvation, and especially the denial of Christ's death in the Qur'an and the divine Sonship of Jesus, with special reference to the denial of it in the Qur'an. It turned out that 'this Delhi maulavi assumed the main truth of the Gospel accounts, and astonished the Mohammedan audiences by explaining away the denials in the Quran' (Madras, 24 November 1888, *Annual letter*, 1889, 19-22, p. 20). The second was with a Shīʿī *maulvī* who

> wished to prove that Mohammed was foretold in Isa[iah] 53 and Rev[elation] 2 and 3. In his opinion, the 'grave being with the wicked' [Isaiah 53:9] clearly indicated that Mohammed would be buried in the same spot with the three first Khalifs, who (according to Shia notions) were 'usurpers'.

Goldsmith found the discussion 'long and wearisome' but was glad of the interest it stirred up amongst a group that they had previously been unable to reach (p. 21).

In a letter written in 1890, Malcolm Goldsmith mentions a number of Muslim speakers. An individual named White Khán Sahib, who had written letters to Madras newspapers on Muslim reform, later visited Madras to speak.

> He poses as a reformer of corrupt Christianity on the one hand, and of corrupt Mohammedanism on the other. In one part of Madras he opened a small hall as a nucleus for a 'Nazarene New Church,' which was intended for the benefit of the Christians, and in another part, in the Mohammedan quarter, he talked as a thorough-going Mussulman, but advocated freedom from seclusion for the women, public and private prayer in Hindustani [Urdu] (instead of the orthodox Arabic), and similar changes. (Madras, 24 December 1890, *Annual letter*, 1891, 160-2, p. 160)

In June 1890, Malcolm invited a Muslim preacher to address the school. 'His line of teaching was in favour of the study of the Bible, which he declared it was a mistake to consider abrogated. This astonished his co-religionists, and exposed him to disapproval' (p. 161).

In September that year, when Maulvī Ḥasan ʿAlī Ṣāḥib came to Madras, Malcolm notes that 'Tisdall [the CMS missionary William St Clair Tisdall (1859-1928); *CMR* 20, 285-309] had published an able refutation of him, which was in the hands of our head-boys, so we were forearmed' (p. 161).

> The Maulavi gave several lectures in English and Hindustani under the auspices of a new Mohammedan society called the Anjuman-i-Himáyat-i-Islam (The Islam Aid Society), and on September 11th he gave a Hindustani address on 'The goodness of God,' at our invitation, before a large and attentive audience of Mohammedans. On this occasion he avoided all points of controversy, and simply enlarged on the Creator's goodness chiefly as shown in the construction of the human frame.
>
> [His lectures in English] were all conciliatory and have helped to remove the ancient orthodox [Muslim] suspicions and fears about Christianity and missionaries, which have in Madras been such a hindrance to our intercourse with the people. (p. 161)

Also working for the Mohammedan Mission in Madras was Elizabeth Lydia Oxley (1848-1914, *Roll of missionaries with particulars of service*, p. 238; *CMR* 24, 404-9), who, together with her sister Sophia Oxley (d. 1929), had arrived in Madras in 1876 as a missionary with the Zenana Bible and Medical Mission (ZBMM), and transferred to the newly-founded Church of England Zenana Missionary Society (CEZMS) in 1880. Their annual reports were published in *India's Women*, the monthly periodical of the CEZMS. In them, Elizabeth Lydia Oxley describes her work of visiting up

to 14 households three times each week to give Urdu reading lessons to the enclosed women, noting that she also read Bible stories to them and these were usually well-received. She does not comment on the details of her conversations or her own knowledge of Islam ('Mohammedan work', *India's Women* 5 [1895] 448-9, p. 449).

Taken together, these reports suggest that, in Madras, CMS missionaries went about their work without much hindrance and that the opposition their encountered was largely verbal and did not include physical threats. The Muslim speakers they mention avoided provocation and, maybe surprisingly, were well-disposed towards the Bible as an authority.

Travancore and Cochin Mission

The first CMS missionaries to this extreme south-western part of India, making up what was known as the 'Travancore trio' of Henry Baker (1793-1866; *Register*, List I, no. 38, p. 8), Benjamin Bailey (1791-1871; *Register*, List I, no. 29, pp. 6-7) and Joseph Fenn (1790-1878; *Register*, List I, no. 44, p. 9), were sent to Travancore to reform the Syrian Church so that it might serve as a missionary force for India. They were initially warmly welcomed, but relations became fraught with doctrinal and cultural differences as the years passed.

Baker opened one of the first schools in Kottayam and pioneered educational efforts throughout the region. When relations with the Syrian Church broke down in 1836, he and his colleagues concentrated on outreach to the Hindu and Muslim populations of southern India. He wrote tracts on Islam in Malayalam and Tamil, among them *Dialogue on Islam*, translated from Malayalam into Tamil and published by the Nagercoil Tract Society in 1849 (14 pages long), and reprinted by the South Travancore Tract and Book Society in 1858 (12 pages long), and *Christ and Mahomet*, published by the CMS, though no other details are known.

Joseph Peet (1801-65; *Register*, List I, no. 187, p. 34), from London, studied at the CMS college in Islington from 1829. Then, following his ordination into the Anglican priesthood, he sailed in 1833 to Madras, from where he went to Mavelicara and became principal of the Syrian College, Kottayam. He is best known for *A grammar of the Malayalim language as spoken in the Principalities of Travancore and Cochin, and the districts of North and South Malabar* (Kottayam, 1841).

In the early 1840s, Peet was writing a work entitled 'A search for truth or conversation on the Hindoo, Jewish, Christian and Mahomedan religions

especially designed for the benefit of the native youth of India studying the "Languages and literature of Europe"' (CMS/B/OMS/C I2 O185-98). The manuscript of this work, dated 'Mavelicara 28 October 1845' and over 400 pages long, was submitted for consideration to the CMS board in London with the proposal that it should be translated into Malayalam and used as a school text ('Preface', p. iii) but, although the manuscript bears some editorial marks, it was never published and is accessible only in its original handwritten form.

It consists of a series of 12 Conversations in which Peet sets out the truth claims of Hinduism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam. In the final two Conversations, Peet addresses Islam.

Conversation 11 (pp. 355-82) is entitled 'On Mahomedanism. An account of the different sects among the Mahommedans. State of religion in Arabia, and the adjacent countries when Mahomed first broached his religion. Of the Caaba. Of the early history of Mahomed. His first attempts to propagate his religion. Flight from Mecca. Means by which Mahomedanism was finally established. Of the Koran'. As this shows, it deals with the origins of Islam, the life of Muḥammad and the Qur'an, as well as Muslim beliefs in angels, scripture, heaven and hell (pp. 377-9). Peet concludes the Conversation with the comment:

> Even though the Unity of God is maintained in the Koran and described well in particular instances; yet the character of God is not adequately supported throughout the whole. He is made to sanction such actions as shew Him to be not only a totally different being from the God of the Christian Scriptures; but contrary to what our reason, independently of all religion, teaches us respecting the character and perfections of the Great Supreme. (p. 382)

In Conversation 12 (pp. 383-405), entitled 'Reasons for rejecting the Hindoo and Mahomedan religions. Reasons for admitting the claims of Christianity. Prophecies relating to the Jews. Conclusion', Islam is addressed on pp. 386-91. With regard to the crucial issue of the forgiveness of sin, about which there were constant disagreements between Christians and Muslims in India at this time, Peet writes:

> [W]hen we consider that the whole scheme of Mahomedanism is opposed to the sacred character of the most High in that most necessary article respecting the pardon of sin and the maintenance of his holy attributes 'How shall man be just with God?' a question the right determination of which was felt to be essential by an Arabian Patriarch who existed long before the era of Mahomed is thus boldly assured in the Koran: 'They who have suffered for

> my sake have been slain in the battle, verily I will expiate their evil deeds from them, and I will surely bring them into a garden watered by rivers, a reward from God and with God is most excellent reward'. (p. 389)

Here, he appears to be contrasting the involved process by which God accords righteousness to Abraham because he had faith in Him, as described in Genesis 15:6 and taken up at greater length by Paul in Romans 4-5:11, with the ease with which God is depicted in Q 3:195 simply cancelling the sins of Muslims.

Peet's thorough knowledge of the Qur'an can also be seen in another of his reports, entitled 'Mavelicare', which appeared in the June 1846 issue of the *Church Missionary Record*. In a meeting with a Muslim, when Peet asked him, 'On what grounds they [Muslims] believed Mahomed to be a true prophet, he said that he performed several miracles: and he would not believe when I said that Mahomed himself had disclaimed all power of working miracles' (e.g. Q 17:90-3). Peet then

> tried to prove that Mahomed could not be a messenger of the true and holy God, from the immoralities that are chargeable upon him, as well as from the doctrines which he inculcated concerning polygamy, divorce, war, etc. The man's moral sense was so vitiated that he justified these doctrines and practices of Mahomed, and was so self-righteous as to deny that he needed the atoning blood of Christ to wash away his sins. (p. 131)

This report again reveals the level of his understanding of Islam, and also gives an indication of the polemical approach he employed.

Bengal and the North-West Province

The North-West Province mission covered most of northern India up to the Afghan frontier, including Agra, Benares and Lucknow.

Charles Leupolt (1805-85; *Register*, List I, no. 177, pp. 31-2), who originated from Saxony and was initially trained in Basel, joined the CMS in 1832 and worked in and around Benares until 1874. He wrote two memoirs of his experiences: *Recollections of an Indian missionary* (1846, new edition 1863) and *Further recollections of an Indian missionary* (1884). In both volumes, he included a chapter recording his views of Islam and Muslims in India.

In 1841, in an article entitled 'Missionary labours in Benares', which appeared in the *Church Missionary Gleaner*, he describes taking services on Fridays at Aurangabad Chapel, where 'We have preaching outside and

inside. Here the greater number of hearers are Mussulmans. I have been forcibly struck by the attention which the people have paid' (p. 116).

In 1844, together with William Smith (1802-57, *Register*, List I, no. 158, p. 29), a fellow CMS missionary, Leupolt wrote *Dín i haqq kí tahqíq* ('An investigation of the true religion', Allahabad, 1842), which compared the claims of Christianity, Islam and Hinduism, but went largely unnoticed (Powell, *Muslims and missionaries*, p. 88). It won a prize from the Bishop of Calcutta 'for the Best refutation of Hinduism and Mahommedanism, and establishment of Christianity in the Urdu language' (cover of second edition, Calcutta, 1850).

In 1846, Leupolt's *Recollections of an Indian missionary* was published. This is in two parts: Part 1, 'Condition of the people' (pp. 11-58), comprises four chapters including 'The Mahometans' (pp. 19-26); Part 2, 'The means employed for the conversion of the people, and effects of these means' (pp. 59-199), comprises five chapters, including 'Preaching' (pp. 60-85) and 'Difficulties' (pp. 86-107).

In Part 1, in the chapter on 'The Mahometans', Leupolt sets out Muslim beliefs. He states that they 'believe in the Koran and Hadees. The word Koran signifies "lesson"', and then he explains that there are seven 'editions' of the Qur'an (by which he presumably means the seven 'readings' of the text that were accepted among most Muslims). 'The word Hadees means "traditions", or such sayings of Mahomet that are not written in the Koran; but all Mahometans do not believe them' (pp. 19-20). He gives a brief outline of the life of Muḥammad, in which he refers to him as the 'author of the Koran' and 'so-called Prophet of the Mahometans' (p. 20), and then examines Muslim beliefs (pp. 21-6), as given in the Qur'an. He comments:

> the attributes of God are so erroneously stated in the Koran and in the traditions, that although the God of the Bible and the God of the Koran are nominally the same, yet, in reality, they are as different from each other as light is from darkness. (p. 21)

After further criticising the teaching of the Qur'an (p. 24), Leupolt states 'Yet there are some beautiful passages in the Koran: some are even sublime' (p. 25).

In Part 2, as he relates his experiences of preaching, Leupolt explains that he regularly visits a *mela* (fair) to preach and distribute tracts. Once, when he was attending a Muslim *mela* with John, his 'native catechist', and was speaking to a Muslim about religion, the man said '"You liar, rogue, rascal, robber, adulterer, blasphemer, murderer" etc. etc. When the vocabulary of words which I was acquainted with was exhausted, I asked [John]

what else the man had said; but he replied "His language is too vile for me to interpret"'. Leupolt then tried to speak to other Muslims and they 'were determined not to listen' (p. 76). He continues with an account of another *mela*, where he and others preached for hours and distributed all their tracts (pp. 77-80).

In the chapter on 'Difficulties', Leupolt gives an example of a Muslim who moved a discussion they were holding on to the topic of the Trinity. Then,

> After arguing for two hours, the Mahometans arose. Their constant cry had been 'Three are one, and one is three: this is new arithmetic!' At last they gave three shouts, crying out, 'Great is God, and Mahomet His prophet! The Christians say that there are three Gods: false religion! Human inventions! The Mahometans say there is but one God, therefore they have the right religion.' (p. 88)

The chapter continues with further examples of discussions with Muslims, including a detailed account of a debate in which the question was 'Which is the true religion?' The Muslim speaker set out two propositions based on the doctrine of the Atonement and the Divinity of Christ, and said that, if he 'fairly prove[s] that the doctrine of Atonement is a human invention, and that Christ is not God, have I fairly upset Christianity or not?', to which Leupolt responded 'You have' (p. 91). The points made in the debate and the reaction of the crowd are then given in detail (pp. 91-7). At the conclusion of Leupolt's speech some of the crowd shouted: 'You are the best man we have seen: what a pity you are not a Mahometan', to which Leupolt's 'native reader' replied, 'If he is the best man already, what would he gain by becoming a Mahometan?' (p. 97). Leupolt comments that he had no more debates with these people, though he saw them often listening very attentively to his preaching.

In the following years, many extracts from Leupolt's *Recollections of an Indian missionary* were published in the *Intelligencer*. A new edition of the book was published in the 1860s.

Whilst Leupolt was working in Benares, another CMS missionary, Karl Gottlieb Pfander (1803-65; see *CMR* 24, 188-236), was in Agra between 1840 and 1854. There, he took part in many debates with Muslims, culminating in the one with Raḥmatullāh Kairānavī (1818-90; *CMR* 24, 253-60) in April 1854, in which Thomas Valpy French (1825-91; *CMR* 24, 338-44) acted as Pfander's second. The November 1854 *Intelligencer*, as part of 'Movements among Mahommedans', reported on this debate at length, quoting from a letter by Pfander as well as an account from Thomas G. Clark (1819-1901), a

missionary of the Free Church of Scotland Mission who was based in Agra at the time (pp. 252-8).

Leupolt left India in 1872 and became vicar of a parish in Norfolk until his death in 1884, the time when *Further recollections of an Indian missionary* was published. This work largely consists of expanded versions of articles Leupolt had written for the *Intelligencer*, together with other CMS papers he had written between 1846 and 1872. Ch. 3 of this work, 'Changes in the minds of the people. Mohammedans' (pp. 20-30), and ch. 9, 'Opposition' (pp. 79-96), record Leupolt's views about Muslims and recount his interactions with them. For example, 'An open door', in the *Intelligencer* of December 1863, quotes extensively from Leupolt's journal entry on a preaching tour in February that year. The incidents it includes also appear in *Further recollections*.

Thus, on 3 February in Atal Hatia, where he sat with the local *kadhi* for several hours, 'The kazi told a number of stories about Christ which I had not heard before; but his chief cry was, "You Christians assert that there are three Gods"' (*Intelligencer*, p. 275; *Further recollections*, p. 28). Also, on 6 February in Ahisoara, during a conversation with a Muslim who had heard him preaching in the bazaar, the Muslim asked, 'How can Christ be God, and yet the Mediator between God and Man?', before raising the problem of errors in the Bible. He asked: 'How can you say that Matthew wrote by inspiration, seeing there are errors in his Gospel?' and gave a few examples, including that in Matthew 26:15 about Christ sold for thirty pieces of silver being related to the prophecy of Jeremiah, when it is actually from Zechariah (see Matthew 27:9 and Zechariah 11:12, 13). Leupolt's response shows awareness of this argument:

> You are right, [...] but this passage goes against you Mohammedans. You constantly charge us Christians as having altered the Scriptures. Now, if we wished or could alter one word, do you not think that we would put Zechariah for Jeremiah? (*Intelligencer*, p. 276; *Further recollections*, p. 84)

The exchange is an excellent example of the acuteness of arguments between Christians and Muslims and the detailed knowledge of each other's scriptures they often possessed.

James Vaughan (1826-82; see *CMR* 24, 332-7) served as a missionary in Bengal from 1855 to 1882. Arriving in Calcutta in 1855, he worked with both Hindu and Muslim communities for 27 years, engaging in apologetics with leaders of both faiths, evangelistic preaching in and around Calcutta, and the care of the local Christian population. Vaughan wrote *The trident, the*

crescent and the cross (London, 1876), an overview of the religious history of India.

In 1911, some missionaries from India attended the Second Missionary Conference on behalf of the Mohammedan World at Lucknow, January 23-28, 1911, (see *CMR* 17, pp. 463-5). They included Louise Marston (1849-1916; *CMR* 24, 1013-17) of the Zenana Bible and Medical Mission, and Clarence Mylrea (1866-51; *Register*, List I, no. 1325, pp. 257-8), who had been with the CMS Mohammedan Mission in Calcutta since 1893. A detailed report by Louise Marston, 'Lucknow Conference', is included in the April 1911 issue of *The Zenana*. There, she bemoans the fact that insufficient time was given to 'women's work', which is 'of supreme importance in the great Moslem problem' (pp. 84-5). In his annual letter for 1911, Mylrea wrote that the conference had resulted in the *Reproach of Islam* by W.H.T. Gairdner (1873-1928; *CMR* 18, 702-33, pp. 721-6) being used in Lucknow as a text for groups that wanted to know more about Islam (*Letters from the front*, part 2. 'India', 161-2, p. 161).

Mylrea ends the letter with a plea for more specialist workers with knowledge of Islam, as

> every Moslem organization here is awake, alert and intent on using every opportunity to advance the cause of the Crescent, to a degree never before known in the history of India, while the Christian Church is gradually diminishing its small staff of evangelistic workers. (p. 162)

The Lucknow conference followed the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference, held in 1910, where Islam had not received as much attention as those who specialised in it felt it needed. Several of those at the Lucknow conference had also been in Edinburgh, and were aware that the total number of Muslims in India was greater than the rest of world combined (S.M. Zwemer, *The Moslem problem and peril*, New York, 1907, p. 5). Their main focus was on developing strategies to evangelise Muslims (see *CMR* 17, pp. 460-5).

Bombay and western India

In 1877, the CMS as a whole suffered a deficit in funds, with the consequence that the missionaries of the Bombay Mohammedan Mission were to be withdrawn. However, a donation of £1,000 was made, meaning that this mission could continue and John G. Deimler (1826-99; *Register*, List I, no. 486, p. 96) remained in post (Stock, *History*, vol. 3, pp. 51, 119). Deimler,

from Bavaria, who had trained at the Basel Mission and then at the CMS college in Islington, was stationed in Bombay from 1854 and served for over 40 years. He worked alongside others, including William St Clair Tisdall (1859-1927; *Register*, List I, no, 997, p. 207; *CMR* 20, 295-309), who worked in India in 1884-90 before transferring to Iran.

Tisdall wrote about their experience of street preaching in Bombay in his 1889 annual letter:

> Large numbers listen, sometimes with great earnestness and attention; at other times the mob very soon get excited to use abusive language and hoot to such an extent that one's voice cannot be heard. But whenever this occurs the cause is generally the presence of some maulvi or mulla, who directs his co-religionists to 'silence the blasphemy of the infidels' by orthodox Mohammedan ribaldry. One cheering sign of the result of our street-preaching is that the Muslims have recently been forced to start opposition preaching, a thing they had intermitted for some time. (Bombay, 31 December 1889, *Annual letter*, 1890, 82-4, p. 83)

In his annual letter for 1892, Deimler wrote about the use of the Qur'an by Muslims and Christians in their discussions, and the difficulties of doing this:

> One kind consists of Maulvis and persons who are more or less instructed in Islam, and are consequently ready to quote passages of the Qoran. These are not satisfied with citations from the Scriptures, but require a learned reference and explanation of their 'holy book.' Now it is a fact that several Christian doctrines can be proved by a clever and circumspect Christian maulwi from the Qoran, as, for example, the Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is an advantage. We, however, cannot deny another fact, that the loose, varied and contradictory statements of the Qoran allow and establish a denial of the very proof brought forward in favour of Christianity. (Bombay, 30 November 1892, *Annual letter*, 1893, 80-2, p. 81)

The following year, Deimler's annual letter included the testimonies of several Muslim converts to Christianity, to show the fruits of his labours in Bombay as he approached retirement. He concludes with the observation that bazaar preaching was not possible unless 'there is a second missionary for Mohammedan work' (Bombay, November 1893, *Annual letter*, 1894, 51-6, p. 56).

In western India, the CMS worked in other areas and, during the 1890s, Malcolm Goldsmith was 'lent' to Hyderabad in Deccan at the request of the Bishop of Madras, initially in 1891-2 and 1894-5, then permanently in 1899 (*Church missionary atlas*, p. 141; *Register*, p. 160). In his 1891 letter,

Goldsmith reports the presence of various activist Muslim movements in Hyderabad, notably that a 'special "Mission of Islam" (Anjuman Tabligh-i-Islam) has been set up to counteract us', and also that 'large numbers of the younger men are followers of Sir Saiyid Ahmad, of Aligurh' and are seen as 'rationalists' (Hyderabad, 18 November 1891, *Annual letter*, 1892, 25-8, p. 28).

In his next letter, for 1892, he reports of 'converts returning to Islam after being given money', and that the 'mission of Islam' (*tablīgh-i Islām*) was converting impoverished Europeans:

> The 'initial rite of Islam' [circumcision] was not enforced, a convenient Tradition declaring it to be unnecessary; and the main evidence required was a public confession of it in the great Mecca Mosque [in Hyderabad] on a Friday, before the congregation. (Madras, 24 November 1892, *Annual letter*, 1893, 28-30, pp. 28-9)

In 1894, Goldsmith wrote about the rise of the Aḥmadiyya led by 'Qadiani Sahib' (Mīrzā Ghulām Aḥmad [1835-1908], *see CMR* 24, 748-53):

> [A] great move is going on owing to the vagaries of a Punjabi, generally known as Qadiani Sahib, who claims to be our Lord Jesus Christ raised from the dead. [...] His doctrine has raised the question as to whether our Blessed Lord died or not – a very burning point in Islam; and notwithstanding the apparently plain statement in one part of the Koran that He 'was not slain' [Q 4:157]. There are not wanting Mussulmans who find that God 'received His spirit,' which support Qadiani in the manner of His *death*. (Hyderabad, 8 November 1894, *Annual letter*, 1895, 26-7, p. 27)

In 1895, Goldsmith wrote about rivalry in open-air preaching between the CMS and a member of the 'Mohammedan Society' (Anjuman Tablīgh-i Islām), who would preach at the same time as a missionary a few metres away from them:

> The theme of his preaching was against the Divine Sonship of Christ and the Holy Trinity: the chief words we could hear were 'Jesus (on whom be peace)' and the 'Injil' (Gospel). This man died rather suddenly, and many seemed to take it as a judgement on his bitterness against Christian truth. However, another has been appointed, but less bitter: with a very fine voice he often opens with, 'How can there be a Son of God?' [... W]e avoid as much as possible expressions and doctrines which are likely to be misunderstood. Nor do we attack Mohammedanism, but find abundance on the lines of our Lord's and His Apostles' teaching to hold forth without laying ourselves open to the charge of throwing stumbling-blocks in any one's way. Many would be only too glad to find a handle against us if we went out of

> our way to abuse the 'Prophet.' As a result of this preaching we meet many who have been more or less impressed, and some have come for further talk to the mission-house. (Hyderabad, 21 November 1895, *Annual letter*, 1896, 387-9, p. 387)

Henry Smith (1871-1962; *Register*, List I, no. 1588, p. 405), from Birmingham, who worked with CMS from 1900-31, wrote in 1912 from Aurangabad about Muslims using the Bible to question Christianity, and his responses:

> Does not Deuteronomy xviii.15 refer to the coming of Mohammed? This was answered by saying that, even if it could be proved to refer to Mohammed, it would not be to his honour; for Ishmael was the son of the handmaid, and could not be the heir to his promises. [...]
>
> We constantly have Matthew xxvii.46 produced as a proof that Jesus could not, according to the New Testament, be the Son of God. We have also had to deal this year with the objection that Ezekiel xviii.4, 20 etc., effectually disposes of the necessity as well as any possibility of any Atonement. A full conviction of the impossibility of the Christian position underlies all a Moslem's questions and conversation with us. (Aurungabad, 1912, *Letters from the front*, 203-7, p. 206).

Punjab and Sindh

Abraham Matchett (1826-83; *Register*, List I, no. 436, pp. 84-5), who was born in Armagh, trained at the CMS College in Islington. He was ordained in 1851 and served in India from 1852 to 1863, initially in Karachi and then in Hyderabad, Sindh, from 1856 to 1863, where he worked alongside James Sheldon (1829-1910; *Register*, List I, no. 469, p. 92). Matchett involved himself specifically with ministry to Muslims and baptised ʿAbdullāh Ātham (1828-96, *CMR* 24, 392-6) in March 1853.

Several reports in the *Intelligencer* included extracts from Matchett's letters to CMS and from his journal of his preaching tours. These include 'The progressive character of Protestant missions to the heathen' (*Church Missionary Intelligencer* [July 1853] 147-58), which, in an extensive overview of the work in India, gives an account of ʿAbdullāh Ātham's conversion and subsequent baptism by Matchett (pp. 153-6). In 'Movements among Mahommedans' (*Church Missionary Intelligencer* [November 1854] 251-63, and [December 1854] 284-8), the latter part of the article, starting on page 258, introduces work in Sindh, which was seen as distinct in having a Muslim majority, as the Hindu population had been proselytised and become Muslim while still maintaining 'many Hindu notions and

practices' (p. 258). It then gives journal extracts from Matchett's preaching tour from Karachi to Hyderabad with ʿAbdullāh Ātham in January and February 1854. In Kotri, Matchett reports that

> the advice of the kazís [to Muslims] was generally to keep away from the Missionaries, lest conversions should result from the controversy. […] One poor fanatic in the extravagance of his superstitious zeal, dared us to put our religion to the test of fire: […] if the names of Mahomed and Christ were written on separate pieces of paper, and cast into the fire, Christ's name would be burned and Mahomed's would remain untouched by the flames. (p. 259)

Matchett and Ātham would go to the bazaars of the towns they visited to preach and engage in 'controversy'. Some Muslims challenged Ātham because he 'was heaping dishonour upon the religion of our prophet' (p. 260). On one occasion Matchett reports that when a Muslim speaker was at a loss for an answer, his supporters would cry out:

> 'La Illaha il Illahu, Mahommad ul Rasul u'lah:' that is, 'There is no god but one God, and Mahomed is the prophet of God;' and it was amazing to see how satisfied they were with themselves after such a shout: it appeared to make all doubt vanish, and to administer more consolation to them than the clearest demonstrative proof of the truth of their argument could possibly have done. Once when they had concluded their roaring, Abdullah [Ātham] quietly asked them that if that were proof; were we to understand that as a satisfactory answer to our arguments? If men maintained a lie, would the use of these words make the falsehood truth? (p. 261)

In order to give structure to some of the debates Matchett chose to provide written questions for the Muslim opponents. An example of this kind of exchange occurs in a discussion on 22 January 1854:

> They had stated there were thousands of prophecies concerning Mohammed. Our first remark, therefore, was, 1. 'Adduce these prophecies.' In reply they wrote, 'Trustworthy persons have given testimony that Christ uttered predictions concerning Mahommed.' 2. 'Specify those persons, and prove the value of their testimony.' Answer: 'From amongst thousands we name Muhaiyudín Gílaní [ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jilānī (d. 1166)], and Qutib ul Aqtab Iman Rabbaní. The former in his book *Ghonínt u'talibín* [*Al-ghunya li-ṭālib ṭarīq al-ḥaqq*] mentions what we have affirmed: the latter also wrote a book, and related the same thing. […] 3. 'When did these two writers live?' […] 'The former writer lived about 500 years after the Christians expunged from the Scriptures the prophecies regarding Mahommed: the second author 1050 years after the same time.' […] 4. '[P]rove that the tradition

> on which they relied was unimpeachable as to its origin and transmission.' Answer: 'We have satisfactorily established the probity of the authors whom we have adduced. [...] We do not think it necessary that men should live at the time, or be eye-witnesses, of the events which they relate: They may be otherwise well-informed.' (p. 262)

At the end of the discussion, the Muslims were given a Persian New Testament, a copy of Pfander's *Mīzān ul-ḥaqq* and a copy of the 'Delhi controversy' (p. 262).

On 9 February 1854, there was a debate about alterations to the text of the Bible, examining the differences between the Persian and Urdu translations of Exodus 32:23, where the Persian says 'Make us *some gods* which shall go before us', whereas the Urdu version says 'Make us *a* [or *one*] *God* which shall go before us'. The Muslim contingent stated that 'it is clearly proved that the Bible has been altered' (p. 284), in response to which Matchett went into a detailed comparison of the Hebrew and Arabic versions of the verse, explaining that the Hebrew used the plural form (p. 285). A fresh point was raised, that the Qur'an related events in one way whilst in 'the Bible account of the same events there was often a considerable difference: it was therefore clear that the Bible had been altered' (p. 285). After six hours of discussion in which they were able to freely consult each other's books, they agreed to meet again.

The discussion continued on 11 February, when the debate centred on prophecies in the Bible concerning Muḥammad's birth and prophetic status (pp. 285-7). The Muslims said that Jews and Christians had looked forward to Muḥammad's coming and visited his grandfather to congratulate him on the birth (p. 285), as well as saying that Christians had expunged references to the prophecies. The Muslims quoted Deuteronomy 33:2 'The Lord came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; He shined forth from Mount Paran', explaining that 'From which verse we learn that the Old Testament came from Sinai, the New Testament from Seir, and the Koran from Mount Paran. It is quite clear that the giving of the Koran at Mecca is here referred to; for it is stated by ancient writers that the Mount Paran here mentioned and the mountain near Mecca are the same. Moreover, Mahommed's ancestor, Ishmael – who undoubtedly dwelt near Mecca – is said, in Genesis 21:21, to have lived in the wilderness of Paran' (p. 285). Matchett's response concerning Deuteronomy 33:2 was that it was 'poetical' and that 'came', 'rose up' and 'shined forth' were equivalent to each other, as were Sinai, Seir and Mount Paran, all denoting the scene of the same transaction, before explaining that the Mount Paran in Genesis 21:21

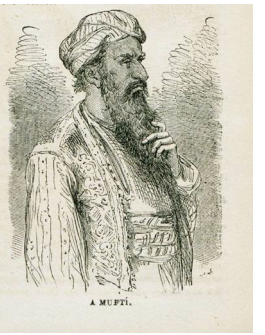


Illustration 28. A Mufti

was a thousand miles distant from Mecca (p. 286). The discussion lasted six or seven hours before it was adjourned.

That these discussions took place before the Agra debates between Pfander and Kairānavī in 1854 is indicative of how widespread amongst Muslims was the desire to challenge the Christian message. Readers in Britain would have been confused, as the article in the November *Intelligencer* also contained a report of the Agra debates in April that year (pp. 253-8), placed before Matchett's report of his preaching tour in January and February 1854 (November, pp. 258-63; December, pp. 284-8).

An article entitled 'Missionary labour in Sindh' (*Church Missionary Intelligencer*, April 1859, 89-95) gives an overview of the work in that region, with black and white pen sketches of the various individuals with whom they interacted, including 'A Musulman fakir' sub-titled 'The Musulman fakir is a sad mixture of a rogue and a fool' (p. 89), and 'A muftí' (p. 91). The sketch of the mufti accompanies a dialogue between Abraham Matchett and a mufti held on 20 April 1859 (pp. 91-3), when, realising that he was addressing 'Sunnies' because their moustaches were closely trimmed, Matchett 'took advantage of this to introduce the subject of the distinction between them and the 'Shíahs' (p. 91) concerning the revelation of the Qur'an. This led to Matchett being asked to talk with the mufti. The dialogue started with Matchett asking: 'All men are sinners, and deserve hell, how can they be saved?', to which the Mufti replied, 'By doing the works of God' (p. 92).

After Matchett returned to Britain, CMS published the pieces he had written as *Missions to Mohammedans. Notes from the diary of a missionary, referring to work among Mohammedans in Sindh* (London, 1876), 46 pages long. This was the result of a letter from Thomas Valpy French,

who 'suggested to the Secretaries of the Church Missionary Society that, "all Mr. Matchett's discussions, as given in old *Intelligencers* or Records might usefully be put together". This recommendation was made, in replying to a requirement of the Church Missionary Committee, for information upon the Mohammedan controversy' (Matchett, *Missions to Mohammedans*, p. 5).

Worthington Jukes (1849-1937; *Register*, List I, no. 756, p. 159), who was born in Canada, was educated at Blundell's School, Tiverton, and Trinity College, Cambridge (BA, 1872; MA, 1874). He served as a CMS missionary in Amritsar (1872-4) and Peshawar (1874-90) and spent a year working in Amritsar with Robert Clark, during which time he was involved in itinerant missionary work around the Punjab with Thomas Valpy French.

In October 1873, he was transferred to the Peshawar Mission, where, following the lead of Thomas Hughes, he adopted local dress and customs, which included setting up the *hujra*, or guest house, a space for hospitality, food and religious discussion. He also worked at the mission school, which at the time had around 400 students, and later established a scholarship programme and a hostel to enable Afghan boys to study.

Along with Hughes, Jukes was involved in a translation of the Pentateuch into Pashto, which was published in 1889 by the British and Foreign Bible Society, and a revision of the translation of the Book of Common Prayer, which was published in 1886.

A significant work of his is an article entitled 'Imâm Mâhdy, and Dajjâl, the Muhammadan Antichrist' (*Church Missionary Intelligencer*, October 1883, 596-601), which is an explanation of Islamic eschatological belief and describes points of similarity with and differences from Christian beliefs about the end times. He summarises a book written by Sadiq Khan of Bhopal, *Hijjaji ul Karâmaâ fi asâr ul qiâma*, which uses *Mishkāt al-maṣābīḥ*, the medieval compilation of Hadiths, to write about the Muslim understanding of the coming of the Mahdī (pp. 596-8), that he was to be born in Medina, and was to be the Sudanese Mahdī, and that as part of the events that would take place the Muslim world would be 'virtually in the hands of Christians' (pp. 597-8). 'Whilst they look upon Christ Jesus with greatest possible respect, as a future supporter of Imâm Mâhdy, they do not look on Christians in the same light' (p. 598). It also describes the arrival of the enemy, Dajjâl-ul-Masih, or Antichrist, and how the Mahdī will deal with him (pp. 598-600). The article ends with the words: 'There is no statement in any Muhammadan book which can be relied upon, to the effect that the end will come at any one particular time, but there is a general impression

that it cannot last after 1500 AH [2076], i.e. almost two hundred years from now' (p. 601).

Jukes retired to England in 1890, on account of his wife Emily's poor health, and took up the incumbency of Shobrooke, Devon. He died in Exmouth in 1937.

In 1877, Thomas Valpy French (*CMR* 24, 338-44), who had worked with the CMS in Agra (1850-90), Derajat (1861-3) and Lahore (1869-74) and was about to return to India as the first bishop of Lahore, delivered an address to CMS supporters in Britain, in which he gave an overview of missionary work amongst Muslims. This appeared as 'Address on the missionary effort among Mohammedans' in the *Intelligencer* (October 1877, 577-88). He looked at the impact that 'the greater crusade or "Jihad"' among Muslims was having on the work of missionaries in north India, Persia, Turkey and central, western and eastern Africa (p. 577). In the course of the address, he gives examples from his own experience and from the letters of colleagues about the situation in the various places where they were working, such as Robert Bruce's (1833-1915; *CMR* 20, pp. 9-13, 56-7, 357-9) experience in Iran (pp. 583-4) and Karl Pfander's (1803-65; *CMR* 24, 188-236) time in Constantinople after he left India (pp. 584-6). He also quotes relevant books, such as John Muehleisen Arnold's (1817-81; *CMR* 17, 224-30) *Islam and the Gospel*, which shows the 'strides Mohammedanism is making in Africa' (p. 587), whilst referring to the appointment of a professorship in Arabic at Fourah Bay College, Sierra Leone, as a sign that the missionary societies were taking steps to counter the 'aggressive efforts' being made by Islam (p. 587). The address concludes with a challenge to Christianity to respond because, if 'Mohammedanism, in its poverty and scarcity, under the influence of the fragmentary elements of truth it has borrowed from God's Word, is so diffusive and communicative [...] how much more ought this to be the case with us Christians' (p. 588).

The concern to understand more of the rise of Islam is seen in an article by Thomas Patrick Hughes (1838-1911; *CMR* 16, 311-19), who served with the CMS in Peshawar from 1864 to 1884. 'The Wahhabis of Najd and India' appeared in the *Church Missionary Intelligencer and Record* (February 1878, 98-100; March 1878, 160-5), reprinted from *The Indian Christian Intelligencer* 1/3 (September 1877) 24-35. Hughes introduces it with the words, 'Wahhabyism is the worst abused, the most dreaded, and least understood of all the numerous systems, sects and phases of religious thought in India' (p. 98), before explaining that Wahhābīs 'believe in the fundamental principles of the Muslim creed' (p. 98). He outlines the origins of Muḥammad

ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb (1703-92; *CMR* 12, 214-20) in Najd, and his influence on the Saʿūd dynasty, with an account of the attack on Karbalā' and the destruction of Ḥusayn's tomb to the cry of 'Kill and strangle all infidels who give companions to God' (pp. 98-100). He goes on to describe the capture of Mecca in 1803 and the establishment of the Saʿūd dynasty (pp. 160-2), and then explains the rise of Wahhābīs in India, with the return of Sayyid Aḥmad of Bareilly from Hajj in 1822, determined to 'reclaim the whole of North India to the faith of Islam' (p. 162). As he was 'a direct descendant from the Prophet, he possessed (unlike the Wahhabi of the Najd) the necessary qualification for a Leader of the Faithful. And the Musulmans of India at once hailed him as the Khalif' (p. 162). The article explains that Wahhābism has been called the 'Protestantism of Islam' because of its assertion of 'the paramount authority of the Quran *with* the Traditions' (p. 164). Wahhābīs would destroy the tomb of every 'Saint, Wali, and Pir', whilst paradoxically they 'adore the black stone of Mecca' (p. 164). The article ends with the assessment that the movement is 'retrograde; it would put back both the hour-hand of civilization and of piety to the dark age of the Arabian Prophet, and rest content so long as the whole world remained Muslim and shouted "Allah!"' (p. 165).

The annual letters from missionaries in Punjab and Sindh show a range of attitudes towards Islam and understandings of it. Writing in 1888, Herbert Weitbrecht (1851-1937; *CMR* 24, 1046-56), who worked in Batala in the Punjab, reported that 'a branch of Anjuman i Islámiya, a society of the propagation and defence of Islam, with its headquarters in Lahore' had been started by a *maulvī* from Delhi, who 'insisted on having a discussion with me[. ...] He maintained that the divinity of Christ could not be proved from the New Testament, and naturally involved himself in contradictions over the first verses of St. John, but I was not surprised to hear later on that he had published a garbled version of the discussion in the monthly paper of his society, giving himself the best of the argument' (Batala, 1888, *Annual letter*, 1889, 263-71, pp. 264-5).

In 1891, Weitbrecht reported that Fatih Masih (given as 'Fath', *Register*, List III 'Native clergy', no. 429, p. 351), a former Wahhābī who had converted to Christianity, had been invited 'to preach at the mosque following the Friday sermon – insisting that he should stand in the *mimbar* addressing 150 Muslims he recited the ten commandments in Hebrew and the first psalm and then translated them – listened to quietly and attentively' (Batala, 22 December 1891, *Annual letter*, 1892, 232-3, p. 233). Fatih Masih himself, writing in 1893, reports on the changing attitudes of Muslims towards him: 'In 1892 [...] an *imam*, violently opposed me; this year when

I went again he showed an earnest desire to hear the truths of the Gospel' (Batala, [no date], 351-2, p. 351).

In his annual letter for 1892-3, Weitbrecht reported on the writings of Mīrzā Ghulām Aḥmad, whom he called a 'semi-heretic',

> This man, for instance (by way of combating the Christian religion!), is setting to prove, contrary to the received exposition of the Quran, that Jesus of Nazareth really died. He adds that he himself is Jesus, come a second time, as John the Baptist was Elijah. How little we are doing to meet these gropings after truth! (Batala, December 1893, *Annual letter*, 1894, 420-3, p. 423)

Medical work was an important aspect of the work of the CMS, though medical missionaries carried out evangelistic work. Writing in 1894, Theodore Pennell (1867-1912; *CMR* 24, 926-33), who established a dispensary in Bannu, Khyber/Derajat in 1893, explained that his work 'divides into medical, evangelical, pastoral and school'. His mother, Asher Pennell (d. 1908), was with him and he said that 'the women and the zenana visiting has been under her charge, and although few houses are open, and there is much opposition, even amounting to stone-throwing, a large number of women have been reached' (Bannu, 26 November 1894, *Annual letter*, 1895, 111-12, p. 111).

The challenge of treating women meant that female doctors were needed. One such was Dr Annie Wilhemina Eger (1856-1931; *Register*, List II, no. 524, p. 453), originally from Philadelphia, who worked in Multan from 1885, initially with the Female Education Society before transferring to the CMS in 1899. Her sister, Lina Eger (1866-1952; *Register*, List II, no. 525, p. 453), worked with her. Annie wrote in 1901 about the difficulties of treating women:

> [E]ven when they are bigoted Mohammedans and hate the Gospel teaching, they feel that the best possible will be done for them in the Mission Hospital. [...] Generally the Gospel was listened to, and even asked for by the late comers, but, occasionally a Mohammedan bigot would be roused to opposition. One said the teaching was not wanted, and if it continued the women would not come, no, not even for medicine; but she stayed on and got her medicine all the same. (Multan, December 1901, *Annual letter*, 1902, 533-5, p. 533-4)

Distrust amongst some of the women continued, as Annie Eger reported in 1910, when a 'woman took her child home with an unhealed wound, saying she could no longer stand the morning service, as the Prophet was continuously being abused'. The report then explains that a young man, who had attended the mission school, spoke to the family in defence of

Dr Eger, 'She is not speaking the truth, for I was years at their school and know that they did not say things against our Prophet' (Multan, November 1910, *Annual letter*, 1911, p. 398).

Attitudes towards Islam and Muslims shown by CMS missionaries in India during this period reveal a certain amount of knowledge about Islam but with many preconceptions.

In their interactions with Muslims, missionaries used Urdu in most cases, although other languages were used when appropriate. For example, Baker and Peet used Tamil and Malayalam, indicating that there was a perceived need to produce relevant material for people, to inform them of what was seen as an Islamic threat.

Debates and discussions between CMS missionaries and their 'native' assistants on the one side and Muslims of different kinds on the other appear to have been a regular occurrence, both informal, arising from open-air preaching, and also more formal, pre-arranged sessions. Reports and Annual Letters show the methods used and questions asked by the missionaries and the Muslims. It is clear that many of the Muslim speakers had a knowledge of the Bible, at least of passages that they knew would raise difficulties. Leupolt's 1863 encounter shows that the approach used by Muslims of challenging the Bible continued ten years after the Agra debates in 1854 between Karl Pfander and Raḥmatullāh Kairānavī. The questions that were regularly asked and the passages of scripture that were used are still to be found in present day polemical literature and open-air preaching (see J. Chesworth, 'Polemical revival. Attacking the Other's texts', in D. Cheetham et al. (eds), *Interreligious hermeneutics in pluralistic Europe*, Amsterdam, 2011, 355-77, esp. pp. 357-62, 371-4).

Education and medical work often provided evangelistic opportunities, and efforts to avoid denigrating Muḥammad and Islam appear to have been made in the process, as is seen in the letters from Malcolm Goldsmith and Annie Eger. Goldsmith, whilst running a school in Madras specifically for Muslim students in order to raise their standard of education, seems to have encouraged Muslim speakers to address the boys.

The missionaries were also aware of the various movements amongst Muslims in India and were able to assess them in relation to their challenge towards the spread of Christianity. An example is Goldsmith's reference, in Madras in 1890, to a speaker from Anjuman-i Himāyat-i Islām (*CMR* 24, 754-64). This Muslim society had only been started in Lahore in 1885, which shows the rate of its expansion.

SIGNIFICANCE

With so many CMS missionaries working in India during the 19th century, it has only been possible to provide a few examples from the great quantity of their writings – *Extracts from Annual Letters* for 1900 alone includes 250 letters from India. Since their communications were edited when they reached London, in their published form they probably present only a partial picture of what actually went on between missionaries in their day-to-day activities and Muslims. An examination of the handwritten versions of what they sent from India to see what was blue-pencilled out could produce revealing results.

This being acknowledged, it is clear from the published correspondence that, as might be expected, many CMS missionaries were concerned to convince their listeners of the human predicament arising from inherited sinfulness and the one means of being reconciled with a just God through the atoning death of Christ. Converts from Islam typically spoke of the existential differences Christianity made to them rather than their intellectual conviction that it was the correct religion. Exploration of the claims of Islam to be the final and complete religion usually came second to this, as did defences against Muslim claims that the Bible was corrupt or abrogated and Christian doctrines were incoherent or illogical. It appears that many missionaries were not equipped with ready arguments that were not derived from basic biblical beliefs. This is instanced most clearly in the debate held at Agra in 1854, in that, when the CMS missionary Karl Pfander realised his Muslim opponents would not accept the authenticity of the text of the Bible and refused to admit it as a source of evidence, the whole meeting ground to an untimely halt.

The approach favoured by most CMS missionaries, centring on human awareness of separation from God, differed from the approaches favoured in other places and times. The Arab Christians who lived under early Islamic rule, for example, knew that their standing depended on demonstrating that their doctrines could survive rational scrutiny (and hence that the doctrine of the Trinity could be logically shown to be compatible with the principle that God was a single non-composite being). This intellectual apologetic (and sometimes polemic) differed distinctly from the CMS missionaries' appeal to human experience.

While converts from Islam were comparatively few, it is striking that missionaries were often listened to sensitively and met with degrees of agreement about such matters as the authenticity of the Bible, but this

points to the intellectual sophistication of their Muslim listeners. In fact, maybe the single most striking element in the missionaries' correspondence is how well-informed Muslim respondents often were about minor points in the Bible and Christian teachings.

While Muslims in India had generally lived for centuries among the much larger population of Hindus and had absorbed some beliefs and practices from them, even though they were their rulers, the evidence from the missionaries' correspondence indicates that this could not be possible for Muslims and Christians, particularly when Christians were perceived as part of the ruling elite. Acceptance of one another, let alone respect, was not a viable way forward, and so the thought and action of the great majority of missionaries remained directed towards convincing the people among whom they worked to change and abandon ways that, in their eyes, could never lead to success or contentment.

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CMS_OX_CMS_Intelligencer *Church Missionary Intelligencer*

CMS_OX_CMS_Record *Church Missionary Record*

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Louise Marston

Mary Anne Louisa Marston; Mary Ann Louise Marston

DATE OF BIRTH October 1855
PLACE OF BIRTH Biggleswade, Bedfordshire
DATE OF DEATH 4 April 1916
PLACE OF DEATH Lucknow

BIOGRAPHY

Louise Marston was a missionary in north India with the Zenana Bible and Medical Mission (ZBMM) from 1882 until her death in 1916. She was born in 1855 to Charles and Elizabeth Marston in either Biggleswade or Clifton in Bedfordshire, England. Her father's occupation as a physician probably influenced her and her sister Alice to join the ZBMM with the intention as serving as medical missionaries. Dr Alice preceded her to India, having been licensed to practise medicine in 1881. When Louise went to India towards the end of 1882 to work as a nurse at the Lucknow Medical Mission, she began by learning Urdu. Within a couple of years, she was transferred from the medical branch of the mission to the *zenana* branch, where she visited women in purdah (seclusion) to teach the Christian scriptures and to organise schools for girls and women in Lucknow and the surrounding villages.

In addition to her *zenana* work, Marston was a writer of children's stories and an advocate for the works of fiction written for children in vernacular languages and in Indian contexts. Between 1881 and 1900, she wrote 12 short novels depicting the lives of children living in England and the development of their Christian faith. A commitment to female literacy and a desire to provide Christian literature in simple English for Indian readers led her to write another 12 stories about individuals and families located in India. Most of these were published by the Christian Literature Society for India between 1901 and 1915. Many of the descriptions of Indian life that they contain were drawn from her own experiences of visiting women in the *zenana* and a prevalent theme was the conversion of women, men and children to the Christian faith. She was also active in writing for missionary periodicals, describing the customs of Muslims in India and her ministry in their communities. In a letter written to the Bethnal Green Association,

which was subsequently published, she described in detail the ceremonies and rites practised among Shīʿī Muslims that she had observed during the month of Muḥarram.

Marston wrote several stories in Urdu, primarily about Indian women. Several of her novels were translated into other Indian languages such as Tamil and Gujarati, and some of those set in Muslim contexts were translated into Arabic and published by the Nile Mission Press in Egypt.

A serious fall in 1911 caused an injury that severely limited her ability to travel and visit the women in seclusion, compelling her to concentrate her efforts on her literary ministry. One of the key books she wrote during this period was a life of Christ written for Muslims.

Marston was active in speaking at conferences and holding prayer meetings throughout India. She was a member of the local committee arranging the Second Missionary Conference on behalf of the Mohammedan World held in Lucknow at the beginning of 1911, as well as attending as an official delegate of her mission, the ZBMM. She wrote an account of the conference for the ZBMM periodical, summarising the various speeches given and highlighting those focusing on ministry to Muslim women and on literature for Muslims. Five years later, after an illness of a couple of weeks, she died in a hospital in Lucknow on 4 April 1916.

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Works for Muslim readers

DATE 1904-12
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

Louise Marston's key contribution to Christian-Muslim relations is her depiction of the lives of Muslim women living in the *zenana*, that part of an Indian Muslim household reserved for women. By extension, her writings included entire Muslim families and their encounters with Christian missionaries and the teachings of the Gospel. Her first stories about Muslim women were published in Urdu, the earliest being accounts of Hanifa Begam and Zuhra Begam contained in a two-volume work, *Shuʿāʿ-i nūr* ('Rays of light'), published by the Methodist Press in Lucknow in 1899 (vol. 1 with 113 pages and vol. 2 with 140 pages). Some of these stories seem to have been serialised in English in the monthly magazine of the ZBMM as 'Rays of light: A story of Mohammmedan zenana life' from November 1894 to October 1895. Another account was of Jafri Begum and her encounter with Christianity, which was published as 'Es kostet viel, ein Christ zu sein' ['It costs a lot to be a Christian'] in *Evangeliches Missions-Magazin* in 1908 and as 'Life sketches from zenanas. Jafri Begum' in *Young Women of India and Ceylon*, the YWCA magazine, in 1909. A number of such sketches were compiled and published as *Jafri Begum and other sketches from zenanas* in 1910.

In addition to stories about Muslim women, Marston wrote four short novels that broadened their focus to include the men and children of Muslim households as well as the women. *Riches that fail not* (127 pages) presents an account of the conversion of a Muslim family, the wife and husband each separately. A key theme is the impact of education on the lives of those portrayed.

This theme continues in *Choosing the highest* (128 pages), which portrays a Muslim family in which two daughters, who have already attended a missionary-run school, enroll in a Christian college to pursue BA degrees. The dual impact of higher education and the Christian influence they come under has a profound impact on their family, ending with all the family members except for the mother planning to profess their faith in Christ publicly.

In the third book, *Amir Ali's vision* (112 pages), it is a supernatural vision rather than education that is the means of one young Muslim father becoming a Christian. Marston depicts the division that is created in a family when others oppose his adoption of the Christian faith. Although she does not provide a detailed analysis of conflicting religious beliefs, she does address briefly the Muslim rejection of the death of Jesus Christ and of the historical reliability of the Gospels.

Ahmad Shah's decision (89 pages) continues similar themes and includes some of the same characters as *Amir Ali's vision*. It was written for Muslim students and it highlights the teachings of Christ that would appeal to them.

Louise Marston contributed significantly to the literature depicting the life of Muslim women in the *zenana*. She joined others such as Elizabeth Lydia Oxley (1848-1914; *CMR* 24, 404-9) and Charlotte Maria Tucker, better known as A.L.O.E. ('A lady of England', 1821-93), who also wrote on Muslim women. Marston's stories often portrayed the difficult situations of the secluded women she visited in Muslim homes, particularly when they desired to receive instruction in Christianity. When she was asked whether stories such as these were true, she replied that, while the individuals she depicted in them really lived, they did so with different names and surroundings. In the 'Introduction' to her novel, *Choosing the highest*, she stated that her object was to depict Indian life as it was lived among the upper and educated classes and that all the descriptions of college life were true (p. 4).

Marston's writings also depict Christian missionaries working in the *zenana*s in north India, visiting Muslim families, conducting schools for secluded women and girls, and communicating the Christian gospel. That the intention in promoting education was to create a context in which the life and work of Christ could be taught is evident in the closing sentence in the same 'Introduction'. She wrote, 'Education creates unrest and dissatisfaction; the Gospel of Christ is alone sufficient to bring rest and satisfaction' (p. 8). Marston's writings contain little analysis of Muslim beliefs, focusing rather on Muslim practices, particularly as they relate to women.

SIGNIFICANCE

Marston is an important author in that she wrote some of her stories in Urdu with the purpose of promoting literacy and providing literature for Indian women that would be 'thoroughly native in incident, thought, and language', as she stated an article on 'Literature for native Christians' (p. 363). She commented that the apparent disinterest in reading among

the women could be overcome by providing stories of native life, not translated English stories which seemed to have little attraction. The fact that some of her novels were translated into Arabic and published in Egypt indicates that her stories of Muslim life transcended their Indian context and were considered useful by missionaries in the Arab world as well.

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Alan M. Guenther

Joseph L. Menezes

DATE OF BIRTH Unknown; probably mid-19th century
PLACE OF BIRTH Unknown; possibly Karnataka state
DATE OF DEATH Unknown; after 1912
PLACE OF DEATH Unknown; probably Karnataka state

BIOGRAPHY

All that is known about the author of *The life and religion of Mohammed* comes from the work itself. On the title page he is referred to as 'Rev. Fr. J.L. Menezes, priest of the diocese of Mangalore, India', a Roman Catholic diocese in the state of Karnataka in south-west India that was created in 1886. In his preface, Menezes refers to its second bishop as encouraging him to write the book, and he dedicates it to him and the first bishop (pp. vi-vii), suggesting that he himself had been a priest there for some years, maybe since the establishment of the diocese or even before, when it was an apostolic vicariate.

Menezes' surname indicates that he probably came from a family with Portuguese roots, which would fit neatly into the history of this part of India. If his reference to 'my countrymen in India' (p. vi) is more than a politeness, he could have been born there. Even though he modestly admits 'many defects both in language and mode of expression' (p. vi) in this work, his English is lucid with many idiomatic expressions, indicating that he was quite at ease in writing it (unless it was extensively altered by an editor) and may have spoken it as his first language.

He dates the preface of the book to 1911 (p. vii). If, as is suggested above, he was well-established in the diocese by this time, he was probably born just after the middle of the 19th century and may have lived into the first quarter of the 20th century or even later.

He makes no secret of regarding Islam as a misguided faith, and he has written this book, he says, so that Muslims 'may open their eyes, and behold how they are deceived, and consequently take the necessary steps towards finding a better leader and a more certain way of salvation' (p. vi). He apologises for putting before them details about Muḥammad that they will find unsavoury, but he recognises that at the end of the day 'facts are facts' (p. vi).

MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Joseph Menezes, *The life and the religion of Mohammed*, London, 1912, pp. v-vii

WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

The life and religion of Mohammed

DATE 1912
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

The life and religion of Mohammed. The prophet of Arabia. Compiled from the best and the most trustworthy authors, published in 1912 and 194 pages long, is divided into five parts, two on the life of Muḥammad, one on the Qur'an, one on the 'sects' of Islam, and a conclusion in the form of 'A familiar and friendly talk'. As the title makes clear, it relies completely on secondary sources, among whom Menezes acknowledges 'Sale, Bettany and Stobbart' (p. v). The identity of Bettany is unknown, but the others must be George Sale (1697-1736; *CMR* 17, 325-43), translator of the Qur'an (1734), and James W.H. Stobart (1832-1902; *CMR* 24, 325-31), author of *Islam and its founder* (London, 1876). He does not mention them by name elsewhere in the work, nor does he indicate whether he quotes directly from them. His stated intention is simple, to inform Muslims in India about the Prophet Mohammed and the Koran (the spellings he uses) as they appear 'in their true colours', so that they may 'take the necessary steps towards finding a better leader and a more certain way of salvation' (pp. v-vi).

In parts 1 and 2, Menezes gives a summary of Muḥammad's life that traces the main events but also voices biased judgements about his motivations and actions. Thus, in the years before he began his ministry Muḥammad 'had a vehement desire to be reckoned as an extraordinary person and this his object he could attain by no means so effectually as by pretending himself to be the messenger sent from God' (p. 18); his claim to have travelled from Mecca to Jerusalem and then to heaven in the miraculous Night Journey was 'a real fiction of his vivid imagination' (p. 33); when he first arrived in Medina, he discovered that 'the knowledge of scriptures which the Jews had was very dangerous to him, and their learning was sufficient to irritate him[. ...] The feeling began soon to be embittered, and the Jews of Medina soon began to feel the power and hostility of the Prophet's

arm' (pp. 46-7); after the killing of the Jews in Medina, 'Mahommed retired to solace himself with this captive [Jewess] Rainah, whose husband and near male relatives were among the massacred' (p. 65); as his lustfulness intensified he manipulated his own teachings to please himself, 'in his later years, the attractions and passionate enjoyment of women proved his human frailty more than any other thing, and led to the deplorable abrogation in his own favour of his own laws' (p. 94). In sum, while he must be accepted as a great religious teacher, 'his sensuality, deception, cruelty and intolerance stain the Prophet's life to the highest degree and prove him to be both an erring mortal and in no sense an infallible model of conduct' (p. 95). It is difficult to see how Muslims would accept this characterisation and be led by it away from their faith.

Part 3 includes a brief summary of the collection and structure of the Qur'an, which Muḥammad believed came to him from God: 'Full of religious dreams and of a highly nervous temperament, he indeed fancied he heard the angel bidding him recite what he imagined to be a revelation' (p. 104); and also the Hadith and main beliefs summed up in the Articles of Faith, foremost among them that God is one, though Muslims 'most obstinately reject the mystery of the Blessed Trinity, which is a great stumbling block to Muslims whose religion knows or admits no mysteries' (p. 110). Menezes also outlines the main religious duties as they are summarised in the Five Pillars of Islam. Among prohibitions, he singles out seclusion of women because, although it has the appearance of prudence in preventing women from casually breaking the marriage contract (p. 139), it 'exercises a very demoralising influence in the home life and becomes an insuperable barrier to the regeneration and progress of a nation besides keeping society in a stagnant condition' (p. 140). Regarding Muslim society as a whole, 'it is hopeless to expect that Islam will ever cease to be what it has hitherto proved, the most formidable obstacle to the dawn of a progressive and enlightened civilization. How can it be otherwise? no permanent house can be built on a foundation of sand; what permanent civilization and progress then can be expected from a people professing a religion founded on fatalism, polygamy and slavery?' (p. 141).

This part also contains an account of the relationship between the Qur'an and the Old and New Testaments. Here, Menezes staunchly defends the integrity and authenticity of the biblical books on the basis of references to them in the Qur'an, which he refers to as 'admirable and indisputable testimonies by which a fair minded man and even a candid Mahommedan can see that the genuineness and authenticity of the Old and New Testaments have been completely attested by the Koran' (p. 148).

In the remainder of this part (pp. 150-66), Menezes moves from the mainly descriptive biographical account of Muḥammad and Islam to more analytical discussions about him and the Qur'an. He starts by acknowledging Muḥammad as a great man for what he achieved and he allows that in the first part of his life, while he lived at Mecca, he was sincere in his religious searchings, though as he grew more ambitious he regularly invoked God's name 'to suit his evil purposes, he became a wilful and intentional deceiver, and for the purpose of raising himself to supreme power, invented this wicked and blasphemous imposture, which he carried by artful skill to a wonderful success' (p. 152). This being so, Menezes asks how such a man, so unlike prophets such as Abraham and Moses, could call himself a friend of God. Furthermore, although the proof of a prophet was the ability to work miracles, the Qur'an does not credit Muḥammad with any, and the attempts by Muslim theologians to find in it references to his miracles do not work (pp. 152-6). In a word, there is no evidence to regard him as a prophet and good reason to think of him as sinful like any other ordinary humans.

Coming to the Qur'an, Menezes applauds it as a work of poetic excellence, but argues that this is not a reason for regarding it as divinely revealed, particularly when its teachings are either puerile or inferior to those of the biblical books (p. 158). 'Apart from its claim to inspiration, it is by no means a great literary composition. It is rather a mixture of longer and shorter chapters, many of them a mere disconnected jumble of events' (p. 159). Furthermore, it contains contradictory verses, as though different parts were revealed to meet different circumstances in Muḥammad's life. It does contain excellent teachings about the oneness, greatness and goodness of God, 'but to be true it is not enough that a religion contain some real truths and some excellent moral maxims and precepts' (p. 161).

Adding to this, Menezes argues that Muslim tradition refers to a number of contemporaries of Muḥammad playing some part in the composition of the Qur'an, and so it cannot be regarded as his composition alone (pp. 162-4). Also, the success of Islam in its early years does not prove its divine origin; 'on the contrary, that the religion of Islam owed its progress and establishment entirely to the sword is a most convincing proof of its purely human origin' (p. 166).

Part 4 contains an account of what Menezes calls the sects of Islam, comprising the Sunnīs and Shī'īs and the early subdivisions within each, and also the Mu'tazila, the Khawārij and others. Nearer his own time, he mentions the Wahhābīs, Sufis and their many sub-sects, and 'Freethinkers', whom he describes as 'educated and cultured Musulmans

both in India and elsewhere, who have practically given up the whole code of Mahommedan canon law based on traditions and the too literal interpretations of the Koran' (p. 179). In concluding this part, he explains that he has written for Muslims in India, 'and it is our earnest prayer that at least the well-educated and enlightened Mussulmans may read this book with unbiased and unprejudiced minds' (p. 182).

In the fifth part, which is entitled 'Conclusion, A familiar and friendly talk', Menezes makes clear to his 'friends and country men' that he has not written the book to insult Muḥammad or offend Muslims, but 'with the sole object of convincing you that the leader you have chosen to follow and the religion you have embraced to obtain your souls' salvation, are unsafe' (p. 183). He asks them to accept the proofs he has given of the integrity of the Torah and Gospel, to read them and to compare their attestations to Jesus with the Muslim accounts of Muḥammad. They should note Muḥammad's reprehensible character and lack of miracles, compared with the perfect character of Jesus and the miracles he performed, and they should act appropriately, no matter how difficult the consequences of this may be for them, because 'What will it profit you, if you were to gain the whole world, with all its riches and powers and then die miserably and be condemned to the never-dying flames of hell?' (p. 189). They should follow Jesus and should also become members of the Catholic Church: 'It is the religion revealed by God as the one by which alone He desires to be worshipped. By following its doctrine and precepts one secures the eternal happiness of his soul. So courage, my dear friends, courage! be bold, and thus save your soul, and be eternally happy' (p. 194).

It is clear from this comprehensive account of the life and character of Muḥammad, the teachings of the Qur'an, of which he demonstrates wide-ranging knowledge, and the religious history of Islam, that Menezes studied the sources he cites closely and extensively. But it is also clear that he employed what he had learnt from them for his own purpose of showing that Islam was deficient even in its own terms, and that a thinking person would abandon it for Christianity. The insensitivity and harshness of many of the assessments he makes must surely have prevented the majority of people who read his book from appreciating what he was trying to do.

SIGNIFICANCE

Menezes did not pretend that he was making any new explorations into Islam or analyses of it. Indeed, most of the arguments he adduces can be found in earlier works. What is most striking in *The life and religion*

of Mohammed is the tactic he uses repeatedly of showing appreciation for aspects of Islam but then immediately exposing flaws and deficiencies in them. The impression he creates is that, while Islam has much that is impressive about it as a human achievement and an Arabian religious phenomenon, it cannot compare with the true religion.

It is not known what impact the book had when it was first published; maybe it was thought to be too offensive to serve much good, or the onset of the First World War prevented it from being promoted. However, when it was republished in 2005 by Roman Catholic Books, Fort Collins, Colorado, which specialises in 'literature designed to deepen understanding and commitment to the Roman Catholic faith', it caused great controversy.

As one author, Aaron Milavec, notes in an online discussion of the book, today it contributes to the promotion of Christian Islamophobic attitudes, especially in conservative Catholic circles. He observes that 'Menezes progressively leaves aside his original intent and falls into unadulterated diatribes and unabated falsifications' ('Fr. Menezes' biography of Muhammad reconsidered'), and he specifies three topics in his account of Muḥammad that are particularly objectionable: his consent to conversion by the sword, his massacre of the Jews in Medina and his sexual improprieties. He concludes that Menezes's book 'can only succeed in satisfying the incoherent antagonism of a misinformed public bent upon discrediting Islam at its very roots' and contrasts this with Karen Armstrong's approach in *Muhammad, a prophet for our time* (2006), a work 'written by a Catholic scholar roughly a century later when the Catholic Church has arrived at a much more sympathetic understanding of Islam'. He adds that the book 'remains a remnant of a fanatical era wherein character assassination and ugly half-truths served to instil fear and suspicion calculated to isolate us from our neighbours'.

PUBLICATIONS

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STUDIES

Aaron Milavec, 'Fr. Menezes' biography of Muhammad reconsidered', *Theological Review of Episcopal Academy* 4 (January 2008) eJournal; https://www.researchgate.net/publication/338357455

Douglas Pratt

Muḥammad Sulaimān Manṣūrpūrī

DATE OF BIRTH 1867
PLACE OF BIRTH Patiala, India
DATE OF DEATH 30 May 1930
PLACE OF DEATH Yalamlam, Saudi Arabia

BIOGRAPHY

Qāzī Muḥammad Sulaimān bin Aḥmad Shāh bin Bāqī Billāh Manṣūrpūrī was born in the town of Manṣūrpūr, Patiāla State in the south-east Punjab, in 1867. He became an exegete of the Qur'an, an interpreter of Hadith, a historian, a jurist, an expert in the study of religions and a poet. As a boy, he gained knowledge of Arabic and wider religious studies, and he went on to study Persian at the University of the Punjab. Before he turned 18, he was appointed superintendent of the Education Department of Patiāla State and, when he was 33, he worked with the inspector-general of police in the Punjab, who reported that he was impressed by his ability. As a result, Muḥammad Sulaimān was appointed as a magistrate and later became a civil judge and finally a sessions judge.

Muḥammad Sulaimān lectured on the Qur'an throughout his life and he was a strong advocate of dialogue between the faiths, in consequence of which he was called the 'Imam of interfaith dialogue'. In addition to the Islamic disciplines, he wrote on other religions and especially on Christianity. He also composed poetry, though his works were destroyed during the establishment of Pakistan. Some of his poems are preserved in his personal diary. He died just south of Mecca on 30 May 1930 while he was returning from Hajj.

MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Qazi Abdul Baqi, 'Sīrat Sulaimān', in his *Safarnāmah Ḥijāz*, [s.l.], 1986², pp. 394-424

M.A. Bhaṭṭī, *Tazkirah Qāẓī Muḥammad Sulaimān Manṣūrpūrī*, Lahore, 2007

A. Najma, 'Raḥmat al-ʿĀlamīn, Qāzī Sulaimān Manṣūrpūrī wa Muṭālaʿah Maẓāhib', Lahore, 2013 (MA Diss. University of the Punjab)

S. Kiran, 'Syed Sulaimān Manṣūrpūrī's work on comparative religions. In the light of Raḥmat al-ʿĀlamīn', Lahore, 2017 (BS Diss. Government Post Graduate Islamia College for Women)

WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Kyā Islām bazūr-i shamshīr phēlāyā gayā hai? and letters 'Is Islam spread by the sword?'

DATE 1899-1914
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Urdu

DESCRIPTION

Muḥammad Sulaimān was clearly strongly concerned to explain and defend his faith when he felt it was under attack. Some of his letters are concerned with Islam and its relations with Christianity, and one short work is a defence of the peaceful character of Islam.

Kyā Islām bazūr-i shamshīr phēlāyā gayā hai? ('Is Islam spread by the sword?') was first delivered as a lecture and then published as a booklet 28 pages long in 1899. It is a response to Christian claims that Islam was propagated by violence and conquest, which numerous missionaries in India at this time, as well as European historians of India, expressed as virtual fact. Muḥammad Sulaimān disproves these by citing a range of evidence.

Without naming anyone specifically, he makes a general observation that Islam is often accused of having been spread by the sword. He then cites certain Christian authors, such as Godfrey Higgins and John Davenport, noting that fair-minded Christian scholars themselves refute this allegation (pp. 2-3), and goes on to adduce examples from the life of Muḥammad to show the extent of the trials he endured for which he never took revenge, even though he had the ability and power to do so. He asks: 'How then was it possible for Muḥammad to convert people to Islam through the use of force?' He also includes incidents from the lives of Muḥammad's Companions, the challenges, threats and punishments they faced and through which they steadfastly remained Muslim. He sees all this as demonstrating unequivocally that they came to Islam of their own free will. He also draws on the examples of many Companions who, before converting to Islam, were living affluent lives but entered into lives of hardship, even destitution. None of the difficulties they endured – distance from their home country, estrangement from their friends, exile from their families, poverty, disease, enmity – could persuade them to renounce Islam. Finally, he argues that the teachings of Islam are so clear and unambiguous that there is no need for a sword to force people to accept them.

Muḥammad Sulaimān concedes that Islam has at times 'used the sword', but he insists that this was only as the Qur'an allows: to prevent the destruction of monasteries, churches, synagogues and mosques in which God's name is often mentioned, and to put an end to the scourge of those who disturb the peace and order of society, those who make conspiracies, and those who spread strife. He goes on to point out that people were not converted to Islam by the sword either during the time of Muḥammad or when the Companions ruled. Furthermore, Muslims in Africa and Asia converted to Islam of their own free will after being satisfied by its teachings.

Muḥammad Sulaimān also addresses the question of whether Islam was propagated through force in any period following the time of the Companions. He states that no unreasonable or nonsensical activities, including actions of war, can be referred to as religion, so, if there ever have been such incidents in the history of Islam after the time of Muḥammad and his Companions, the religion itself should not be blamed. In the course of history, a Muslim ruler may have shed blood for political reasons, but there was no occasion on which a ruler attempted to spread Islam through violence. There were no forced conversions to Islam anywhere in India during the reign of the Mughal Emperor Aurangzīb ʿĀlamgīr (r. 1658-1707); if there had been, the presence of Muslims in India or in the vicinity of the capital would have served as evidence. Also, in answer to sceptics who continue to insist that Islam was spread by the sword, he notes that the Mongols who invaded Baghdad destroyed the Muslim libraries there but afterwards converted to Islam peacefully. He also names numerous non-Muslims, particularly Christians, who later converted to Islam and he questions how Islam penetrated to places where no Islamic ruler had ever engaged in fighting. Among those who converted he names Khagan Tegüder, the brother of the Mongol ruler Hülegü Khan, who converted to Islam despite having been baptised as a Christian in his childhood, and Sultan Ghazan, the most formidable ruler of the Ilkhanid dynasty, followed by his brother, Sultan Muhammad Öljaitü, who had also been baptised; in another branch of the Mongols, Berke Khan, the great-grandson of Genghis Khan, who converted to Islam, and later Tughlugh Timur Khan, with whom the entire region under his rule entered Islam. In addition to these, during the Crusades many knights embraced Islam when they observed the conduct and morals of Muslims. These new converts were not limited to military figures or members of the nobility; at times, even prominent priests and religious leaders of their communities became Muslims (pp. 19-21).

Simply by amassing factual evidence of this kind, Muḥammad Sulaimān shows that there is no support for the view that Islam spread through force.

Other writings by Muḥammad Sulaimān that refer to Christianity or address Christian-Muslim relations include published lectures and letters ranging in length from 10 to 15 pages. A few are significant enough to note here.

Istiqāmah ('Rectitude') is a letter he wrote in 1906 in response to a letter from a wavering Muslim. During an illness, this individual received care and assistance from a Christian priest, who at the same time sought to evangelise him. The priest's kindness, coupled with his objections to Islamic teachings, left the Muslim in a state of religious uncertainty, nearly leading to his conversion. Distressed by his spiritual turmoil, he detailed his experience in the letter and sent it to Muḥammad Sulaimān with a request for guidance. While Muḥammad Sulaimān does not disclose the writer's identity or personal details, he responds with a comprehensive reply, addressing the religious concerns he has raised (p. 7). In May 1961, his reply was published as a booklet 48 pages long by Maulānā 'Aṭā'ullāh Ḥanīf (Al-maktabah as-salafiyyah, Lahore).

Burhān ('Proof') is a letter he wrote in 1914 in response to a letter from an unnamed Christian priest who asked about the compatibility of the Torah, the Gospel and the Qur'an, and the distinctions in rank between the prophets Moses, Jesus and Muḥammad.

Makātīb Sulaimān ('Correspondence of Sulaimān') contains 34 letters he wrote on various topics. The first of these is *Istiqāmah* and the third is *Burhān*. In the seventh letter, he writes about the permissibility of consuming meat from animals slaughtered by People of the Book. The thirteenth letter addresses inquiries made by a Christian priest regarding the strictly monotheistic and Trinitarian views of God, atonement through Christ and the majesty of Islam. In the fourteenth letter, he shows that the prophethood of Muḥammad and the authenticity of the Qur'an are proved by Christianity.

SIGNIFICANCE

Kyā Islām bazūr-i shamshīr phēlāyā gayā hai? and Muḥammad Suleimān's letters are unusual in exhibiting an alternative to the combative strategy that was common in interfaith debates at the time he was writing. The booklet was quickly recognised as a ground-breaking work in the field of comparative religion. It has been published in a number of editions, with each edition consisting of 1,000 copies.

PUBLICATIONS

Muḥammad Suleimān, *Kyā Islām bazūr-i shamshīr phēlāyā gayā hai*?, Lahore, 1899

Muḥammad Suleimān, *Istiqāmah*, Lahore, 1906

Muḥammad Suleimān, *Burhān*, Sheikhupura, 1914

Muḥammad Suleimān, *Makātīb Sulaimān*, Sheikhupura, [n.d.]

Jamil Akhtar

Shiblī Nuʿmānī

Muḥammad Shiblī Nuʿmānī; Shibli Numani

DATE OF BIRTH 1857
PLACE OF BIRTH Bindwal, Aʿzamgarh (present-day) Uttar Pradesh
DATE OF DEATH 18 November 1914
PLACE OF DEATH Aʿzamgarh

BIOGRAPHY

Born in 1857 in Bindwal, a small village in the district of Aʿzamgarh, Shiblī followed the traditional Islamic route of education: lessons at home, followed by a few years of tutoring by one or two local teachers, and then some specialised instruction, usually at some distance from home. The teacher who made the deepest impression on him was Maulānā Muḥammad Fārūq Chirāyākoṭī, a strident Ḥanafī, a sworn enemy of Wahhābism and an implacable opponent of modern education and of its protagonist, the reformer Sayyid Aḥmad Khān (1817-98; *CMR* 24, 424-47 – but see further below). Maulānā Fārūq once addressed Shiblī as 'Nuʿmānī', derived from the personal name of Abū Ḥanīfa, the early jurist after whom the Ḥanafī legal rite was named. Since he was a strong supporter of the Ḥanafī legal rite, he attached the sobriquet to his name as a badge of honour. The two delighted in debating and attacking anyone who was not a Ḥanafī.

When he was about 19, Shiblī went to Mecca on pilgrimage. After returning to Aʿzamgarh, he continued his literary and sectarian passions privately, composed poetry in Urdu and Persian, wrote a few pamphlets in refutation of Wahhābism and in support of Ḥanafism, and also gave lessons to students. After repeated false starts to find a satisfying and sustaining vocation, his application for employment as a teacher of Arabic at the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College in Aligarh bore fruit in 1883. Aligarh provided Shiblī with some unique advantages at just the right juncture in his life: the opportunity to rub shoulders with other scholars, especially, as it turned out, Sayyid Aḥmad Khān, a veritable intellectual and political giant, who allowed Shiblī the use of his personal library.

In order to succeed in Aligarh, Shiblī needed to reinvent himself, a challenge he met by projecting himself as a historian with a mission. He chose to write the biographies of some heroes of Islam and use the pages

of these publications to serve a second purpose: to glorify Muslim contributions to world culture, to refute allegations of Muslim discrimination against *dhimmī*s, and to exonerate the leading figures of Islam, most of all the Prophet Muḥammad, from the calumnies hurled against them over the centuries, mostly by Christians. He also wrote a travelogue and some other tracts.

In 1894, through Sayyid Aḥmad Khān's efforts, Shiblī was awarded the title *Shams ul-ʿulamāʾ* by the British government and, the following year, was appointed a Fellow of Allahabad University, though his relationships with both Sayyid Aḥmad Khān and the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College were ambivalent. On the one hand, antagonism towards modern education did not blind him to the benefits of belonging to the college and, having experienced the crippling consequences of not knowing English, he became an advocate of teaching English to Muslims. On the other hand, however, he desired this within an educational set-up that preserved the old concept of education, apart from minor adjustments.

After the death of Sayyid Aḥmad Khān in 1889, Shiblī left the College and settled in Aʿzamgarh, where he worked for a while in the education service of the Muslim state of Hyderabad, Deccan. In 1905, he returned to north India, where he became the secretary of the Nadvat ul-ʿulamāʾ in Lucknow, an association of Muslim scholars founded with the avowed purpose of forming a curriculum based on an optimised blend of the Eastern learning of Deoband and the Western education of Aligarh. He played a pivotal role in the establishment of the Dār-ul ʿulūm sponsored by the Nadva, and worked as its secretary for a number of years (1905-13), in addition to editing (1904-12) its monthly journal, *Al-Nadva*. In early 1908, Shiblī joined forces with Muhammad Ali Jinnah (1876-1948), an able and ambitious lawyer (but with no knowledge of *fiqh*), and campaigned for the revival of religious endowments whose beneficiaries were the testator's relatives (this had been abolished by the colonial government in 1894). Their effort was rewarded by the promulgation of the Mussalman Wakf Validating Act of 1913.

Feeling alienated at the Nadva, in 1910 Shiblī planned another institution of Islamic studies in Aligarh, named Dār ul-Muṣannifīn ('The abode of authors', now Dār ul-Muṣannefīn Shiblī Academy). He resigned as secretary of the Nadva in July 1913, and left Lucknow shortly afterwards. The Academy was established three days after his death.

Shiblī's first two publications, *Musalmānon kī guzashta taʿlīm* ('The past education of Muslims', 1888) and *Al-Māmūn* (1888, a biography of the Caliph al-Maʾmūn) won him wide acclaim; his reputation as a historian with a nimble mind and an enviable ability to articulate his thoughts

through both spoken and written Urdu kept climbing with each new work. But he was perceptive enough to realise that his admirers had not actually been edified by his books, and he expressed his misgivings in the preface to *Rasāʾil-i Shiblī* (1898), a collection of tracts published some ten years after the appearance of these works.

MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Primary

Sayyid Sulaimān Nadvī, 'Ḥujjat al-milla wa-l-dīn Ḥaḍrat ʿAllāma Shiblī Nuʿmānī taghmad Allāhu bi-raḥmatihī' ['The proof of the nation and faith, Ḥaẓrat ʿAllāma Shiblī Nuʿmānī, may he be protected by the grace of God'], *Maʿārif* 1/2 (1916) 12-25 (an obituary notice in Urdu)

Shiblī Nuʿmānī, *Makātīb-i Shiblī*, ed. Sayyid Sulaimān Nadvī, 2 vols, Azamgarh: Matbaʿ-i maʿārif, vol. 1 [n.d.], vol. 2, 1917 (Shiblī's letters)

Secondary

Shiblī Nuʿmānī, *Sīrat un-nabī* (*The life of the Prophet*), vol. 1, trans. M. Tayyib Bakhsh Budayuni, Lahore, 1979, pp. xii-xv (English trans.)

S.M. Ikrām, *Yadgār-i Shiblī*, Lahore, 1971

S.M. Ikram, *Modern Muslim India and the birth of Pakistan, 1858-1951*, Lahore, 1970, pp. 119-33

Muhammad Sadiq, *A history of Urdu literature*, Bombay, 1964, pp. 274-85

Muḥammad Amīn Zubairī, *Zikr-i Shiblī*, Lucknow, 1946

Sayyid Sulaimān Nadvī, *Ḥayāt-i Shiblī*, Azamgah, 1943 (Written by Shiblī's favourite student and collaborator, who was far more conservative than Shiblī himself, this 'official biography' appeared some 30 years after his death. Nadvī's disapproval of the political outlook and educational policies of Sayyid Aḥmad Khān made him downplay the pivotal role played by Khān and Aligarh in Shiblī's intellectual development. For a more balanced picture, it is important to consult other sources, particularly the biographies by Zubairī and Ikrām.)

WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Al-Māmūn

DATE 1888
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Urdu

DESCRIPTION

Shiblī Nuʿmānī's biographical work entitled *Al-Māmūn*, on the ʿAbbasid caliph Abū Jaʿfar ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Rashīd, who took the throne name al-Maʾmūn (r. 813-33), first appeared in 1888, with further editions in later

years. The 1892 edition, which is used here, was published in two parts with continuous pagination and is 261 pages long.

It appears that Shiblī's thoughts turned to the Caliph al-Ma'mūn at about the time he started preparing notes for a lecture entitled *Musalmānon kī guzashta taʿlīm*, the text of which was published as a booklet in 1888. This booklet turned out to be a kind of preliminary version for *Al-Māmūn* in that it provided a great deal of material that was inserted with minimal changes into the biography. ʿAbdullāh al-Ma'mūn was the seventh ʿAbbāsid caliph, though Shiblī calls him the sixth, and he was the son of the fifth caliph Hārūn al-Rashīd, though Shiblī styles him Māmūn ar-Rashīd.

The first chapter, which has no title, might suitably be called 'An introduction to modern historiography'. This is because Shiblī, knowing that only a handful of his readers would know what a modern work of history was, tries to explain this to his readers.

Shiblī's comments in the book concerning Christian-Muslim relations begin in a discussion about taxes (p. 148). He argues that, in the time of al-Ma'mūn, the system of taxing non-Muslims generally followed the practice of the Prophet and the Rightly-Guided Caliphs and that variations introduced during the reigns of later caliphs were guided by issues of prudence and expedience: 'details were left at the discretion of every lawful occupant of the throne of Islam' (p. 150). Shiblī implies that, if an avaricious and tyrannical ruler chose to impose a high rate for the payment of *jizya* (the poll tax on non-Muslims), it was the ruler who was responsible for any suffering caused rather than the system that had been established by the Prophet himself.

Shiblī cites many examples of the courtesy shown by Māmūn to non-Muslim courtiers and scholars, and concludes his account of the caliph's liberal-mindedness and tolerance with a remark of al-Māmūn: 'The religion that makes one fit for living in this world is that of Zoroaster, the religion that would benefit one in the afterlife is Christianity, but the religion that suits both this life and the next is Islam' (p. 171), indicating his openness to other faiths and loyalty to his own. Shiblī also discusses at some length controversies arising from clashes and confrontations between Christian and Muslim courtiers. He directs his readers' attention to a footnote that is not only long but also has footnotes of its own (pp. 171-6). In part, this reads:

> Unfortunately, even this is not enough to reassure European authors. Even in works of history, they attack Muslim rulers in such a manner that Islam

> becomes the ultimate target. [… I]n the days when God's world was under the sway of Muslim conquerors, those who gave written guarantees to protect thousands and hundred-thousands of cathedrals and churches were the Rightly Guided Caliphs, who have been recognised in every period as the undisputed guides of Muslims. Was not ʿUmar bin ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz (ʿUmar II [the eighth Umayyad caliph, r. 717-20]) the caliph who sent a decree to the governor of Damascus ordering him to tear down the extension to a mosque because it had entailed demolition of a church, and let the Christians rebuild their church?

Shiblī clearly wants to show that accusations of religious prejudice and persecution are completely out of place.

He goes on to underline how fully Christians and Christian life were accepted under the ʿAbbāsids, and how new churches were built: 'Were not thousands of magnificent churches built in which the worshippers enjoyed freedom to observe all rituals?' (p. 172), and he cites the case of a Christian leader, Naṣr bin Hārūn, who was permitted to build churches on land owned by the caliph in Baghdad (p. 173).

SIGNIFICANCE

Like Shiblī's other works, *Al-Māmūn* is riddled with errors and solecisms, most of them traceable to his ignorance of any major European language or of Western authors (including the ancient Greeks) and their works; the book is of little use to a serious scholar. It represents a certain popular and hagiographical style of literature that held sway in its day over a considerable readership. It thus provides an insight into how Christians and Christianity were viewed by Muslims in South Asia around the end of the 19th century, and offers a riposte to negative Western Christian perceptions of Islam by highlighting examples of acceptance of Christianity in the early Islamic world. It evidently met a need because the first edition sold out in a year.

PUBLICATIONS

Shiblī Nuʿmānī, *Al-Māmūn*, Agra, 1888 (difficult to find)

Shiblī Nuʿmānī, *Al-Māmūn*, with a preface by Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān, Aligarh, 1889; https://archive.org/details/Al-MamoonByShaykh ShibliNomanir.a

Shiblī Nuʿmānī, *Al-Māmūn*, Agra, 1892; https://www.rekhta.org/ebooks/al-mamoon-part-002-shibli-nomani-ebooks-2

Sīrat un-nabī
'The life of the Prophet'

DATE Before 1914
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Urdu

DESCRIPTION

Shiblī planned to write a biography of the Prophet Muḥammad entitled *Sīrat un-nabī, yaʿnī, savāniḥ aqdas ḥaẓrat sarvar-i ʿālam Muḥammad rasūl Allāh* ('The life of the Prophet, which is to say the occurrences in the most sacred life of the sovereign of the world Muḥammad, the messenger of Allāh') in five parts: the events of Muḥammad's life; the office of a prophet; the history of the Qur'an; Muḥammad's miracles; European writings about Muḥammad. In the last part, he states,

> [w]e shall see what they have said of Islam and its Prophet, what sources of information they have utilized, what blunders they made in historical statements and what errors they have committed in appreciating the principles of Islam. We have also given in this book a rejoinder to their charges against the Prophet and his teachings'. (trans. Budayuni, p. 91)

He was unable to finish it before he died, and it was further worked on by his student Sulaimān Nadvī, who published the first part in 1921. An English translation of this in two volumes was made by Tayyib Bakhsh Budayuni in 1979, and this is the version used here. The first volume, which is of most interest here, comprises a long 'Author's note' (pp. 1-92), which includes considerations about the reliability of the Arabic sources for Muḥammad's biography and discussions of European works on it, together with accounts of the main incidents in Muḥammad's life up to the Battle of Uḥud in 625 (pp. 93-270).

At the start of the 'Author's note', Shiblī expresses concern about the works on Muḥammad that are available to Muslims in India:

> Pressed by present day needs, Muslims have generally lost touch with Arabic literature. Those who wish to know something of the Prophet, have, consequently, to resort to the biographies written by Europeans. By slow degrees, and yet continuously, they get poisoned. As a result, there is a large number of people who regard Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) as a mere reformer, and hold that if he was able to improve the social environment in any way, he had acquitted himself of his mission; while the fact that spots could also be detected (as they suppose) in his moral character does not affect his position for the reliability of the accounts upon which biographies of Muḥammad are based. (p. 7)

Here, Shiblī evidently has in mind biographies in which Muḥammad is portrayed as someone who, at least in the first years of his ministry, introduced new and commendable spiritual and moral teachings to the people of Mecca, but was then affected by his success in Medina and lapsed into self-promoting authoritarianism.

In an attempt to counter such inaccurate and biased portrayals, Shiblī argues for a return to the Arabic sources, and to the most reliable among them. Accepting the Qur'an itself as unimpeachably authoritiative, he examines at great length the other kinds of sources, categorised as Hadith, *sīra* (traditional biographical accounts) and *maghāzī* (accounts of battles fought under Muḥammad's leadership). He concludes that, of these, the Hadiths should be given priority since they can be shown, by scrutiny of the lines of transmitters within them, to derive from the time of Muḥammad himself. While the authors of *sīra* and *maghāzī* works were prepared to admit material of uncertain authenticity, the compilers of the most widely recognised Hadith collections only accepted sayings of the Prophet and traditions about him that could be shown by the most rigorous examination of the lines of transmitters to be reliable derivations from him.

While he insists upon this, Shiblī is also concerned to admit only accounts of what Muḥammad said and did that meet common-sense criteria: 'Statements belied by reason, general experience, established principles and attendant circumstances should not be treated as valid' (p. 74). This procedure may appear to contradict the traditional criteria that disallow individual judgements about what is and is not admissible about the Prophet, though Shiblī supports it with references to instances of early Muslims rejecting remembered sayings because they 'do not conform to logical reasoning or authoritative proof' (p. 66, and also point 9 on p. 74). It must be asked whether, in raising this point, he was at least conceding that the life and actions of the Prophet should be traced in terms of the rational explanations that were accepted by post-Enlightenment minds.

In the discussion of European biographies of Muḥammad that follows (pp. 75-89), Shiblī offers an introduction to the fuller discussion that was to have formed the fifth part of the book. He explains that, in this part, he intended first to survey biographies from the Middle Ages onwards and 'then examine their general trend, their common mistakes, their sources of information and the reason for the common errors they share. Finally, we shall try to judge to what extent malice and prejudice have been at work' (p. 75). As it is, he only gives a hint of his thinking about their value in a few pages here.

He starts with a short summary of medieval European beliefs about Muslims, mainly that Muslims in Spain worshipped idols (pp. 75-7). In the 17th and 18th centuries, however, European scholars began to learn Arabic and to edit and translate Muslim works for themselves, and they also freed themselves from the domination of the Church. The result in his own time is that 'writers on Islam are found divided into two groups – the clerical and the ordinary authors form one group, the other comprises impartial scholars intent on research' (p. 78). Then, when European 'imperialists' began to penetrate the Islamic world, European scholars also established themselves there, setting up schools, libraries and learned societies. It so happened that

> [w]ith a few exceptions, all the Arabic books on Maghāzī and *Sīra* that had escaped the ravages of time were one by one published in Europe up to the end of the 19th century, and most of them with translations into European languages. (p. 79)

The result was a stream of books on Islam and Muḥammad, which Shiblī lists in a table of 37 works by British, French and German scholars dated between 1800 and 1905 (pp. 81-4). He divides them into three groups: scholars without knowledge of Arabic, who derive their information from secondary sources and 'give to a mass of doubtful and inadequate material a shape that answers to their own fancies and inclinations'; scholars who know Arabic language and philosophy but not *sīra*, and 'make the boldest assertions they please'; and scholars who have read the appropriate sources but have not understood them (pp. 84-5). In more detail, he writes about D.S. Margoliouth (*CMR* 17, 445-58), who had read every word of Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal's *Musnad* (a respected collection of Hadiths) but even so 'his biography of the Prophet stands unsurpassed for lies, calumnies, misinterpretations, and biased expressions', and Aloys Sprenger (*CMR* 24, 472-95), an experienced scholar whose biography of Muḥammad is nevertheless 'a disappointing performance' (pp. 85-6). The main cause of the unsatisfactory nature of these scholars' works 'is the religious and political prejudice inherent in the Western writers', though they also use *sīra* works rather than Hadith collections in which, as he has argued above, 'all information is traced back to the original source' (p. 86). Another cause is that they judge material as suitable for their purposes, not on the basis of the sincerity of its transmitter, following accepted Islamic method, but by seeing 'whether the incidents reported by a narrator are in accord with the circumstances and the trends of events' (p. 87) and thus provide a suitable, coherent narrative. The resulting biographies, Shiblī complains, present Muḥammad as at first a prophet and later a king, lusting after women,

making conversions to Islam by force, allowing slavery and acting like worldly rulers (p. 88). This is in complete contradiction of portrayals based on the most accurate information that has been obtained by meticulous testing of transmitted reports.

SIGNIFICANCE

Shiblī's disparaging comments on renowned earlier *sīra* and *maghāzī* works did not go down well with many Muslims, who interpreted his harsh comments on earlier historians, particularly al-Wāqidī, as an attempt to parry the attacks of Islam's Christian critics. Among Muslims who made such comments was Tayyib Bakhsh Budayuni himself (*The life of the Prophet*, pp. xvi–xxvi), as well as his continuator Sulaimān Nadvī, who inserted numerous editorial remarks into the text in an attempt to appease more conservative Muslims (like himself).

Among those who have tested Shiblī's bold claim that he subjected the material he intended to use to close examination, Ẓafar Aḥmad Ṣiddīqī has published the most thorough analysis. He contends that at least half of the material in *Sīrat un-nabī* fails to meet the criteria set by Shiblī himself and he points out that, ironically, on more than one occasion Shiblī used material originating from the very historian al-Wāqidī whom he condemns as a liar.

Nevertheless, most Urdu readers continue to regard Shiblī as a sound historian. Fazlur Rahman, speaking in 1954 as president of the Pakistan Historical Society, stated: 'No doubt the views of some of these writers [Orientalists named earlier] have been ably scrutinized and criticized by Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan, Sayyid Amir Ali, Mawlana Shibli and Maulawi Chiragh Ali, but some of their writings appear to be apologetic because they wrote in an atmosphere which was by no means favourable to an objective expression of the truth' (*Proceedings of the Pakistan Historical Society* (*Fourth session*), Karachi, 1954, p. 18).

He has been more than a scholarly writer. ʿAbdulmājid Daryābādī (1892-1977) describes in his autobiography the alienation from Islam he felt in the years 1909-18 (*Āp bītī*, Lucknow, 1989, pp. 239-44). The writings of Western Orientalists had convinced him that the Prophet was merely a callous conqueror. However, the publication of the first volume of Shiblī's *Sīrat un-nabī* broke their spell. As soon as he finished reading it the scales fell from his eyes and he began to see the Prophet as a great reformer, a kind-hearted and munificent ruler, who took to arms only as a last resort (p. 248).

PUBLICATIONS

Sulaimān Nadvī mentions two manuscripts in the preface to the fourth *tabaʿ* (edition). This preface, as well as prefaces to the second and first

printing (*tabaʿ*) are included in the 1974 Azamgarh edition (referred to as the eighth *tabaʿ* on the title page). An online view of this is available at: https://www.rekhta.org/ebooks/seerat-un-nabi-part-001-shibli-nomani-ebooks

The publishing history is complicated as the editor, Sulaimān Nadvī, appears to use *tabaʿ* both for 'edition' and 'reprint'. Where known, details are given for each of the volumes.

Shiblī Nuʿmānī, *Sīrat un-nabī*, 6 vols, Azamgarh, 1918-41; 000332 n1-6 (digitised version available through digitalcollections.crl.edu)

Shiblī Nuʿmānī, *Sīrat un-nabī*, 6 vols, Azamgarh, 1952-9 (vol. 1, sixth edition; vol. 2, fifth edition; vols 3-4, fourth edition; vols 5-6, third edition)

Shiblī Nuʿmānī, *Ākhirī payghambar*, trans. Muḥammad Isrāʾīl, Peshawar, 1958- , repr. 1969- (Pashto trans.; unclear how many vols were published)

Shiblī Nuʿmānī, *Sīrat un-nabī*, 6 vols, Azamgarh, 1962-8

Shiblī Nuʿmānī, *Sīrat un-nabī*, 6 vols, Azamgarh, 1969-71 (vols 1-2, seventh edition; vols 3-4, fourth edition; vols 5-6, sixth edition)

Shiblī Nuʿmānī, *Asr-ı saadet. İslâm tarihi*, Istanbul, 1973- (Turkish trans.; unclear how many vols were published)

Shiblī Nuʿmānī, *Sīrat un-nabī*, Azamgarh, 1974 (according to the information given on the title page, this is the eighth *tabaʿ* ['edition' or 'reprint'], which is probably a reprint of the fourth edition that was published in 1945. The first edition of vol. 1 was published in 1918)

Shiblī Nuʿmānī, *Sīrat un-nabī. The life of the Prophet*, trans. M. Tayyib Bakhsh Budayuni, 2 vols, Lahore, 1979-81, repr. New Delhi, 2001 (English trans.)

Shiblī Nuʿmānī, *Sīrat un-nabī*, vols 1, 3-5, Lahore, 1987

Shiblī Nuʿmānī, *Sīratunnabī. Da dwaṛo kūno da sardār Ḥaẓrat Muḥammad*, trans. Muḥammad Isrāʾīl, vols 2-3, Peshawar, 1979 (Pashto trans.; unclear how many vols were published)

Shiblī Nuʿmānī, *Siratun Nabi*, trans. Rafiq Abdur Rehman, 7 vols, Karachi, 2003 (English trans.)

STUDIES

Ẓafar Aḥmad Ṣiddīqī, *Maulānā Shiblī Nuʿmanī ba ḥaisīyat sīrat nigār* ['Maulānā Shiblī Nuʿmanī as a writer of *sīra*'], Lahore, 2005

Muhammad Qasim Zaman, 'A venture in critical Islamic historiography and the significance of its failure', *Numen* 41/1 (1994) 26-50

K. Razi Naqvi

Aḥmad Shāh

DATE OF BIRTH 1840
PLACE OF BIRTH Srinagar, Kashmir
DATE OF DEATH 1926
PLACE OF DEATH Jagraon, Punjab

BIOGRAPHY

Aḥmad Shāh Shā'iq was born in Srinagar into a family that lived in Sidor, Kashmir, where his father Raḥmat Shāh was the *pīr*. Aḥmad Shāh was trained by his father to continue in the role. However, when he was a boy he was given the New Testament in Persian by two British army officers and through reading it he became convinced of the Christian way of life. He was baptised, though this meant he had to run away from his home and family.

He settled in Jagraon near Ludhiana in the Punjab. In time, he married and he and his wife became devoted workers in the Indian Church. Aḥmad served as a pastor and evangelist of the Presbyterian Church in Jagraon and was an active missionary at the Ludhiana station, where he worked with Elwood Morris Wherry (1843-1927; *CMR* 16, 571-84) and his wife, and John Nelson Hyde (1865-1912), missionaries from the United States (*The president's report*, p. 11). He played a key role in evacuating Muḥammad Bakhsh, a convert to Christianity from Islam, when almost the whole town of Jagraon gathered to convert him forcibly back to Islam. Muḥammad Bakhsh, later known as Ṭālibuddīn, became a well-known Christian preacher, poet and writer in the Presbyterian Church in the Punjab (Ṭhākur Dās, *Eminent Christians*, pp. 89-100). After his first wife died in 1895, Aḥmad Shāh married the much younger Sophie Hira Singh, the daughter of a Sikh convert to Christianity, and they had eleven children.

Aḥmad Shāh was a member of the executive committee of the United Provinces Christian Council of India (Jacobs, *When Jesus lived in India*, p. 140), and served on the continuation committee of the Second Missionary Conference on behalf of the Mohammedan World, Lucknow, 1911, where he also presented a paper on 'A course of study for missionaries in the field' (Lucknow, 1911, pp. 83-99). After undertaking medical training, he was employed as a surgeon at Domel in Kashmir from 1887. He worked under Arthur (1859-1932) and Ernest Neve (1861-1946), who were serving as medical doctors in Srinagar with the Church Missionary Society.

In 1894, Aḥmad took charge of the Leh hospital in an area known as 'Little Tibet' (present-day Ladakh in eastern Kashmir), at the time referred to simply as 'Tibet' (Aḥmad Shāh, *Four years*, p. 16). He had to leave his wife at a friend's house, where the friend's wife and mother cared for her. He was still on the way to Leh when he learnt of the death of his son Maḥmūd (Aḥmad Shāh, *Four years*, p. 10) and a few months later he received in Leh a telegram from his wife that she was seriously ill. He was able to get to her before she died on 14 October 1895. After arranging for their six-year-old daughter to be admitted into a Christian boarding school in Lahore, he returned to Leh to continue his mission (Aḥmad Shāh, *Four years*, pp. 22-23).

Aḥmad Shāh wrote *The biblical characters and other sages of the Quran* (1905), the concordance and glossary *Miftáhul Qûrán* (1906), and translated the Qur'an into Urdu and Hindi. In addition, he translated William St Clair Tisdall's (1859-1928; *CMR* 20, 285-309) important compilation, *A manual of the leading Muḥammadan objections to Christianity*, into Urdu with the title *I'tirāzu'l-Muslimīn ma'a javābāt* (Wherry, 'Literature', p. 152), and also the *Bījak* of the 15th-century north Indian poet Kabir into Hindi (1911) and English as *The Bijak of Kabir* (Harimpur, 1917). In the preface of this he sums up Kabir's religious attitude as follows: 'While it cannot be denied that thoughts resembling his are to be found in the writings of Hindu philosophers, and especially in the Moslem Sufis of all ages, yet the presentation of them is peculiarly his own', p. 34. In addition, in *Four years in Tibet* (1906) and *Pictures of Tibetan life. A collection of sketches* (1906), he chronicled his experiences in Leh.

A highly provocative book known as *Ummahāt ul-mu'minīn* ('Mothers of the believers', Gujranwala, 1897) has been incorrectly attributed to Aḥmad Shāh (Weitbrecht, *Descriptive catalogue*, p. 71; Study-Islam.org; Urdu Wikipedia), though Wherry attributed it to a different author whom he left anonymous (perhaps in view of the controversy surrounding the book; 'Literature', pp. 149-50), and J.W. Sweetman gave the name of the author as 'one Akbar Masih, a Unitarian' ('Echo', p. 3). This misattribution is especially unfortunate in that Aḥmad Shāh himself wrote in 1912, 'The character of Mohammad should not be attacked. If you start by attacking Mohammed, you will find Moslems very sensitive, and thus you will lose your chance of getting them to listen to the love of Christ and His redeeming power' ('Nearest way', p. 12).

Aḥmad Shāh stayed at Leh for four years (1894-8), after which he travelled to England and studied at Oxford University. He subsequently returned to India and died at his home in Jagraon in 1926.

MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION

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Aḥmad Shāh, *Four years in Tibet*, Benares [Varanasi], 1906

[E.M. Wherry], *The president's report on the work of the Punjab Mission of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America*, Ludhiana, 1907

Aḥmad Shāh, 'Course of studies for missionaries in the field', in E.M. Wherry, C.G. Mylrea and S. Zwemer (eds), *Islam and missions. Being papers read at the Second Missionary Conference on behalf of the Mohammedan world at Lucknow, January 23-28, 1911*, Madras, 1911, 83-99

E.M. Wherry, 'Literature for Muslim readers, in the Urdu language', in Wherry, Mylrea and Zwemer (eds), *Islam and missions. Being papers read at the Second Missionary Conference on behalf of the Mohammedan world at Lucknow, January 23-28, 1911*, 132-63

'The nearest way to the Moslem heart. A symposium', *The Moslem World* 2 (1912) 9-20 (Aḥmad Shāh's contribution, pp. 10-12)

H.A. Walter, 'Islam in Kashmir', *The Moslem World* 4 (1914) 340-52 (mention of Aḥmad Shāh and his wife's conversion, pp. 350-1)

A.V. Ṭhākur Dās, *Eminent Christians*, Lahore, 1930

J.W. Sweetman, 'The echo of a controversy', *Missionaries to Muslims League, News and Notes* Series 24 (1936) 2-6

A. Jacobs, *When Jesus lived in India*, London, 2009

Damini Shah, 'Beau Pere. His story through pictures', 2018 2-6 (online article including information about Aḥmad Shāh, the author's great-grandfather-in-law); https://daminishah.blogspot.com/2018/

Aḥmad Shāh Shā'iq (attributed), *Ummahāt ul-mu'minīn*; https://www.study-islam.org/urdu/urdu-books/mothers-faithful

WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Works on Islam

DATE 1898-1915

ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English and other languages

DESCRIPTION

Aḥmad Shāh's many articles and columns in Christian periodicals and collections include a 'Course of studies for missionaries in the field' (1911), and pieces on Muslim observances (1915-16) and the Muslim calendar (1920-1). His books cover a range of scholarship, from qur'anic studies to the culture of Tibet.

The biblical characters and other sages of the Quran, which is 158 pages long, was published in 1905 as the first in a projected series of six 'Studies in the Quran' intended as introductions to the Qur'an for general readers. It has been aptly called a portrait gallery of the Qur'an because in it Aḥmad Shāh arranges the characters from the Bible mentioned in the Qur'an in chronological order, as far as possible, and examines the similarities and differences between the accounts of them in the two sacred texts. In his notes, he refers to apocryphal and other sources of the Qur'an accounts and, using Sale's translation, also organises passages of the Qur'an under thematic headings.

Aḥmad Shāh planned to publish five further volumes in the series. The second volume was to deal with statements in the Qur'an regarding the personality of Muḥammad and his contemporaries. It is not clear whether this and the other volumes ever appeared, though a publication of his entitled *'Inirat ul-Quran'. All that the Quran says about Muhammad*, which is mentioned at the end of a review of his Urdu translation of the Qur'an (R. Siraj-ud-din, Review, *Missionaries to Muslims League, News and Notes* 4/8 [December 1915] 6-7), may have been a further volume.

Miftáhul Qûrán ('Key to the Qur'an'), published in Benares in 1906, was the fruit of a full year of labour by Aḥmad Shāh. It comprises a concordance and a glossary. The concordance, which runs to 266 pages, offers every possible facility for reference and serves as a guide to the correct pronunciation of Arabic words. The words are arranged in alphabetical order along with their verbal root, and references are given by the names and numbers of each verse and passage (*rukūʿ*) of the Qur'an, a feature that brings it into uniformity with other Arabic versions. The references to the verses are based on the numbering of Gustav Flügel, the system commonly followed at the time.

The glossary, which is 109 pages long, provides the English and Urdu meanings of each word, with all forms from the same root that occur in the Qur'an grouped together. Before he started the work, Aḥmad Shāh consulted many experts, who expressed strong support for the undertaking and especially for the plan he had adopted.

Aḥmad Shāh made two translations of the Qur'an, into Urdu and into Hindi, both published in 1915. A translation into Urdu had been published by ʿImāduddīn Lāhiz (1822-1900; *CMR* 24, 506-41) in 1894, but this was the first attempt into Hindi (Dewhurst, 'Two translations', p. 292). The Urdu translation runs to 508 pages and the Hindi translation to 432 pages. Aḥmad states the following aims for his Urdu translation: to keep as close as possible to the original Arabic and still to make the translation

idiomatic without the addition of extra words; to leave Arabic words as they are when familiar to Urdu speakers; and to translate as a Muslim translator would do, without any prejudice against Islam or its scriptures. He also attempted to note the traditional Muslim 'occasions of revelation' (*asbāb al-nuzūl*) of various verses and passages in footnotes, a feature that eventually took up about a quarter of the volume.

Aḥmad Shāh claims that both of these translations were made with great care and fairness, accompanied by abundant footnotes explaining complications and allusions in the text and characterised by a spirit of impartiality (AWAZ, 'Ghair Muslim ulama'). Nevertheless, his Urdu translation has been the target of criticism by Muslim religious groups in India and Pakistan (Hussain, 'Padri Ahmad Shah', pp. 77-96).

SIGNIFICANCE

Aḥmad Shāh's translations of the Qur'an won praise in the pages of the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* in 1922:

> The labour involved in preparing these two translations must have been very great indeed, more especially as the Urdu version at least has been made direct from the Arabic, and is not merely a translation of a translation; and Mr. Ahmad Shah may be congratulated on the completion of a careful and scholarly project of no little interest. (Dewhurst, 'Two translations', p. 293)

In a similar tone, Samuel Zwemer (1867-1952; *CMR* 16, 433-54) compared *Miftáhul Qûrán* favourably with two standard European works, those of Gustav Flügel and John Penrice. Until Shāh's *Miftáh*, the only concordance accessible to Western scholars was that of Gustav Leberecht Flügel (1802-70). Zwemer found the work an improvement on Flügel for three reasons: 'It is more exhaustive, the references are to derived words as well as to root words, and this book can be used for all editions of the Koran and not only for the edition of Fluegel himself' (Zwemer, 'Translations', p. 256). Zwemer also found Shāh's glossary superior to John Penrice's *Dictionary of the Koran* (1873): 'We welcome this book as an invaluable companion to the intelligent study of the Koran in the original. Every college where Arabic is taught should have a copy in its library' (Zwemer, Review, p. 459).

Publications of this type are rare in this or any other period and place. All in various ways aids to the study of the Qur'an, they were produced with painstaking care by a scholar who had belonged to a senior Muslim religious family and, after converting to Christianity, had become an ordained clergyman. Converts generally look back on their former faith with anything but respect, but here was a conscientious Christian taking

as much trouble as any Muslim scholar to introduce the Qur'an to new audiences through his 'Studies in the Quran' series and to help the study of it by producing vernacular translations and basic research tools. His motivation can only be imagined, but his dedication to improving the accessibility of the fundamental source of his former faith cannot be doubted.

PUBLICATIONS

Aḥmad Shāh, *The biblical characters and other sages of the Quran*, Cawnpore [Kanpur], 1905

Aḥmad Shāh, *Miftáhul Qûrán*, part 1. *Concordance of the Quran*, part 2. *A complete glossary of the Quran*, 2 vols, Benares [Varanasi], 1906, repr. Lahore, 1970; PJ6696 Z8 A27 1906 (digitised version of part 1 available through McGill University Library)

Aḥmad Shāh, *Al Koran* (*The Quran translated into Urdu*), Cawnpore, 1915

Aḥmad Shāh, *Ala Kurana* (*The Quran translated into Hindi*), Cawnpore, 1915

Aḥmad Shāh, *Ala Qurāna* (*The Quran translated into Hindi*), Rajapur, Varanasi, 1935[2]

STUDIES

AWAZ, 'Ghair Muslim ulama aur mufakareen ke tarjuma Quran'

Muḥammad Iftikhār Ḥusain, 'Pādrī Aḥmad Shāh kā Urdu tarjuma: Qur'ān kā tanqīdī jā'izah', *Abhas* 2/8 (2017) 77-96

Akshaya Kumar, *Poetry, politics and culture. Essays on Indian texts and contexts*, New Delhi, 2009

Salīm Akhtar, *Urdu adab kī mukhtaṣar tarīn tārīkh āghāz se 2000 tak*, Lahore, 2004

S.M. Zwemer, Review of *Biblical characters in the Koran* by John Walker, *The Moslem World* 22 (1932) 89-90 (includes a short description of Aḥmad Shāh's *The biblical characters, and other sages of the Quran*)

R.P. Dewhurst, 'Two translations of the Quran – (1) The Quran translated into Urdu. By the Rev. Ahmad Shah. (2) The Quran translated into Hindi. By the Rev. Ahmad Shah', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain & Ireland* 54/2 (1922) 292-3

E.M. Wherry, 'Classified list of books in the Urdu language suited to Moslem readers', *The Moslem World* 10 (1920) 157-63

R. Siraj-ud-Din, 'Review of Aḥmad Shāh's translation of the Quran into Urdu', *Missionaries to Muslims League, News and Notes* 4/8 (December 1915) 6-7 (this review also appeared in *The Moslem World* 6 (1916) 216)

S.M. Zwemer, 'Translations of the Koran', *The Moslem World* 5 (1915) 244-61 (description of Aḥmad Shāh's Hindi translation of the Qur'an, p. 256)
S.M. Zwemer, 'Review of *Miftah-ul-Quran*', *The Moslem World* 1 (1911) 458-9

Naseer John

Herbert Udny Weitbrecht

Herbert Udny Weitbrecht Stanton

DATE OF BIRTH 24 January 1851
PLACE OF BIRTH London
DATE OF DEATH 30 May 1937
PLACE OF DEATH Highbury

BIOGRAPHY

Herbert Udny Weitbrecht (he added his wife's surname Stanton during the First World War) was a Christian missionary and scholar of Islam who worked in India over a period of 35 years, contributing especially to the translation of the New Testament into Urdu ('Hindustani') and the production of literature for mission work in India. Born in 1851 to German parents who had also been missionaries in India, he received his early education in London before undertaking Religious Studies at the University of Bonn. He continued his studies in Berlin and Tübingen, graduating in 1873 with a PhD. After returning to England, he was ordained into a curacy in 1874 and served in Everton and Chester. In 1876, he married Ellen Louise Stanton, and the couple left for India under the auspices of the Church Missionary Society (CMS).

From 1878 to 1884, Weitbrecht was vice-principal at St John's Divinity School in Lahore, training Indian pastors. He and Ellen moved to Batala, Punjab, from where he worked for 12 years in the surrounding villages among Hindus and Muslims. He later wrote of 'much candid and friendly intercourse' among Muslims 'during thirty-five years residence in the Central Panjab, where Moslems are in a majority' (*Teaching of the Qur'ān*, pp. 5-6).

For a period of 10 years, 1894-1904, Weitbrecht was the chief reviser of the New Testament in Urdu, working with a committee of Indians and foreign missionaries. He later wrote a monograph describing the methods employed by the committee and explaining the conclusions they had reached. In recognition of this work, he was awarded a Lambeth DD in 1906. At the same time, the CMS appointed him as a literary missionary to supervise the production of literature for mission work in India from Simla and Lahore in 1896-1900. Weitbrecht wrote a series of 'Reviews of

Urdu Christian literature' in 1887, 1902 and 1908, as well as *A descriptive catalogue of Urdu Christian literature* (1886, 1902).

Weitbrecht's other involvements included work as honorary secretary of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge from 1878, and as acting secretary for the CMS 1906-11 (from Amritsar, Kashmir, Batala and Simla). He participated in the First Missionary Conference on behalf of the Mohammedan World in Cairo in 1906, serving as vice-chair of the Executive Committee under Samuel Zwemer, where he contributed an address on 'The new Islam in India'; and in the second conference in Lucknow in 1911, where he presented 'A guide to literature for workers among Muslims'. He also took an active part in discussions about the teaching of the Aḥmadiyya in both India and England (Zwemer, 'Herbert Udny Weitbrecht Stanton', p. 328).

In 1911, Weitbrecht returned to England to become the first secretary of the Board of Study for the Preparation of Missionaries (1911-14). In this capacity, he compiled a useful *Bibliography for missionary students* (1913), and in addition wrote *Raymond Lull and six centuries of Islam* (1915), *The teaching of the Qur'ān* (1919) and *Selections from the Qur'ān* (1922).

Herbert Udny Weitbrecht Stanton died in London on 30 May 1937 at the age of 86, having spent 35 years serving in the Punjab. Ellen died in Bury St Edmunds in 1944.

MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION

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CMS, '827 Weitbrecht, Herbert Udny – age 25', *Register of missionaries and native clergy 1804-1904*, London, 1905, p. 174

H.U. Weitbrecht, 'The new Islam in India', in S.M. Zwemer and E.M. Wherry (eds), *The Mohammedan world of today*, New York, 1906, 185-204

H.U. Weitbrecht Stanton, *The teaching of the Qur'ān, with an account of its growth and a subject index*, London, 1919

W.W. Cash, obit. 'Weitbrecht Stanton', *Missionaries to Muslims League, News and Notes* 25 (1937) 84-5

S. Zwemer, obit. 'Herbert Udny Weitbrecht Stanton', *The Moslem World* 27 (1937) 325-8

WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Short works

DATE 1899-1915
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION
Related to Weitbrecht's best-known publications are five short works that were published between 1899 and 1915, before he produced his substantial *The teaching of the Qur'ān*. Ideas that appear in the later work are hinted at here and there within them, showing that Weitbrecht had been ruminating over them for some time before he brought them together.

'A three-fold view of Islam' (1899)

In this 12-page article, Weitbrecht reviews works by seven prominent Muslim, Christian and Jewish authors, including such classics as T.W. Arnold's *The preaching of Islam* (*CMR* 24, 654-9), Edward Sell's *The historical development of the Qur'an* (*CMR* 24, 789-94), Abraham Geiger's *Judaism and Islam*, and *The travels of Ibn Batuta* (vol. 2) translated into Urdu by Khān Ṣāḥib Maulvī Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān. At times, Weitbrecht moves beyond review to commentary, referring, for example, to the Muslim identification of the Paraclete (John 14:16, 26) with Muḥammad as an 'abject perversion of the promise of the Paraclete' (p. 897). Furthermore, he is critical of Arnold's discussion of the preaching of Islam as favouring a positive appraisal of peaceful methods and giving insufficient attention to examples of force and punishments for apostasy (pp. 898-901). Nevertheless, Weitbrecht adopts a more irenic tone in observing that 'from the zeal and adroitness of [Muḥammad's] missionary followers we have some things to learn. For one, the practical recognition of the brotherhood of all men, and the elimination of distinctions of race and class in the matter of religion. For another, the consecration of trade to the service of God' (p. 903).

Islam and the Gospel (1905)

In this 16-page booklet, Weitbrecht takes the Christian world to task for employing polemics and force to resist Islam rather than drawing on Christ-like methods to challenge its message. He argues that 'this wrong

answer' (p. 1) has produced a sense of pessimism among many Christians regarding mission to Muslims and he calls on the Church of England to take action, asserting that it

> has a unique responsibility towards the Moslems of the world and of the empire, and their mutual influence must bring about large issues for good or ill. This is inevitable because of the ever-closer contact, not merely political and commercial, but in matters of thought and social life between the Moslem and the Christian peoples. (p. 3)

Such actions by the church, he believes, will make up for its grave errors in the past, which effectively lost the opportunity to win the world of Islam for Christianity: 'The Defects of Islam are the Faults of the Church [...] it was through the corruptness of the Christian Church of Mohammed"s day that Islam lost the message of salvation' (pp. 10-12).

There is clearly an irenic touch in Weitbrecht's statements of appreciation of aspects of Islam:

> Do not let us forget what we may learn from Islam, for Mohammed undoubtedly started as a reformer of corrupt conditions, both religious and moral, and had the love and teaching of Christ been truly presented to him by the Church of that day, we may well believe that he would have been a reformer, instead of a destroyer, of the Christian faith. As it is, his followers teach us the duty of open and unashamed acknowledgement of God and His authority in every department of life. (p. 14)

'A Muhammadan villager's faith' (1905)

In this short article of 10 pages, Weitbrecht centres on Islam in the Indian context, unlike the more general discussions in his earlier publications. Drawing heavily on the *Pakkī rotī*, a Muslim source written in Punjabi, which he describes as a 'religious primer', he addresses Muslim sectarian differences, identifying shrine-attending Sufis, then the 'very many' of the sixty million Muslims in India who are 'extremely ignorant of their own religion', going to Hindu shrines and treating Hindus no differently from their own people. There is also the 'considerable minority' who are zealous for their faith and are taught by the village *maulvī*s, men of good Islamic education, and there are the Wahhābīs, whom he describes as a 'Muhammadan "protestant" sect, zealous against saint worship and other accretions on primitive Islam' (p. 130).

Weitbrecht sees Islam as a kaleidoscope of groups: 'There is a brotherhood of believers, and they have their schools and masters, but no

organisation of laity and clergy' (p. 137). As in his earlier writings, he is open in his critique of Christianity and its disunity, commenting '[i]t is in the loss of power and friction as among ourselves that the "unhappy divisions" of Christendom show their weakening effect in the face of Islam' (p. 137).

Weitbrecht's use of the *Pakkī rotī* enables him to cover a broad range of doctrines, identifying contrasts with Christian doctrine but doing so in a way that is neither disrespectful nor polemical. He suggests that the practice of Islam among the Muslim masses shows a preoccupation with legalistic minutiae, adding '[n]o wonder that the devout Muslim of higher culture often seeks relief in the impalpable pantheistic gropings of Sufism'. His account carries several indications of positive interactions between himself and Muslim preachers: '…I left the village, after a friendly religious discussion with the preacher and an invitation to come again' (p. 130). His conclusion is clear but irenic: 'The faults of Islam lie generally not in that which it affirms, but in what it denies or ignores' (p. 139).

'The new Islam in India' (1906)

In this book chapter, the published version of a paper delivered at the First Missionary Conference on behalf of the Mohammedan World, Cairo, 1906, Weitbrecht considers the meeting between traditional Islam and Western modernist thinking. He writes: 'The mind of Islam at last had to meet with the thought and culture of the outside world on a basis of equality of civil rights, for the Moslem subject of a Christian state is neither oppressed nor favoured; he is simply protected and bound by the same law as others' (p. 188). He sees hope for the world of Islam in reformist thinking, regarding favourably the influence of Sayyid Aḥmad Khān (*CMR* 24, 424-47), whom he warmly praises for having adopted English manners and customs and preaching 'that God would help those who helped themselves, and told his co-Moslems that they would deserve to remain impoverished and slighted unless they set themselves to remedy their own condition by means of education' (p. 191).

Weitbrecht is impressed by Aḥmad Khān's identification of the 'chief barriers to progress in the Moslem world' as being 'the seclusion of women which results in keeping half the community in ignorance and degradation', 'the spirit of self-aggrandizement', 'fatalism', and 'formalism, with reference to the multitude of unproductive and ignorant persons who encumber the community with pretensions of superior holiness while they are nothing but a burden on its resources' (p. 195). His paper concludes

with a conversation between two scholars, a Christian and a Muslim, ending with words spoken by the latter: 'Leave us our God; in all else make us English.' He refers to this as a 'profoundly pathetic saying, which indicates our attitude and duty towards this reform movement' (p. 202).

In addition to this volume of papers that were published for a general readership, a second volume marked 'For private circulation only' also appeared in the same year. This includes a number of papers that were not included in the other volume and also a record of some of the discussions at the conference. Among these are comments by Weitbrecht that give further insight into his thoughts on Islam and Christian-Muslim relations. He voices clear opposition to the polemical methods that were favoured by some Christians against Muslims, such as those employed by the missionary Karl Pfander in his works (*CMR* 24, 188-236), with a possible oblique allusion to Zwemer as well, stating 'I believe that, not only in India, but also in Arabia, we want to be careful about our literature in more ways than one. It needs revising. Some works outgrow their usefulness. Pfander for instance' (*Methods of mission work*, p. 97).

Raymond Lull and six centuries of Islam (1915)

This pamphlet of 16 pages, 4,000 words long, consists of three main parts. The first comprises introductory reflections by Weitbrecht on the expansion of Islam, the Crusades, the fundamentals of Islamic doctrine and the role of Muḥammad as final prophet. In the second and longest part he tells the story of Ramon Llull's life (c. 1232-1315/16; *CMR* 4, 703-17) and examines his legacy, emphasising the extent to which Llull's approach represented a radical reappraisal of Christian approaches to Islam in his time. The third part comprises concluding comments, in which Weitbrecht reflects on the consequences of Christian colonial domination of vast Muslim populations in the early 20th century.

Weitbrecht clearly admired Llull greatly, appreciating his radical approach of love rather than war in winning Muslims for Christianity. He openly asserts: 'The one man of the Middle Ages who gave his life to the work of preaching Christ to the Moslem in the spirit of love and with the help of adequate knowledge was "the enlightened teacher," Raymond Lull' (p. 7). Weitbrecht concludes this short work with a theme that occurs regularly in his writing, that Christianity has largely itself to blame for its problems with the other faith: 'Islam owes its destructive force to the fault of the Christian church which, in its early days, had distorted the image of

the Christ. Had Mohammed met with the pure faith of the New Testament and an undivided Church, it may well be that he would have become a propagator instead of an opponent of the Gospel' (p. 16).

SIGNIFICANCE

The irenic tone towards Islam that can be detected in these shorter works is summed up in one of Weitbrecht's contributions at the private discussions held at the First Missionary Conference on behalf of the Mohammedan World, Caro, 1906. There he is recorded as stating:

> When we wish to bring our holy faith before the Mohammedans we should remember that they rest upon the same fundaments that we do. We must give them the Christian faith in a way to draw out the devotional instincts. Especially effective has been a series of meditations and prayers prepared respectively for non-Christians, inquirers and converts. (p. 97)

This seems completely non-confrontational (it could be instructive to examine the meditations and prayers he refers to), though another comment at the Cairo Conference indicates that challenge and disagreement could be an integral part of Weitbrecht's approach:

> If there is a real difficulty, say so, and do not try to get round it by diplomacy. Controversy does not do away with sympathy. A book discussion is the best method. It was on one occasion carried on in Amritsar as follows: Taking the Bible and Koran, find out what both say on certain subjects. For instance, Being and attributes of God. Sin and Redemption. Each side taking a quarter of an hour for discussing the subject. (p. 201)

Through both his shorter public statements and his private comments, Weitbrecht showed that he was very much in tune with the emerging consensus of the large mission conferences of the early 20th century that favoured bold but compassionate mission. His voice echoed (and may have contributed to) the emerging movement towards ecumenism, both within Christianity and across the faiths, and to this extent he could be considered an early ecumenist. This being said, he had no doubt about the truth and finality of Christianity and he was not blind to the shortcomings and flaws of Islam, though he attributed these to the form of Christianity known to Muḥammad. His statement that 'it was through the corruptness of the Christian Church of Mohammed's day that Islam lost the message of salvation' (*Islam and the Gospel*, pp. 10-12) hints that Islam is an errant offshoot from Christianity, with the implication that it could potentially be restored to the Church as long as both Christians and Muslims were intent on reform.

PUBLICATIONS

H.U. Weitbrecht, 'A three-fold view of Islam', *Church Missionary Intelligencer* 50 (1899) 895-907; 100188881 (digitised version available through Hathi Trust)

H.U. Weitbrecht, *Islam and the Gospel*, London, 1905; islamgospel00weit (digitised version available through archive.org)

H.U. Weitbrecht, 'A Muhammadan villager's faith', *The East and the West* 3 (1905) 130-40; https://archive.org/details/eastandwest00un kngoog/page/n140/mode/2up (digitised version available through archive.org)

H.U. Weitbrecht, 'The new Islam in India', in S.M. Zwemer, E.M. Wherry and J.L. Barton (eds), *The Mohammedan world of to-day, being papers read at the First Missionary Conference on behalf of the Mohammedan World held at Cairo, April 4th-9th, 1906*, New York, 1906, repr. London, 2018, 185-204; mohammedanworld00missuof (digitised version available through archive.org)

H.U. Weitbrecht and E.M. Wherry, 'Remarks on the subject of Dr Tisdall's paper', in E.M. Wherry (ed.), *Methods of mission work among Moslems*, New York, 1906, 96-100, pp. 66-8

H.U. Weibrecht, *Raymond Lull and six centuries of Islam*, London, 1915, repr. 2018; 007683169 (digitised version available through Hathi Trust)

The teaching of the Qur'ān

DATE 1919
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

The Teaching of the Qur'ān, with an account of its growth and a subject index is a guide to the contents of Muslim scripture written by Stanton (he was using his wife's surname by this time) towards the end of his long career, after he had returned to England in 1911 from 35 years of missionary work in India. The book runs to 136 pages and features a substantial section of summaries of qur'anic teaching on many subjects, along with a detailed index of verses on various subjects. The main strength of the book is its organisation of materials for handy reference.

The book opens with an introduction to the origin and development of the Qur'an according to Muslim tradition (pp. 9-29). This leads into the central presentation, the 'teaching of the Qur'an' divided into six topical areas (pp. 31-73). An extensive subject index follows (pp. 75-110). The final section contains what one reviewer called 'a remarkably useful set of appendices' (Swan, Review, p. 207) including a table comparing the verse numberings in Gustav Flügel's edition with those of Indian Qur'ans (pp. 111-36).

The section on the teaching of the Qur'an focuses largely on the doctrines of God, revelation, judgement and salvation, but it also includes consideration of legal content and the Qur'an's attitude to other faiths. In this section, Stanton often presents topical information in concise yet thorough entries, almost in the style of a word study. One example is his discussion of the qur'anic name 'Īsā (p. 47): he queries the change from the Hebrew Yeshūʿ, which he credits to Muḥammad, and notes the reversal of root consonants into the qur'anic form. He points out the consequence of this: 'Incidentally the meaning of the name has been obliterated, and Moslem divines give meaningless explanations of the quranic form' (p. 47).

While he keeps strictly to the text of the Qur'an in some cases, in others he brings in the views of various Muslim groups past and present, as well as general Muslim practice. He accounts for a number of qur'anic beliefs and expressions, as well as the shape of the Qur'an, by a kind of psychological analysis of Muḥammad (e.g. pp. 36, 40, 44). He also follows the Mecca-Medina scheme of the chronology of suras established by Muslim tradition.

While he does not generally comment on the information he presents, at times he may suddenly do so, as in the following example in response to what he calls the distortion in the Qur'an of the stories of prophets known from the Old Testament:

> It remains one of the outstanding anomalies of history that the religious genius of Arabia [Muḥammad], who staked the truth of his message on the witness of previous Scriptures, should have utterly neglected to verify their contents and should have successfully inspired his followers through the ages to a like neglect. (p. 42)

His responses, however, can also go in other directions, as when, after a description of 'virtues' commended in the Qur'an, he writes that '[t]he main outline of these duties is in substantial agreement with the teaching of Christ in Mt. 6' (p. 58).

SIGNIFICANCE

Stanton indicates in the preface that he has written the book after failing to find any comparable guide to qur'anic theology, or a subject index, in English (p. 5). He cites German scholarship by Karl Friedrich von Gerok, Otto Pautz and Hubert Grimme, but the best English studies he can find on qur'anic theology are published in India by W.R.W. Gardner (active in the early 20th century) and Thomas Hughes (1838-1911). In consequence, the bibliography he provides at the close of the book is strikingly short (pp. 135-6). In this sense *The teaching of the Qur'ān* is a contribution to contemporary academic scholarship on the Qur'an, as was acknowledged by one reviewer soon after publication (Sprengling, 'Study', p. 45).

Stanton explicitly states that he does not intend the book to be a 'manual of controversy' (p. 5) and, apparently in accordance with Muslim practice, he refers in his introduction to the Qur'an as 'revelations' and 'oracles' (e.g. pp. 9-12, 17-21). While he does add that he hopes the book will be of help to 'those who are called to the great work of interpreting the Gospel to Moslems' (p. 5), there is no sign of any comment about the status of the Qur'an for Christians.

Reviews at the time of publication considered the subject index to be the most valuable part of the book (Sprengling, 'Study', p. 459; H.R.S., Review, p. 58), though George Swan regarded it as tantalisingly incomplete (Review, p. 207). Sprengling pointedly criticised Stanton's use of traditional Muslim teaching. The first page of the preface declares the intention as being to present the teaching of the Qur'an 'apart from the Traditions' (p. 3), but then Stanton immediately presents an account of the origins of the Qur'an based entirely on Hadith and early Muslim narrative (pp. 9-29). Sprengling wrote that

> in following a wholly traditional and antiquated historical scheme of Mohammed's life and of the connection of specific portions of the Qur'ân with events, themselves often problematical and legendary, he is substituting tradition, perhaps in the guise of traditional interpretation, for the Qur'ân itself. (p. 459)

Aloys Sprenger's expressions of scepticism about the early Muslim narratives (*Das Leben und die Lehre des Moḥammad*, vol. 3, Berlin, 1865; *CMR* 24, pp. 479-83) were available to Stanton, as well as Ignác Goldziher's trenchant questioning of Muslim tradition (*Muhammedanische Studien*, Halle, 1889-90). Yet in his introduction, Stanton simply states that 'there is reasonable ground for believing in the substantial truth of the facts alleged in the biographies of Muḥammad' (p. 10).

On the other hand, a short review in *Missionaries to Muslims League, News and Notes* recommended the use of the book by a Muslim reader because of 'the certainty that he will find nothing in it that can with any show of reason be taken exception to' (H.R.S., Review, p. 58). This may well have been what Stanton intended, so that Muslims would find the work unexceptionable and Christians would be aware of the Muslim version when they formed their opinions.

PUBLICATIONS

H.U. Weitbrecht Stanton, *The teaching of the Qur'ān, with an account of its growth and a subject index*, London, 1919, repr. New York, 1969, London, 1987, New Delhi, 1990, 2011, London, 2019; theteachingof the00stanuoft (digitised version available through archive.org)

STUDIES

M. Sprengling, 'A study of the Qur'ān. *The teaching of the Qur'ān*', *American Journal of Theology* 24 (1920) 458-62

G. Swan, 'Review of *The teaching of the Qur'ān*', *The Moslem World* 10 (1920) 207-8

H.R.S., 'Review of *The teaching of the Qur'ān*', *Missionaries to Muslims League, News and Notes* 8 (1919) 57-8

Gordon Nickel, Peter G. Riddell and Rachel Riddell

John Takle

DATE OF BIRTH 25 April 1870
PLACE OF BIRTH Bristol, England
DATE OF DEATH 14 October 1939
PLACE OF DEATH Wellington, New Zealand

BIOGRAPHY

John Takle was born in Bristol in 1870. When he was 14, his family emigrated to New Zealand and settled in Wellington. Although his parents belonged to the Exclusive Brethren, he joined the Baptist Church, where he became a prominent young preacher. In his early twenties, he was accepted by the New Zealand Baptist Missionary Society (NZBMS) for missionary service. In November 1896, after two years' training in Dunedin, he went to East Bengal, India, which was part of the British Empire. He served as a missionary in India until his retirement in 1922, for most of this time at the Mission Station at Brahmanbaria (approximately 70 miles east of Dhaka in modern Bangladesh, near the Indian border state of Tripura.) There, he periodically chaired the municipality commission, an indication of his standing and leadership qualities. There is no evidence that he wrote in any language other than English; translations of his works into other languages were made by others (Jones, 'Rev. John Takle', p. 187). However, the nature of his duties suggests he had at least some proficiency in the predominant local languages, and there are references in his obituaries to interactions with Indian Muslim leaders.

Takle was a keen reader, observer and writer. He was especially interested in writing on Islam and the approaches Christians might undertake with respect to Muslims, particularly in India. His theology may be characterised as exclusivist in the Protestant evangelical mode. In 1905, he wrote *The Koran and the Bible; or, The crescent versus the sun*, and in 1913 *The faith and the crescent*. In 1914, he wrote *The straight path – sirat al-mustaqim* (of which a Bengali language version was published in 1936), and in 1921 *The inward way – at-tariqat*. He returned to New Zealand during periods of furlough, giving public and private lectures on India and Indian religions throughout the country.

In 1911, Takle attended the Second Missionary Conference on behalf of the Mohammedan World, held in Lucknow, where he gave a speech

entitled 'Moslem advance in India' and proposed the formation of a league of Christians devoted to proselytising work among Muslims. The Missionaries to Muslims League was founded in 1912 and Takle became editor of its monthly publication, *Missionaries to Muslims League, News and Notes*, until 1920, when ill health obliged him to retire from this position. He also contributed articles on Islam to the periodical *The Young Men of India.* Still in poor health, Takle left India in December 1922 for an early furlough in New Zealand. He resigned from the NZBMS in 1924, settling in Vogeltown, a suburb of Wellington.

In semi-retirement, he continued his preaching and his tours around New Zealand, giving lectures on Indian religions and assuming temporary charge of small churches as and when needed. After a week in hospital, he died aged 69 in 1939, leaving a widow and four daughters. He was buried in the Karori cemetery, Wellington. His death was reported in many newspapers across the country, followed by several respectful obituaries.

MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Anon., 'The Rev. John Takle', *Evening Post*, 14 October 1939, 15
L.B. Jones, 'The Rev. John Takle', *The New Zealand Baptist*, June 1940, 187
S.M. Zwemer, 'John Takle', *The Moslem World* 30/3 (1940) 298
G.A. Murray, art. 'John Takle', in G.H. Anderson (ed.), *Biographical dictionary of Christian missions*, New York, 1999, 656

Douglas Pratt and Abdullah Martin Drury

WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

The Koran and the Bible

DATE 1905
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION
This short work of 36 pages, in landscape format (its full title is *The Koran and the Bible; or, the crescent vs. the sun. Notes and outlines for talks on comparative religion*), was published in Madras in 1905. As is stated on the cover page, it attempts to sketch a case for two theses: on the one hand, 'That the Koran confirms the Bible to such an extent that' Muslims should

take heed and 'should give due consideration to the Christian religion', and on the other, 'That the Koran contradicts the Bible to such an extent' that it cannot be 'revelation from the God of the Bible'. It is divided into nine sections, the first eight in three-column format. From the left side, the first column lists passages from the Qur'an ('Testimony of the Koran'), the second shows similar passages from the Bible ('Bible account') and the third contains notes and comments. In this column, Takle inserts remarks of his own and also quotations from other sources, Muslim and Christian, as well as from the Bible and the Qur'an. The work is presented in note-form – reinforcing the sense that it probably derives from his speeches and lectures, written up as a prompt to those who attended, perhaps for other missionaries to make use of – suggesting the likelihood that the intended readership would be solely Christians, most likely evangelicals in New Zealand or Great Britain and elsewhere within the British Empire.

Section 1 (pp. 1-6), 'The Christian scriptures', lists passages from the Qur'an that are regarded as referring to the Bible, together with corresponding biblical texts. In column three, Takle responds to the Muslim claim that the Bible in its present condition has been corrupted or abrogated, attempting to demolish the Muslim position by citing internal contradictions in the Qur'an, Hadith and Muslim commentaries. Section 2 (pp. 7-9), entitled 'God', lists passages from the Qur'an and the Bible on God's unity, eternity, omnipresence, omniscience, omnipotence, immutability, mercy, justice, holiness and love. Again, the third column contains quotations from various sources that highlight commonalities yet point to the superiority of the Christian understanding of God. Section 3 (pp. 10-12), on Jesus Christ, follows the same structure, listing passages on Jesus under his birth (annunciation and conception), titles ('Christ', 'The Word of God', 'The Spirit of God', 'Illustrious'), mission, miracles, disciples, 'The Lord's table', his death and second coming. Section 4 (p. 13), which is only one page long, is on the character of the prophets Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses and David, while Section 5 (pp. 14-15) focuses on Muḥammad, highlighting the qur'anic statements that he was a mere man and preacher only (not a worker of miracles), a mere warner, only an apostle, an illiterate prophet and a sinner.

Section 6 (pp. 16-22) covers a range of teachings, including the Fall, sin, salvation, prayer, resurrection, judgement, intercession, heaven and hell, while the next two sections register a shift in tone from biased comparison to direct criticism coupled with apologetics. Section 7 (pp. 23-8), 'Contradictions', outlines what Takle claims are contradictions in the

Qur'an and Muslim views pertaining to the Christian concepts of the Trinity, the deity and divine sonship of Christ, Old Testament history and New Testament truth and narratives. Section 8 (pp. 29-31) goes deeper into Muslim teachings with a focus on 'Internal contradictions' in respect of a sequence of issues, namely 'Christ', 'wine', 'force in religion' and 'idolatry'.

In Section 9 (pp. 32-6) the landscape format changes from three to two columns: Islam and Christianity. It begins with sketches and comments on emblems of identity and power: the crescent moon and sword for Islam on the one hand; the sun and the cross for Christianity on the other. This is followed by a sequence of issues: religion, God, true faith, golden rule, divorce, the Qur'an, Islam's prophet compared with Christianity's Lord, and a brief list of other comparisons on the last page that highlight negative perceptions and judgements of Islam in contrast to positive contrasts provided by Christianity.

Little more than a proof-texting exercise, the intent of *The Koran and the Bible* is clear from the outset: to demonstrate the superiority of Christianity over Islam, principally, it would seem, to provide useful material for fellow missionaries. It is a work of evangelistic outreach to Muslims, on the one hand, and of theological reinforcement of a particular late 19th-century Protestant Christian perspective on Islam, on the other.

SIGNIFICANCE

Sitting within the genre of evangelical Protestant literature that construes Islam as a rival religion, with Muslims potentially ripe for conversion, the impact of this work on missionary objectives would probably have been limited. Its Christian readership, and especially those looking for a text-based primer for apologetic and debating or argumentative purposes, would have found this a useful booklet.

PUBLICATIONS

The Koran and the Bible; or, the crescent vs. the sun. Notes and outlines for talks on Comparative Religion, Madras: Christian Literature Society, 1905

Douglas Pratt

'Moslem advance in India'

DATE 1911
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

Published as ch. 15 (pp. 206-19) in a volume of papers read at the Second Missionary Conference on behalf of the Mohammedan World at Lucknow, January 23-8, 1911, 'Moslem advance in India' starts with an outline sketch of the history of invasions of the Indian sub-continent by various peoples, ending with the coming of Islam and the rise of the Mughal Empire. Declaring that 'Most of the Moslem rulers were more than conquerors [but rather] "religious knight-errants" of Islam' whose purpose was 'to purify the land from the defilement of misbelief and polytheism' (p. 208), Takle construes the advance of Islam into South Asia as varying forms of persecution aimed at enforcing change to the religion and identity of the conquered peoples. This is supported with references to the harsh actions of the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb (r. 1658-1707), though Takle does also acknowledge another side to the story, that the Islamic teaching of everyone 'being entitled to an individuality and dignity quite unknown in the teaching of Hinduism' (p. 211) had a huge appeal among those suffering the prejudices and restrictions of the caste system.

After sketching the ways in which Islam took root and grew in India, Takle turns to what this might teach the Christian to adopt or avoid in engaging with Indian Muslims, noting that, according to the 1901 census, there were some 62,458,077 Muslims in India, of which over a third resided in Bengal and for whom 'there is not one missionary to my knowledge in that vast territory who has been definitely set apart for Mohammedan work' (p. 215). He calls for more missionaries to work with both Muslims and Hindus, and he flags up the need for such missionary resources to be indigenous: 'the need for Indian Christian specialists to work in both communities' (p. 216), because there are limits to what European Christian missionaries can achieve in relating to Asian peoples. He advocates an eirenic and empathetic approach on the part of missionaries in their relationships with Muslims, even to the point of 'using the Koran more in our work' (p. 217), albeit for the purpose of winning the polemical battle. There is no hint here of dialogical détente or a two-way relationship of mutual inquiry.

Takle closes on two notes: advocating greater social and philanthropic input by Christians in the Indian context, and even greater intentionality

and resourcing with respect to the missionary endeavour – the formation of 'A missionaries to Moslems league' (p. 219) no less.

SIGNIFICANCE

Written from within the Indian context for a volume concerned with the general theme of 'Islam and missions', Takle's paper reflects both the popular contemporary Orientalist approach and the typical Protestant evangelical outlook. It is important as an example of the non-dialogical Christian missionary approach of the day, premised on the inevitable corruption and decline of Islam and the expectation of the triumph of evangelical Christianity.

PUBLICATIONS

John Takle, 'Moslem advance in India', in E.M. Wherry, C.G. Mylrea, and S.E. Zwemer (eds), *Islam and missions. Being papers read at the Second Missionary Conference on behalf of the Mohammedan World held at Lucknow, January 23-28, 1911*, New York, 1911, 206-19; islammissionsbei (digitised version available through Archive.org)

Abdullah Martin Drury

The faith of the Crescent

DATE 1913
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

The faith of the Crescent is a work of 176 pages, together with a preface of two pages and twelve pages of notes, consisting of: a brief exhortation to Christian missionary endeavour with respect to Islam; a table 'showing the territory lost by Islam since 1800' and the 'political division of the Muslim world', which gives approximate numbers of Muslims in various parts of the world; and a list of important dates from the birth of Muḥammad in 570 to the fall of the Mahdī and the British occupation of the Sudan in 1898. A bibliography of reference books for further study includes such works as S.M. Zwemer's *Islam*, W.H.T. Gairdner's *The reproach of Islam*, D.S. Margoliouth's *Mohammedanism*, and Richard Burton's *Pilgrimage to Mecca and Madina*, among many others. Clearly, the work was intended for a general Christian readership. It was published by the Association

Press, the publication arm of the National Council of the Young Men's Christian Associations of India and Ceylon.

Takle lays out his combined instructive and hortatory purpose in the opening paragraph of the preface. Noting that, in the latter stages of the 19th century, great swathes of the Muslim world 'have been shaken by mighty movements, the end of which is not yet', he suggests: 'Their shaking was our waking, and now there is a keen desire on the part of missionaries and thoughtful laymen to know something about Islam' (p. ix). Having served for some 17 years as a missionary in eastern Bengal, Takle acknowledges much in Islam 'that is true and praiseworthy' though at the same time 'there is also that which saddens the heart of every lover of God and truth' (p. x). He expresses confidence in the expectation that Islam is on the wane, with Christianity poised to reign supreme.

Following this short preface, the body of the book is divided into ten chapters. The introductory ch. 1 addresses the fact of Islam, its origins amid the persecution suffered by Muḥammad and his first followers, its rapid and phenomenal growth after Muḥammad's migration to Madina, and its 'aggressiveness' in sweeping all before it when it came into its own as a colonising force around much of the Mediterranean Sea and then beyond. Takle considers the appeal of Islam, especially in Asia, to lie in its attractive linking of 'things spiritual and carnal' (p. 7), its assertive missionary outreach, which is second only to that of Christianity, and its palpable solidarity: 'one Prophet, the one magnetic centre of Islam, the one religious language, the one book – these all strengthen the sense of brotherhood' (p. 10). Ch. 2 focuses on the life and role of Muḥammad and includes a note on his immediate successors. Writing in an authoritative style, with occasional references to scholars such as Sigismund Wilhelm Koelle (1820-1902) (p. 17), David Samuel Margoliouth (1858-1940) (p. 17, 22), and Duncan Black MacDonald (1863-1943) (p. 23), Takle summarises familiar Christian assessments of Muḥammad, both positive and negative, and declares that the truth about him lies somewhere in the middle. Indeed, he acknowledges, Muḥammad may be regarded as 'a reformer of no ordinary power and insight, for if he did nothing else he delivered his country from the bondage of idolatry, and urged upon every one the truth of the divine Unity, and this was no small task to perform' (p. 28). Takle further observes that Muḥammad was 'a man of remarkable ability, strong purpose and resolute courage; a reformer [...] a legislator [...] a warner, and at the same time a cruel despot' (p. 29). Such contradictory characteristics place him together with such figures as King David, John the Baptist and

Moses, and identify him as the complete opposite of 'our Lord Jesus Christ' (p. 29).

In ch. 3 Takle engages in what today might be thought to approach a phenomenological analysis of the foundations of Islam – its basis in the religious systems and movements that existed in the Middle East at the time of Muḥammad. However, he does not hide his Christian bias: '... there existed in Arabia certain religious systems, customs, and traditions from which Muhammad drew material for shaping the stories, doctrines and poetic fancies of his supposed revelations' (p. 32). To these he adds the influences of Judaism, Christianity, the Sabianism of Mesopotamia, that of the Meccan hanifs (*ḥunafā'*, sing. *ḥanīf*, monotheists) and 'the cult of Isma'il', centred on the belief that the Arabs were descendants of Ishmael (pp. 46-50).

Chs 4 and 5 outline the beliefs and practices of Islam. Takle admires the relative simplicity of Muslim beliefs and the clarity with which they are held and articulated. However, the apparent requirement that Muslims should take their beliefs and all they entail literally poses for him significant moral objections, especially with regard to notions of heaven, or paradise, and hell. The 'sensual description of heaven has given rise to a vast number of Muslim books and commentaries of a most objectionable kind [. ...] As the Muslim description of hell must be taken literally, so that of heaven' (p. 70). He sums up the intent of Muslim beliefs as being to promote a fatalistic acceptance that everything occurs by divine decree, thus 'making mechanical ceremonial the all-important part of submitting to Allah' (p. 74). He sees Islam as a matter of performing duties and rituals on a daily basis, which he judges as spiritually stultifying.

Ch. 6 explores *sharī'a*, examining some of the laws of Islam and stressing their ubiquity in Muslim daily life. Muḥammad's sanctioning of polygamy (up to four wives) and slavery is both noted and condemned as allowing inhumane practices. To these and other areas of social laws Takle adds criminal and civil law, including the punishment of murder by execution and severe punishments for adultery. Apostasy also attracts capital punishment if the apostate refuses to recant and return to the Muslim fold.

In ch. 7 Takle discusses the Qur'an, including its composition and collection, its arrangement and divisions, its inspiration and matters of style, language and teachings. Without saying so, he takes for granted that it is entirely the work of Muḥammad. He is as critically concise about it as he is dismissive: it 'lacks originality', it is 'circumscribed', representing the mind of a single person and single type of society, and it is 'unscientific' (p. 121). It is also self-contradictory, as is shown by the principle of abrogation

applied within the Qur'an itself, designed to alleviate the appearance of internal contradiction. The chapter ends with a discussion of the 'Sunna or traditions of what Muhammad (i) did, (ii) enjoined and (iii) allowed' (p. 125), and also includes the two legal principles of consensus (*ijmāʿ*) and analogy (*qiyās*).

In ch. 8 Takle covers the sects of Islam, categorising them as political, represented by Sunnīs and Shīʿīs, pietistic, represented by Sufis, and puritanical, represented by the Wahhābīs. He judges that the existence of sects and divisions in Islam is indicative of 'disintegrating forces [...] expressions of Muslim dissatisfaction', and he notes a report from the 1910 Edinburgh missionary conference to the effect that missionaries saw Muslims as finding 'consolation in their faith, but no satisfaction' (p. 143).

Takle sets out his perspective on Christian-Muslim relations in ch. 9, where he addresses the points of contact and conflict between Islam and Christianity. He cites with approval Ramon Llull (c. 1232-c. 1316; *CMR* 4, 703-17), the medieval missionary to Muslims who, at the height of the Crusades, taught that the way to win Muslims was not by the use of force but by preaching, prayer, supplication and sacrificial love. Takle also notes a number of points of hopeful contact, including the honour given by Muslims to Christian scripture and to the name and person of Jesus, albeit understood in their own way. Nevertheless, he believes that Islam sprang 'from a corrupt Christianity' (p. 152) and from this flow points of conflict including most seriously the concept of God and the person of Christ. To this chapter he adds a note listing in parallel columns contrasting ethical teachings. This is aimed at highlighting the scriptural teaching of Christianity as morally superior to that of the Qur'an (pp. 161-3).

In ch. 10, the last, Takle prognosticates on the future of Islam by way of noting 'certain facts which give scope for speculation' (p. 164). These he adumbrates as an overarching diminution of the prestige and place of Islam coupled with an undergirding sense of decay. The world of Islam is increasingly under the rule of non-Muslim overlords or governments if not colonised outright, and the caliphate has all but dissipated entirely. So-called 'enlightened Muslims [...] see the cause of the decline of Islam in the loose laws of polygamy, divorce, concubinage and slavery' (p. 168) and in stagnated traditionalism, by which their societies are demoralised. It is no wonder, then, that attempts at restoration are afoot, both revival and reform. But since Islam is marked by decadence, 'in Islam to-day the religious leaders, the traditional beliefs and practices, and the basal principle of their political constitution are hindrances to progress. The world has out-grown them all' (p. 171). Only one option is left: for the Christian to

make known to the Muslim 'the way of peace [...] newness of life'; in short, the Christian Gospel, 'the fresh breath of Jesus' (p. 176).

The faith of the Crescent is undeniably a work designed not simply to inform a Christian readership about Islam but to inspire that readership with a fervent desire to engage in a missionary relationship with Islam and Muslims. Takle makes a reasonable fist of summarising the main tenets of Islam, and he is not entirely unappreciative of it and of what it has achieved. Nevertheless, he is clear in his final negative assessment.

> Islam, instead of being the simple faith which so many boast, is one of the most complicated religious systems the world has ever known, and every Muslim must cast from him all liberty of thought and freedom of will, and sink himself in the cumbrous system of blindly accepting all the ritual and interpretations of all the authorities who have made Islam what it is today. (p. 128)

This work may at best be regarded as a popular exposition of the Protestant evangelical missionary understanding and assessment of Islam as it was recognised in Takle's time. Anything that might resemble a dialogical approach is in reality a preparation for evangelical conversion. In the context of his day, this approach would also apply to other forms of Christianity as much as to Islam itself. What Takle is expressing is a form of the emerging fundamentalist Christianity that came to prominence within Protestant Christianity in the early 20th century. It is entirely exclusivist (to use a term that was coined later) in its attitude towards other forms of faith, seeing them as corrupt, decayed or irredeemably false.

SIGNIFICANCE

Takle's prominence on the missionary speaking circuit in New Zealand in the early 20th century, along with the authoritative nature of his writing, suggests that this 1913 work may have had wide influence at the level of popular religion, at least in New Zealand, as well as among Protestant missionary circles in India, if not also elsewhere. Sadly, there is no firm evidence to support this.

PUBLICATIONS

John Takle, *The faith of the Crescent*, Calcutta, 1913; faithofcrescent-0000takl (digitised version available through Archive.org)

Douglas Pratt and Abdullah Martin Drury

The straight path, Sirat al-mustaqim

DATE 1914
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English and other languages

DESCRIPTION

This short book of 87 pages, which takes its title from Q 1:6, is divided into eight chapters. The first, the introductory chapter 'Religion a relationship', presents a general approach to the meaning of religion encapsulated by the comment: 'Our religious relationship must be with One Who can understand us [... and ...] Whom our imperfect natures can in some measure understand' (p. 9). Ch. 2, 'The relationship paternal and fraternal', is chiefly a discourse on love in the New Testament sense of *agape*, noting the parent-child relationship in many faiths, on the one hand, and the ideal sonship exemplified by Christ and so yielding the perfect 'fatherhood and brotherhood' motif.

In ch. 3, 'What Muhammad teaches concerning the relationship between God and man', Takle holds that there is no emphasis on the love of God in Islam; rather, divine sovereignty rules. This leads to a discussion of freedom versus enslavement and the assertion of the superiority of the Christian perspective. Ch. 4 addresses the teaching of Christ concerning the relationship between God and humankind at the heart of religion, and ch. 5 focuses on the ideal relationship of the human with God as seen in the consciousness of Christ. Takle refers to the Qur'an and Hadith in constructing his argument for the unique and superior perspective of Christ as the Son of God.

Muslim objections, articulated and countered, form the substance of chapter 6. For Islam, the idea of the divine sonship of Christ is regarded as unacceptable because it belittles the majesty of divine otherness and is therefore demeaning towards God. Takle gives a robust retort from his evangelical Christian perspective. Ch. 7 is entitled 'How the Muslim and Christian conceptions of man's relationship with his maker work out in the religious, social and political spheres'. It comprises a succinct but wide-ranging comparative discussion of prayer, alms-giving, intercession, marriage, slavery and politics, the last referring particularly to the Young Turks in the Ottoman Empire. It seems Takle may have regarded this political development as an example of the potential for Muslim progress. He is otherwise quite dismissive of the prospect of such progress, however it may be understood. In ch. 8, the conclusion, Takle argues for Christ as

the true 'Straight Path' and urges Muslims to read the 'Injil', by which he seems to mean the wider New Testament, not just the Gospels, in order to discover this compelling Christian truth for themselves.

SIGNIFICANCE

This work may be seen as a classic example of late 19th-century evangelical missionary literature concerning Islam: although not overly polemical, despite its taunting title implying that the straight path is not to be found in Islam but in Christianity, it is certainly firmly apologetic in its appeal to Muslims for the veracity and superiority of Christianity over Islam. It represents a particular genre of Christians writing both about and to a Muslim readership, yet clearly also with an eye on Christian readers who seek to be assured of the Christian position and may be persuaded to support the work of Christian missionary evangelism toward Muslims. How well it resonated with a Muslim readership can hardly be assessed, but it seems to have enjoyed popularity among its Christian readership, and it also appeared in a Bengali translation. It was a book from a time when relations between the two faith communities were rarely dialogical in the present-day sense, and anything approximating a 'dialogue' was a matter of making a case for the superiority of one's own faith over the other, the only question being how far to go without denigrating the other. Takle here argues a strong case for Christianity with very little in the way of polemical argument against Islam as such. The significance of this work thus lies in its exemplifying a particular form of Christian witness to Muslims.

PUBLICATIONS

John Takle, *The straight path. Sirat al-mustaqim*, London, 1914
John Takle, *Sirātu'la mustākima, bā, Dharmmera sarala patha*, trans. D.A. Caudurī, Calcutta, 1936 (Bengali trans.)

'The approach to Muslim mysticism'

DATE 1918
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

Noting the predominance of a form of Muslim faith, 'Fakirism', which is 'really Sufism adapted to the average illiterate Muhammadan villager', in this 10-page journal article Takle discusses the fact and importance of 'this

mystical and spiritual movement in Islam' (p. 249). Written apparently as an appeal for missionary engagement – 'we think it well to invite attention to the unique opportunity of attempting to reach these people ...' (p. 249) – the article is intended to provide a Christian answer to what is a 'spiritual revolt against a cold formalism, rationalism and traditionalism in the Islam that preaches a lonely, inaccessible, unfeeling deity' that Takle sees on the rise (p. 251). He presents a succinct overview of the complex diversity of Sufism in the India of his day and draws the conclusion that Muslim mysticism implies the notion of the divine being manifest through the agency of a human person, which then allows him to argue the case for this being none other than Jesus Christ.

Takle draws a link between the three Sufi stages of conversion to God (repentance, renunciation and poverty) and the 'purgative way' of Christian mysticism. Nevertheless, while both Muslim and Christian may be those of whom Christ said 'Blessed are the poor in spirit' (p. 256), his assessment is that 'while Muslim mysticism begins hopefully, it ends hopelessly' (p. 258). The article reads as an evangelical and triumphalist assertion of Christian superiority.

SIGNIFICANCE

Sharply focussed on the predominance of Sufism among the Muslims of India, this article aptly demonstrates the apologetic art of evangelical missionary appeal. This is the ability to understand and use the terminology and ideas of the targets of outreach in order to assert the superiority of a Christian perspective that is the answer to the question and quest of the seeker of a closer union with God. It is a good representation of this genre.

The article was cited by a few later scholars, among them J. Spencer Trimingham, in *The Sufi Orders in Islam* (1971), suggesting that it was used as a reference point in later scholarship.

PUBLICATIONS

John Takle, 'The approach to Muslim mysticism', *The Moslem World* 8/3 (1918) 249-58; 006665172 (digitised version available through Hathi Trust)

The inward way – at-Tariqat

DATE 1921
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

This short booklet of 66 pages is divided into seven chapters that follow the underlying thread of the mystical way of religion (Arabic *ṭarīqa*, 'path', used to designate the 'pathway towards perfection' of the Muslim mystics or a mystical brotherhood itself; hence the sub-title). It would seem that Tackle wrote it with a Christian readership in mind. The first chapter serves as a general introduction, touching on the presence of the divine in nature and drawing on the Psalms of David on the one hand and evidence of Muḥammad's mystical inclinations on the other, especially with respect to references in the Qur'an to 'the face of Allah' (Takle appears to assume that his readers will accept without question that the Qur'an is Muḥammad's own composition), intimating an overwhelming sense of God that contrasts with the otherwise arid orthodoxy of Islam. However, Takle notes: 'But care had to be taken lest devotion to the symbol usurp the worship of the Reality' (p. 5). Ch. 2 presents an exposition of Sufism with its 'apprehension of divine realities' (p. 10) and includes a discussion of the medieval mystic Abū Hāmid al-Ghazālī (1058-1111) and the tension between the mystical openness of Sufism and doctrinaire Muslim orthodoxy. It highlights what Takle discerns as threads of mystic openness in the Qur'an.

Ch. 3 is devoted to a discussion of 'The stages of the inward way'. Here, Takle compares and contrasts a number of points between Muslim and Christian mystics, where 'religion is an experience of fellowship with God' (p. 15); the pilgrim seeking the true home; the marks of surrender, repentance, self-repression, self-denial, purity of heart, humility and sanctity with both Christian and Muslim references and examples. He draws attention to the inner conflict of the divided will and sense of the 'true self' struggling with and 'enslaved by the lower self'. Here, exposition shifts to argument, albeit gently apologetic in tone, where, with reference to jihad, the daily struggle of faith, and to *nafs*, 'self', Takle urges Muslims to take in the Gospel for its sense of spiritual regeneration that resolves all such inner conflicts and contrasts.

In ch. 4, 'Progress towards perfection', Takle asks: What is the goal of mysticism? He regards constancy of endeavour as the key, and highlights the Islamic emphasis on divine unity that opposes all dualism; on the

names of Allāh and use of repetitive mantras; the sense of floating in ecstasy through *dhikr*; and the production of a transcendent state as the major elements of Sufism. Yet, he avers, 'all these ecstatic practices are harmful to those who engage in them' (p. 31). Takle's tone changes with his comments on emotional ideas of love and passion, and on what he refers to as moral suicide – the 'dangerous errors in this Sufi system' (p. 33): God is regarded as creator of evil as well as good. Thus, Islam's mystical way yields the possibility of chaos. However, given the end-point of the Sufi way is self-obliteration or self-expression in love, the superiority of the way of Christ is then presented as, in fact, the better or truer way to perfection.

The slide from Takle's apparently sympathetic exposition of the mystical way in Islam to his assertion of Christian superiority continues in ch. 5, which looks at the role of the spiritual guide, whom he names *pir*, *shaikh* or *murshid*. The guide is the one who shows the way, and so acts as mediator for the initiates in his care. Takle includes references to Christ as exemplar *par excellence*, hence the perfect guide, thus providing a closing transition from Sufism to evangelical Christian appeal and apologetic, which emerge as the main threads of the last two chapters, entitled 'Christ and mystical union' and 'Christian attainment'. Sufis may venerate Christ, he comments, regarding Him as one of them, but they 'are mistaken in regarding Christ as an ascetic of their own type' (p. 49), because Christ was no ascetic.

Takle closes by likening St Paul to al-Ghazālī, the medieval mystic and theologian. Al-Ghazālī turned from Islamic formalism to Sufism, whereas Paul turned from the Law to Christ: 'Paul had found a new centre for his life' (p. 60), a better and truer way. Takle urges Muslims to do likewise, and sketches an evangelical theology by way of exposition.

Whilst it shows that Takle felt some sympathy for elements of Islam, this work seems to be aimed at serving not dialogical but missionary ends. He writes with authority, alluding to but not directly citing any sources. He is not a scholar, strictly speaking, so much as an author who produces compilations primarily for the support of the missionary endeavour in India. He is clearly well read on Sufism, and appears to have had direct contact if not also engagement with Sufis. But none of this is spelled out in this or any of his other published works.

SIGNIFICANCE

A short work of substantially evangelical apologetic, *The inward way* was seemingly aimed at a Christian readership yet potentially accessible to

Muslims to whom the Sufi path would have been quite familiar. It may be read as an example of missionary appeal literature that sought to reach out to the world of Islam in a particular time and place.

PUBLICATIONS

John Takle, *The inward way – at-tariqat*, Madras, 1921
John Takle, *Āla tārikāṯ:* (*Suphi-panthā*), trans. D.A. Caudurī, Calcutta, 1935 (Bengali trans.)

Douglas Pratt

William Goldsack

DATE OF BIRTH 29 November 1871
PLACE OF BIRTH Glen Osmond, South Australia
DATE OF DEATH 26 June 1957
PLACE OF DEATH Glen Osmond, South Australia

BIOGRAPHY

William Goldsack was the eldest of eight children born to Mark and Mary Goldsack of Glen Osmond, South Australia. Little is known of his early life. Following ordination in the Australian Baptist Church, he went to India in 1896 with the Furreedpore (Faridpur) Mission (FM), the precursor of the South Australian Baptist Missionary Society which was closely associated with the Baptist Missionary Society. At a time when most missionaries specialised in working among Hindus, Goldsack chose to work among Muslims. He transferred to the Baptist Missionary Society in 1912.

Goldsack learnt Musulmani Bengali and published a number of his works in this language, translating them into English later. He also learnt Urdu and, in 1913 and 1916, he travelled to Syria and Egypt to improve his Arabic, which he had initially learnt in India with the help of local *maulvī*s. He was involved in a translation of the Bible into Musulmani Bengali, though his great project was the translation of the Qur'an into Musulmani Bengali to which he 'intended to add, as footnotes, his own commentary, employing the work of learned Muslims to discredit the Koran and disprove its claim to divine origin' (Cupit, Gooden and Manley, *From five barley loaves*, p. 57). Some people queried the wisdom of this, and the translation received a hostile reception when it was published. Following Indian independence it was proscribed.

Together with William Arthur Jeffery (1892-1959), a younger contemporary who was also initially a missionary in India, Goldsack was one of the first Australian exponents of Islam. He and Lewis Bevan Jones (1880-1960) were instrumental in having Islamic Studies added to the curriculum of Serampore College near Calcutta.

Due to ill health, Goldsack returned to Australia in 1923 and did not return to India. He died in South Australia in 1957. His legacy is debated. Gerald Ball comments that his 'aggressive stance was misdirected [...] and very little came as a result of this' (Cupit, Gooden and Manley, *From five barley loaves*, p. 59).

MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Primary

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C. Bennett, 'The legacy of Lewis Bevan Jones', *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 17 (1993) 126-9

J. Whitney, *The Goldsack story. From Kent to South Australia*, Glen Waverley, 1990

C. Bennett, 'A theological appreciation of the Reverend Lewis Bevan Jones (1880-1960). Baptist pioneer in Christian-Muslim relations', *Baptist Quarterly* 32 (1988) 237-52

WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Works on Islam

DATE 1903-22

ORIGINAL LANGUAGE English

DESCRIPTION

Goldsack wrote a number of works dealing with Christian-Muslim relations, most of them booklets. They were usually printed in Madras and they enjoyed a wide circulation.

God in Islám. An enquiry into the Moslem conception of God, 1903

This short work comprises five chapters totalling about 10,000 words. Following the introduction, the chapters deal with: the unity of God; the attributes of God; anthropomorphic references to God; God in relationship to humankind; God in relation to sin and salvation. Goldsack forthrightly sums up his critical estimation of this outline in the conclusion:

> To the cry of the human heart which realizes its own sinfulness and cries out, 'What must I do to be saved?' Islam makes no satisfactory reply. In that reply, indeed, one can see the utter incompleteness and inadequacy of the Moslem idea of God. Without a true and worthy view of the character of God, it is not strange that Muhammad should have failed to conceive of a scheme of salvation worthy of Deity.

In the same vein, Goldsack also observes that, although God is called just and merciful, 'Islam fails to explain how the Supreme can be, at the same time, both just and merciful [. ...] Islam brings no assurance of salvation because it offers no substitution for the sinner, and provides no remedy for sin' (https://study-Islam.org/god-islam/william-goldsack/god-islam).

Christ in Islam. The testimony of the Qur'an to Christ, 1905

This work, 48 pages long, comprises eight chapters: Christ, the Israelite; The birth of Christ; Jesus, the promised messiah: Christ, the Word of God; Christ, the spirit of God; Christ, the only intercessor; the sinless prophet of Islam; Christ, the wonder-worker. At the end, there is a list of works for further reading. At the beginning Goldsack writes, 'We purpose here to show from the authorities of Islam itself the high testimony which is borne to Christ by these books, and to point out the duty of all true Muslems [*sic*] with respect to the same' (p. 4), implying that they should respond to what their own sources teach about Christ. He supports and elucidates his arguments with quotations from the Bible.

The closing sections of the booklet reflect much of Goldsack's general attitude and approach throughout his writings. He makes a request:

> Thus the Qur'an gives precious glimpses of the Messiah's greatness, but stops short of unveiling His glorious perfections and divine majesty. It leads to the portal, but fails to open the door [...] Will you, then, my Muslim reader, be content to leave this important question, with which your eternal interests are bound up, to remain unsolved? (p. 42)

and concludes with the closing verses of the opening chapter of the Qur'an (Q 1:6, 7): 'Guide us in the right way; the way of those on whom Thou hast been gracious; not of those against whom Thou hast been angry, nor of those who have gone astray' (p. 43).

The Qur'án in Islám. An enquiry into the integrity of the Qur'án, 1906

This booklet of about 8,000 words comprises an introduction followed by six chapters and an appendix containing the sura of 'Two lights' (*Sūrat al-Nūrayn*), which Shīʿīs accept as part of the Qur'an but Sunnīs reject. The chapters are entitled: the seven readings of the Qur'an; the recensions of Abu Bakr and 'Uthman; the reading of Ibn Mas'ud; the testimony of Imam Husain concerning the various readings of the Qur'an; the testimony of Kazi Baizawi concerning the various readings of the Qur'an; the testimony of the Traditions to the Qur'an.

In the introduction, Goldsack notes that 'Muhammadans' regard the Qur'an as 'the uncreated word of God' and consider its Arabic to be 'unequalled anywhere in literature', to which he responds: 'The language of the Qur'an is in places exceedingly beautiful', and memorising it is 'regarded as both praiseworthy and meritorious'. He goes on to make the important point: 'The contents of the Qur'an are exceedingly varied, but it may be noted that the Jewish and Christian religions occupy a large amount of attention', which he suggests goes 'to show that Muhammad did not so much represent himself as the founder of a new system as the promulgator of that faith which was held in the beginning by Abraham himself'. By referring to the Jewish and Christian scriptures, Muḥammad was confirming and substantiating them. He continues,

> Verses to this effect may be found all over the Qur'an; indeed the most extravagant praise is bestowed upon both the Taurat and Injil [...] thus it becomes a matter for surprise that, in spite of this fact, modern Muslims almost invariably speak of the Jewish and Christian scriptures as 'corrupted' and therefore unworthy of serious attention today.

The reason, he notes, is the considerable differences that appear between the three texts, with the result that 'the Muhammadans have [...] been driven to the expedient of denying the integrity of the Taurat and Injil'. Curiously, the question of whether the Qur'an 'has been corrupted [...] never seems to have been seriously considered by modern Muslims; yet the slightest acquaintance with Arabic history and literature reveals the

fact that the present Qur'an is far indeed from being a complete and accurate copy'. He continues:

> In the following pages we shall proceed to establish the fact from reliable Muslim authorities [...] that [...] the present Qur'an has been so mutilated and corrupted since the time of Muhammad that it can no longer be relied upon as an accurate and complete record of what he taught.

He proceeds to do this systematically through the rest of the work, adducing evidence from important Islamic sources and authorities, including the medieval exegete Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Bayḍāwī (d. 1319), to support his case.

The origins of the Qur'án. An enquiry into the sources of Islam, 1907

This work, 52 pages long, comprises a preface and four chapters. At the beginning, Goldsack indicates that it is based on the words of many of the Islamic scholars of his day and 'aims at presenting in a brief, and therefore inexpensive, form for Indian readers some of the results of the exhaustive studies of those scholars'. Regarding its purpose: 'If it helps any enquiring Muslim to understand more clearly the origin of the faith taught by Muhammad, it will have accomplished the purpose for which it was written.' The chapter headings are as follows: heathen beliefs and practices incorporated into the Qur'an; Jewish beliefs and practices incorporated into the Qur'an; Christian beliefs and practices incorporated into the Qur'an; portions of the Qur'an connected with particular incidents. Goldsack discusses the claim that the Qur'an confirms previous scriptures, which Muḥammad himself regarded as 'excellent' (Q 6:155), and he concludes by noting that, while all Muslims are enjoined to read the Taurat and the Injil, when they do this they are immediately confronted with difficulties and contradictions between them and the Qur'an. So he encourages readers 'to search those "former Scriptures" of which Muhammad spoke so highly and [they] will find in them the way to eternal life'.

Ghulam Jabbar's renunciation. A tale of Eastern Bengal, 1913

One of Goldsack's more extended works, this is 137 pages long, divided into ten chapters, as follows: the missionary's letter; a momentous interview; the sword of the spirit; the Maulavi's challenge; the Munshi's story; new views of truth; the public discussion; counting the cost; Ghulam's confession; Emarat's conversion. It narrates the story of a young Indian Muslim

who converted to Christianity and, despite having to endure persecution and being disinherited by his family, went on to become a preacher of the Gospel. The original edition was translated into Chinese by Isaac Mason and published in 1920 as *Chung tao ch'ing ts'ai chi* by the Christian Literature Society of China. It has more recently been published online.

Muhammad and the Bible. Being an inquiry into the allegation that certain passages in the Bible foretell Muhammad, 1915

This is a short book of 40 pages, divided into an Introduction and eleven chapters, each centred on a verse of the Bible that Muslims have understood to refer to Muḥammad, as follows: 'Raise up unto thee a Prophet', Deuteronomy 18:15, 18-19; Seir and Mount Paran, Deuteronomy 33:2; 'Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O mighty one', Psalms 45:3-5; 'Muhammadim', Song of Songs 5:10-16; 'Camel', Isaiah 21:7; Kedar, Isaiah 42:11; Teman and Mount Paran, Habbakuk 3:3; 'One mightier than I', Mark 1:7; 'That prophet', John 1:19-21; 'The Paraclete', John 14-16; 'The prince of this world', John 14:30.

Goldsack shows that every one of these claims is based on faulty exegesis and that the inferences drawn from them cannot be sustained. In addition, the biblical reference cited in the last chapter actually refers to the devil. Not surprisingly, Goldsack characteristically writes,

> Muslims have fallen into a most egregious error, and have illustrated in a very startling manner the un-wisdom of taking a single passage of Scripture, and without reference to parallel passages, building upon it a theory of interpretation which makes them the laughing stock of all intelligent people. (https://study-islam.org/muhammad-and-bible/william-goldsack/muhammad-and-bible)

Other works

Other works by Goldsack, namely, *The Traditions in Islám, being an essay on the origin and value of Muhammad Tradition* (1919) and *The Bible in Islam, being a study of the place and value of the Bible in Islam* (1922), were written in the same astringent style and with the same intention of pointing out errors in Islam. Among his later works were his translation of selections from the *Mishkāt al-Maṣābīḥ* (1923), the well-known medieval collection of authoritative Hadiths made by Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-Khaṭīb al-Tibrīzī (fl. 1337), titled *Selections from Muhammadan Traditions*, and

also his translation of the Qur'an into Bengali (1908-20), which included the commentary that brought criticisms and objections from Muslims.

Essentially, Goldsack's approach in his writings was to highlight differences between Muslim and Christian beliefs and also problems associated with the Muslim position, by using works by Muslim scholars and exegetes to prove his points. He usually identified his sources and quoted extensively from the Qur'an and Hadith in Arabic, accompanied by translations. Sometimes, particularly in *God in Islam*, he acknowledged some of the beauty of the poetry and insights that Muḥammad gained from nature, though he was direct and occasionally outspoken in pointing out the shortcomings in the points made by his Muslim adversaries. He was constantly frustrated by the fact that Muslim scholars did not pursue their criticisms of their own faith to their logical conclusions, and he was angered by what he saw as the duplicity of Muslim scholars in their criticism of Christian teachings while failing to use the 'same measure' in relation to their own religion. He also found it difficult that, when Muslim scholars were considering issues connected with the Christian scriptures, they handled them without proper attention to the accepted principles of biblical exegesis, resulting in sometimes gross misinterpretations and applications of verses.

Goldsack saw his primary purpose as being to inform the Muslims of Bengal of the 'Christian truth' in their own language. What he wrote shows in detail where Christian and Muslim teachings were in conflict and examines the basis of that conflict. He also saw it as important to provide information for Christians who, like himself, wanted to evangelise Muslims as well as to circulate scholarship in a simple, easily obtainable and reasonably cheap format so that the Muslims of the region might have access to it. His works constitute a serious attempt to respond to Islam, reflecting the extent to which, despite the challenges of his location and the difficulty in obtaining resources, he was acquainted with both non-Muslim and Muslim, including Bengali Muslim, scholarship on Islam. While his intention was to highlight the cleavages between Islam and Christianity, he chose to use Muslim scholars who identified these issues and used their deductions to support his arguments.

SIGNIFICANCE

While he recognised the difficulties in confronting Muslims with 'Christian truth', Goldsack was not afraid to speak (and write) boldly and critically against Islam and its teachings. His method of approaching issues head-on and using the strongest words and phrases reflected his time and context,

and presumably his character as well. Nevertheless, he had his admirers, and his works added to the growing body of studies on Islam, particularly as they related to the Indian subcontinent.

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ʿAbdulḥalīm Sharar

DATE OF BIRTH 4 September 1860
PLACE OF BIRTH Lucknow
DATE OF DEATH 1 December 1926
PLACE OF DEATH Lucknow

BIOGRAPHY

ʿAbdulḥalīm Sharar was born in Lucknow, the son of Tafazzul Ḥusain, who was in the service of Wājid ʿAlī Shāh (1822-87), the ruler of Avadh, the last major Muslim kingdom in north India. Following British annexation in 1856, in 1867 Wājid ʿAlī Shāh was exiled to Maṭiyā Burj, a few miles from Calcutta (Kolkata). Tafazzul Ḥusain accompanied him and took young Sharar with him. In Maṭiyā Burj, Sharar learned Persian and English as well as Arabic, and also studied classical Muslim literary and religious works. Wājid ʿAlī Shāh was a poet and patron of art and literature, and his court was a centre of cultural and literary refinement. Later, as a journalist and novelist, Sharar provided accounts of a glamorous courtly way of life that was quickly disappearing.

Sharar was influenced by modernist thinkers in north India such as Sayyid Aḥmad Khān (*CMR* 24, 424-47) and Altāf Ḥusain Ḥālī, who were pioneering religious and social reforms and the use of Urdu as a literary language. From 1882 to 1887, he worked as a writer and editor for *Avadh Punj*, an Urdu periodical in Lucknow. In 1887, he started *Dil Gudāz*, a literary journal, which continued with a few intermissions until his death in 1926.

The early editions of *Dil Gudāz* mostly featured poetry and short stories, but Sharar turned to writing longer pieces of historical fiction and romance that appeared in serialised form. In the 1890s, he changed to publishing novels and presenting these free of cost to the subscribers of the journal at the end of the year. These were mostly romances such as *Malik al-ʿAzīz Varjinā* (1888), *Ḥasan Angelinā* (1889), *Manṣūr Mūhanā* (1890), *Qais o Lubnā* (1891) and *Flōrā Flōrindā* (1897), stories loosely set within historical contexts. Besides *Dil Gudāz*, Sharar started other journals such as *Pardah-i ʿIṣmat* in 1892, which roused bitter resentment in conservative circles with its open attacks on the compulsory veiling of Muslim women. Sharar opposed this tradition and vociferously attacked the practice in novelettes such as *Badr al-Nisā' aur unkī muṣībāt* ('Badr al-Nisā' and her

perils') and *Āghā ṣādiq kī shādī* ('The marriage of faithful Āghā'), and a play entitled *Mevah-i talkh* ('Bitter fruit').

In 1893, Sharar accompanied Nawāb Valīuddīn Khān of Hyderabad on a three-year visit to London, where he improved his English and studied French. On his return, he settled in Lucknow and turned his attention to religious and historical subjects. His works included *Qadīm Masīḥiyyat* ('Ancient Christianity'), which was serialised in *Dil Gudāz* between 1901 and 1905, and *Tārīkh-i Sindh* ('History of Sindh'), published as a supplement to *Dil Gudāz* in two volumes in 1906 and 1908. Sharar remained in Lucknow, writing and publishing, until his death in 1926.

A prolific writer, Sharar published over 50 books, of which about 30 are historical novels. His best-known work is *Guzashtah Lukhnaū* ('The Lucknow of old', 1926), which portrays the last vestiges of an 'Eastern' way of life in the city. Sharar's novels have been described as didactic because of their one-sided views and self-righteous characters. Some of his novels have been seen as rejoinders to the novels of Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832), which Sharar felt were replete with anti-Muslim bigotry. Many of his works contain references to Christianity and those that address it directly are described below.

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Historical novels

DATE 1888-1906
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Urdu

DESCRIPTION

Malik al-ʿAzīz Varjinā ('King ʿAzīz and Varjina')

This novel, which is 232 pages long and divided into 20 chapters, was first published in Sharar's magazine *Dil Gudāz* in 1888 and then in book form in 1889. It is set in Syria and Palestine during the Third Crusade and primarily revolves around the love between ʿAzīzuddīn, the eldest son of Ṣalāḥuddīn, and Varjinā, the niece of King Richard I, who converts to Islam and marries him. As historical novels were a new genre to Urdu readers at this time, Sharar explains in the introduction that, while the story is based on historical events, he is not claiming that everything happened as he has recounted it.

The novel touches upon two important themes in Christianity and Islam: the differences between their foundational beliefs and between their conduct in war. Setting this love story during the Crusades gives Sharar space to contrast the valiant Muslims, who keep fighting even when they are outnumbered, with the cruel Christians. ʿAzīzuddīn, for example, does not kill Asia, a Jew, who later converts to Islam along with Varjinā, even though Richard kills all the Muslims when he conquers Acre, which angers Ṣalāḥuddīn so much that he orders his men to kill any Christians in retaliation, although his sons do not implement this order.

Varjinā's conversion to Islam comes as a blow to Richard and his sister, but when the sister is taken hostage Ṣalāḥuddīn gives her into the care of Varjinā. Richard's sister, Varjinā's aunt, protests to Varjinā about her conversion, to which Varjinā retorts that Islam is a logical religion that teaches about one God while Christianity teaches about three. She continues that Christians believe that Jesus Christ is the son of God when Christ himself never made that claim because he knew that he was only a messenger and that God created him like any other being.

King Richard eventually captures his niece and assigns a servant to give her 50 lashes each day as punishment for her betrayal. Meanwhile, ʿAzīzuddīn disguises himself as a man named Toshā and persuades Varjinā

to pretend to renounce Islam in the presence of Richard in exchange for permission to marry Toshā. In the last chapter, once a peace treaty is signed, Toshā reveals himself as ʿAzīzuddīn and Richard announces that Varjinā is allowed to marry him.

Flōrā Flōrindā

This story was first serialised as *Ziyād aur Ḥalāvah* in *Dil Gudāz* in 1893 and then published as a novel in 1899 with the title *Flōrā Flōrindā*. Comprising 30 chapters in 283 pages, it is set in Spain during the time of Abdurraḥmān (the Umayyad ruler ʿAbd al-Raḥmān II, r. 822-52), in Córdoba and Toledo, and also in the Pyrenees. The story echoes historical events set in Córdoba, when a number of Christians were executed for offences such as making offensive statements about Islam and Muḥammad. In the preface, Sharar states that he wrote the novel to prove that the form of Christianity in the Indian subcontinent in his own time was not the Christianity preached by Jesus Christ, but that Christians, especially bishops, priests and nuns, who took the vow of celibacy, used churches and monasteries for their wicked sexual activities. This is the dominant theme of the novel.

The major characters include Flōrā (also called Zahrah), her brother Ziyād, Flōrindā (a nun), Eulogius (a priest of Córdoba Cathedral), Qazī Muḥammad bin Ziyād (a judge), ʿAbdurrauf bin ʿAbdussalām from Toledo, Alfonso (duke of San Sebastian), Helen (the duke's daughter, who later marries Ziyād), Christine (mother superior of the nunnery in Toledo), and Martha (a nun of Toledo). Flōrā, the daughter of a Christian mother and a Muslim father, is persuaded by her mother to accept Christianity despite the disapproval of her father and brother Ziyād. After the deaths of her parents, Ziyād tries to keep her away from Christianity because, if she declares herself a Christian, she will be regarded as an apostate, making it the duty of Muslims to kill her. Eulogius, a highly respected priest of Córdoba Cathedral, plots to free Flōrā from her brother's clutches and to instigate a rebellion. He suggests that chosen Christians should insult the Prophet in public, leading to their execution and fomenting a revolution among Christians the world over. The nun Flōrindā volunteers to free Flōrā; she disguises herself as a Muslim widow named Ḥalāvah and buys the house next to where Flōrā is living. She is beautiful and succeeds in attracting Ziyād, who asks for her hand in marriage. She helps Flōrā to escape and they flee with Eulogius to the Pyrenees.

Flōrā has the impression that Islam is a cruel religion, since even her brother has sought to kill her. However, when Eulogius tries to force himself upon her, she realises that the true face of Christianity has been hidden behind veneers of pretended celibacy and false virtue. Eulogius offers her two options: either accept him or be sent to Alfonso, Duke of San Sebastian, and become his wife, but Flōrā rejects both, preferring to forsake worldly dealings and spend the rest of her life as a devout Christian. Eulogius rejects this, so he calls Alfonso's daughter, Helen, to persuade her, though she does not succeed. Sharar draws a sharp distinction between the characters of Helen and Flōrā: Helen, a rich Christian girl, is talkative, mischievous and flirtatious, whereas Flōrā, from a Muslim family, is quiet, shy, retiring and knows nothing about flirting. One day, Helen asks Flōrā about Islam, and Flōrā tells her that Muslims are not brutal or cruel but rather respect their women, and she adds that the kind of questions Eulogius was asking her when she was making her confession are forbidden from being discussed in Islam between a man and a woman except within the bonds of marriage. She also says that, when a Muslim man loves a woman, he presents a marriage proposal, unlike Christians who are not concerned about wedlock. Moreover, music is also forbidden in Islam because it diverts attention from God, as even when people hear a choir in church they do not focus on God but rather on the music. Most importantly, she tells Helen that Muslims do not believe that Jesus Christ is the son of God but that he was a human messenger, because this is a logical view.

Helen is unsuccessful in persuading Flōrā, who resolutely seeks to become a nun in order to save herself from Eulogius. Martha, a nun from Toledo, agrees to escort Flōrā to her convent and promises to protect her once she is there. At this, Flōrindā tries hard to change Flōrā's mind but she fails. She knows, and later tells Helen, that no nun is celibate because they are all sexually involved with priests. It is the common Christian belief that whatever the clergy do cannot be evil because they are thought to be above committing sin.

Flōrā enters the convent in Toledo and is renamed Mary. Meanwhile in Córdoba, her brother seeks to kill Eulogius, Flōrindā and Flōrā herself in revenge. Some Christians are charged with blasphemy and, in reaction to their abuse, many Muslims are angered and imprison all priests, monks and nuns. However, the judge meets with respected members of the Christian community, who tell him they were happy with the rule of ʿAbdurraḥmān and they will do their best to quell the unrest and find the

guilty Eulogius. But Ziyād cannot wait, so he decides to go to Toledo to meet ʿAbdurrauf and take matters into his own hands. ʿAbdurrauf suggests that Ziyād should disguise himself as a monk, which he does and travels under the name of Jarjas to the Pyrenees. There he finds Helen, though Eulogius and Flōrindā are away. Helen tells Ziyād the secret revealed to her by Flōrindā about the sexual misdeeds in the Church and Ziyād reveals his true name and his Muslim identity. They fall in love and are married, though Ziyād does not pressurise Helen into converting to Islam. However, when the two go to ʿAbdurrauf to inform him of the situation, ʿAbdurrauf insists that Helen should convert. In their exchange, she asks why he will not believe that Jesus was the son of God even though he was born without a father, to which ʿAbdurrauf replies (with the same Qur'an-based reasoning that Sharar also uses in *Malik al-ʿAzīz Varjinā*) that his birth was a miracle. He goes on to say that, since it is known that God is not a body but a soul and a spirit, and since copulation and begetting are characteristics of bodily beings, it is inconceivable that God should beget a child.

The story reaches a climax when Eulogius and Flōrindā return to Córdoba and discover that Helen has married and is rumoured to have converted to Islam. They scheme to kill her and then to seek martyrdom by publicly insulting the Prophet (recalling the historical 'martyrs of Córdoba'). Flōrindā asks her friend, Father Santiago, to join with her in killing Helen, but Ziyād overhears and thwarts their plans. In the end, Flōrā reverts to Islam and commits to bring up her child as a Muslim.

Muqaddas nāznīn ('Holy belle')

Published in 1900, this novel, which is 320 pages long and divided into 20 chapters, tells the story of Agnes, who disguised herself as a man named Joan, travelled through Lutetia (present-day Paris), Fulda (in Germany) and Greece, and ended up in Rome, where she became pope, succeeding Pope Leo IV (r. 847-55).

Father Lazarus, who is in Winchester with other monks, suggests to Agnes that she should devote her life to acquiring religious knowledge. She first goes to Lutetia, where she befriends an old monk and frees the Muslims ʿAlī and his sister Salmah. She goes on to Fulda but, when her former lover Henry finds her there, he threatens to reveal her true identity, so she flees to Greece. After becoming known as a mystic, she goes to Rome, where she meets Leo IV and succeeds him as pope after his death (there

are legends that Pope Joan ruled from 855 to 857). But Henry reveals her true identity and so she marries ʿAlī and converts to Islam, and the two flee with their baby daughter to a Muslim country.

The story contains a number of descriptions and explanations about Christian beliefs and practices. Thus, Sharar notes that enmity between Muslims and Christians was at a peak in the 9th century so that, whenever a Christian ship was captured by Muslims, they would loot it and enslave the people on board. In the same way, whenever a Muslim ship was captured by Christians, they not only looted it but also publicly executed the crew after celebrating a mass. When Agnes hears about this from Father Lazarus, she condemns the practice and explains that Muslims allow Christians and Jews in their countries to live freely. The book describes the order and elements of the Eucharist, and the bishop also refers to the Council of Nicaea in 325. Sharar explains in a footnote that this was one of the first councils to decide on an organised form of Christianity. He notes that, under pressure from the Emperor Constantine, important subjects such as the Trinity were discussed there and that Arius of Alexandria protested against these ideas, for which he was condemned as a heretic.

Further, when Agnes, ʿAlī, one of three persons freed by Agnes, and Father Lazarus enter the shrine of St Boniface, ʿAlī repeats a Hadith that recounts how Jews and Christians had converted the tombs of holy persons into places of worship, which was unacceptable to Allāh. In a footnote, Sharar observes that this same error was presently being committed by Muslims in South Asia. Later, in the college at Fulda, where Agnes (now Joan) started her education, Latin and Greek are taught because these are the languages of the ancient texts. Moreover, apocryphal texts are also taught in addition to the New and Old Testaments. The students of this college occupy themselves with these and also with discussions of trivial matters such as whether Mary had other children besides Jesus and whether this affected her status as a virgin. Lastly, they do not teach philosophy or other rational subjects because their focus is on mortification of the flesh.

While in Greece, Agnes observes that a college she knows there is not interested in proving idol-worship wrong but rather in proving Muslims wrong, as well as portraying them as cruel, ruthless and obsessed with worldly affairs. After Greece, Agnes decides to go to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem and then on to Rome. In a footnote, Sharar explains that the Holy See convoked a council to elect a new pope with Agnes as a member. In another footnote, he says that in the 9th century

Christians venerated the bones of their monks and martyrs, and so bishops and priests collected them. It was thought that they had a fragrance different from that of other bones. When Pope Leo IV meets Agnes, he tells her to pray that the Christians may be able to conquer the lands of the Muslims, as was normal for Christians of the time to think.

Clearly, Sharar includes these examples in order to show the illogicality and cruelty of Christianity.

Fatāḥ-i Undulus ('The conquest of Andalus')

First published in 1904, this novel is 305 pages long and divided into 27 chapters. It revolves around the love story between a convert to Islam named ʿĪsā bin Mazāḥim, who is the son of Seleucus, and a Christian girl named Maryam, the daughter of Seleucus's brother Don Pedro. The story is set during the conquest of Andalusia by Muslim forces aided by Count Julian of Ceuta during the caliphate of Waleed bin ʿAbdulmalik (the Umayyad caliph al-Walīd ibn ʿAbd al-Malik, r. 705-15). ʿĪsā bin Mazāḥim joins the army of Mūsā ibn Nusayr, who has earlier been defeated by Count Julian, in an attack on Ceuta. However, after some initial forays Julian proposes that they should jointly attack Roderic of Toledo. His reason for this is that Roderic has seduced his daughter Flōrindā, and he wants revenge. Moreover, Julian has heard that ʿĪsā wants to marry Flōrindā because of her famed beauty, though ʿĪsā has fallen in love with Maryam. Flōrindā and Julian take this as an insult, as is shown in the ensuing story of betrayals, unexpected chivalry and unrequited love.

After the Muslims have conquered Andalusia, Maryam seeks to visit St Martin's monastery, where Flōrindā has spread the rumour that Maryam has converted to Christianity. ʿĪsā rescues Maryam from the monastery and reveals the duplicity and hypocrisy of the monks. To determine Maryam's punishment for her alleged conversion and sexual misconduct, St Martin and other monks meet together, revealing their evil ways. Later, the honourable ʿĪsā meets Maryam's father and asks for her hand in marriage, promising to return Toledo to him as the rightful heir. However, the father chooses to remain away from worldly affairs and gives all to his daughter Maryam, who marries Isaac, a Christian. In due course, however, she converts to Islam when she comes to know about it from ʿĪsā.

One distinct element in this novel is that Sharar depicts Muslims as presenting Christians with two options: either to accept Islam or pay *jizya*, thus emphasising that Muslims did not forcibly convert people from other

religions. Lastly, Sharar depicts ʿĪsā telling Maryam that it was the Apostle Paul who introduced new rituals and beliefs into Christianity, desecrating the true faith in order to make people follow his religion.

Shauqīn malikah ('A passionate queen')

This novel, which is 288 pages long and divided into 23 chapters, was first published in *Dil Gudāz* between 1904 and 1906, and it appeared a little later in novel form. The plot revolves around Ṣalāḥuddīn's struggle to become reunited with his family during the events of the Second Crusade. He was travelling with them from Aleppo to Mecca when they were ambushed by Christians, who left his grandfather Zainuddīn alive but killed all the other men and took the women as slaves. Zainuddīn is furious and approaches the sultan of Mosul to remind him of his duty to take revenge. The sultan agrees and together they attack Edessa, which is ruled by Joscelin II. To ensure the loyalty of his army and people, the sultan offers them the plunder of the town, though after they have captured the city he sees his men insistently harassing a woman and punishes them. When the sultan captures Qal'at Ja'bar, which is ruled by Salīm ibn Malik ibn Badrān, who is known to give aid to the Christians, he is killed while he is sleeping. Hearing of his death, Joscelin II raids Edessa but is defeated by the sultan's son Nūruddīn. This time the Muslim warriors plunder the city, kill all the Christians who are left and burn their churches and monasteries.

When the news of this cruelty and the massacre reaches Pope Eugenius III, he writes to request Bernard of Clairvaux to proclaim the Second Crusade, which Bernard does in his famous sermon at Vézelay. Eleanor of Aquitaine, the wife of King Louis VII of France, requests permission from Bernard for women to join this Crusade. She has lived for most of her life in the West, where there are no Muslims, and she does not know about them, so she asks some bishops and monks who have come from the East with the terrible news of the destruction of Edessa to give her someone who can tell her about them. A certain Matthew, who is the youngest person present and also a foreigner with no knowledge of French, is chosen by the queen herself and the bishops have to agree to her decision. It is revealed later that Matthew is in fact Ṣalāḥuddīn disguised as a monk to search for the women of his family. First, however, Eleanor asks a certain Bishop Jablā about Muslims and he tells her that they are very cruel and ruthless and the worst enemies. He says their religion originated in the land of Arabia, from a man named Muḥammad, who belonged to the race

of Ishmael, and also that people of Arabia embraced this religion and then conquered all other lands while this religion spread like wildfire. Lastly, he complains that Christians who are living in lands ruled by Muslims have to pay a heavy tax to visit Jerusalem.

When Eleanor asks particularly about the faith of Muslims, Bishop Jablā tells her that they believe in only one God and hold Christian prophets and Jesus Christ in high regard, though they do not look on him as divine, which is the root of the enmity between them and Christians. Moreover, they also believe that Jesus was not crucified but instead disappeared up into the air. The queen is particularly curious about whom Muslims worship, as she has heard that they are idol worshippers and particularly revere Mahved, Ibelin and Turfa Jan. She has also heard that Muḥammad made a statue of himself in gold and claimed to be a god, and that he had spirits and djinns under his control and performed miracles with their help. She says that this is the religion of Muslims in Spain. Bishop Jablā replies that they do not worship idols and points out in particular that they are not even allowed to place images in their houses and mosques, but worship God alone. He also tells her that Islam is the same everywhere. But Eleanor insists on an explanation she has heard, so Bishop Jablā does not pursue the matter, thinking that it is best for Christians to carry on being prejudiced against Muslims, which may be useful in in the Crusades.

King Louis and Queen Eleanor are experiencing trouble in their marriage. The queen is suspicious that her husband is having an affair with a woman named Sabila, while the king is suspicious that his wife is having an affair with young Matthew (Ṣalāḥuddīn in disguise). When King Louis sneaks into the women's camp, these suspicions are found to be true and he realises that, just as he loves Sabila, so the queen loves Matthew. The queen suggests they each love whom they wish and the king accepts this because he has no other choice.

Meanwhile, news comes that King Manuel of Constantinople has ordered the murder of a relative of Emperor Conrad of Germany, who has also agreed to take part in this Crusade. Moreover, Manuel has also led the German army astray and killed most of them, while he has spread news that Conrad has defeated the Turks in Konya. It is later discovered that this was a ruse to divert the attention of the French. Queen Eleanor shares the news of Conrad's defeat with Matthew and he replies that he knows the Turks could not have been defeated because they are very brave. But when Conrad returns to the French camp, he says that the Turks are looters, robbers, deceitful and hypocrites, though when he expresses these opinions

in front of Matthew, the latter feels compelled to correct him. Matthew argues that looting and robbery are regarded by Turks as part of their military strategy and that they are so courageous that they prefer to die in battle rather than surrender. He explains that they are prepared to die in places where there is no one to bury them and their bodies devoured by wild animals. King Louis thinks that this is the embodiment of their barbarity but Emperor Conrad praises them for their courage.

Conrad returns to Germany to gather more troops, betraying Louis and the promise he has made to stay. Louis presses forward against the Muslims at the River Meander but is defeated at Çatalhöyük. Following this defeat, some soldiers abandon their faith thinking that, if God could not save them from such a disaster, then there is no God. The king of Italy, fearing that the situation might get worse, suggests to King Louis that he travel to Jerusalem by sea. Louis agrees and leaves his wife in Antioch, which is under the rule of Raymond, her uncle. In Antioch, Raymond prepares for an attack on Edessa but Louis favours a move against Jerusalem. It is at this point that Matthew reveals his identity to Eleanor, whom he later rescues and takes into his protection. The story climaxes in Nūruddīn's defeat of the Crusader army, when Eleanor divorces her husband and marries Henry II of England. It is their son who becomes known as Richard the Lionheart.

SIGNIFICANCE

With the loss of Mughal sovereignty and the depredations that were experienced after the Uprising of 1857, Sharar believed that Muslims needed to recall their glorious past. He, therefore, sought to broaden his readers' horizons and evoke a sense of being part of the wider Islamic world. More than being Indian, they were Muslims. This was a theme common among followers of the Aligarh movement, who cultivated Muslim nationalism at a time when many social, financial and political structures had been destroyed by fighting and, under direct British rule, new policies were not looked on favourably by Muslims.

Sharar's historical novels present heroes who embody ideals and inspire pride. He stated in his essays that there was no better medium than novels to educate an audience morally. He realised that the audience did not favour those of his novels that were situated in their own time and place, but were enthusiastic about those set in distant lands. He also observed that his audience did not connect with the form and topics in Western novels that had been translated, but preferred tales of romance, particularly when they depicted heroism and the self-confidence of people of

their same country or religion. They loved a hero they could relate to, one who represented their struggles and aspirations.

Some critics believe that Sharar started writing historical novels such as *Malik al-ʿAzīz Varjinā* as a rejoinder to Sir Walter Scott's *The Talisman* (1825). Scott's story and style were gripping, but he cast Muslims in the role of villains, and this is thought to have sparked Sharar's imagination.

Sharar's religiously charged historical novels contributed to a surge of pride in their non-Indian heritage among Muslims in the subcontinent. It also helped engender a negative view of other religions, especially Christianity. Awareness of the biased portrayals in these novels spread widely and added to a reverse of Orientalism in which Christian countries were described as irrational, violent and grossly sexualized. Such accounts were recounted and passed on by grandparents and parents and are still known today. Later writers such as Nasīm Hijāzī (1914-96) carried forward a genre that described a glorious though imagined past and narrated a future of global domination.

Sharar's historical novels introduced a new genre to a ready readership of Muslims who were living under British colonial rule and in an increasingly globalised world. There were frequent news reports from the Ottoman Empire and from areas affected by war and revolution. The novels placed recognisable characters in these distant lands, and recounted stories that were gripping and romantic, but that fed a distaste for Christians and sought to embolden the Muslim community, who felt the need to reassert their place within the leadership of the region where they lived.

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ʿAbdulḥalīm Sharar, *Flōrā Flōrindā*, Lucknow, 1988

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ʿAbdulḥalīm Sharar, *Muqaddas nāznīn ya Pope Agnes*, Lucknow, 1923; muqaddas-nazneen (digitised version available through Rekhta.org)
ʿAbdulḥalīm Sharar, *Muqaddas nāznīn*, Lucknow, n.d.

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ʿAbdulḥalīm Sharar, *Fatāḥ-i Undulus*, Lucknow, 1904
ʿAbdulḥalīm Sharar, *Fatāḥ-i Undulus*, Lucknow, 1910
ʿAbdulḥalīm Sharar, *Fatāḥ-i Undulus*, Lucknow, 1922; fatah-e-undulus-abdul-halim-sharar (digitised version available through Rekhta.org)
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ʿAbdulḥalīm Sharar, *Shauqīn malikah*, Lucknow, 1991

STUDIES

A. Fatimi, *ʿAbdul Halīm Sharar bah-haisiyat-i novel nigār*, New Delhi, 1986
M. Manglori, *Sharar ke tārīkh novel*
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Non-fictional works

DATE Late 19th-early 20th centuries
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Urdu

DESCRIPTION

In addition to the novels in which he portrayed Christians and Christianity as dramatic elements in his stories, ʿAbd ul Ḥalīm Sharar also wrote two

more direct and systematic works on Christianity and its relationship to Islam. The first of these works also contains an additional essay.

Qadīm Masīḥiyyat ('Bygone Christianity')

This is a short treatise of 72 pages divided into six chapters in which Sharar compares aspects of Christianity and Islam. Nothing is known about the circumstances in which it was written or what prompted it. He begins by discussing Christian wars against Muslims, such as the Crusades and earlier assaults, attempting to prove that Muslims were more humane than Christians, who relentlessly massacred everyone who was not with them. As decreed by the second Caliph ʿUmar (ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, r. 634-44), Muslims avoided killing women, children and the elderly, and respected churches. ʿUmar himself entered Jerusalem but decided not to pray in the churches as he feared that Muslims after him would demolish them and replace them with mosques. While they ended Roman rule, according to Sharar's reading Muslims did not harm Christianity in itself. Even in Bayt al-Ḥikma (the 'House of wisdom' established in Baghdad under the early ʿAbbāsid caliphs), some Christian scholars and translators were included. Christian kings, however, ruthlessly opposed all other religions and forcefully required dogmatic conformity.

Sharar also discusses the reasons why Christianity has spread all over the world. One reason is that Judaism had already spread worldwide, and Christianity flowed along the channels that had been set in place through this. Another reason is the simplicity of Christian faith and practice. There was a consistency about these in the early Church, and a mutual consensus among Christians about the magnanimous and miraculous person and works of Christ that was compelling to the people of that time. But there were many different sects of Christians, which were actually sects of Gnosticism such as the Ophites, Saturnilians and Carpocracians. The weakness of Christianity was that a proper *sharīʿa* was never devised to codify the teachings of Christ.

Sharar also wonders whether Christians are too preoccupied with refuting the beliefs of others, no matter who they are. The manner in which missionaries work, particularly in India, is also not fruitful. They attach special focus to public debate and in this way stir up prejudices. Instead, they should focus on teaching the truth, and refrain from giving offence and making personal attacks.

In conclusion, Sharar thinks that, although Christianity was once a true religion with claims so strong that it would have been impossible to disprove it, a few centuries before the Islamic era it became contaminated by Roman idolatry.

At the end of the booklet, Sharar includes an essay entitled *Tamāshā-i muʿjizāt* ('Circus of miracles') in which he criticises Christian preachers who have diverged from the actual teachings of Christ and invented new ones. As evidence to support this, he describes how theatrical performances based on biblical stories present inaccurate portrayals of events in order to evoke emotional responses. Examples are a dramatisation of the story of Noah's ark and a play called the 'Dance of death' (*Danse macabre*) that aim to spread Christianity through public entertainment. At various times these have been authorised by popes, bishops and priests.

Masīḥ aur Masīḥiyyat ('Christ and Christianity')

This book, 270 pages long divided into 23 chapters, was first published in 1917. It describes the birth of Jesus Christ from the viewpoints of Christian and Muslim historians of Jesus's times, and presents a detailed analysis of his life before and after his claim to prophethood. It also outlines his teachings, struggles and miracles, as well as the lives of John the Baptist, Paul, Barnabas, Peter and later figures such as Constantine the Great.

The book also analyses the controversy regarding the crucifixion of Jesus from the perspectives of Muslims, Christians and Jews. It goes on to discuss the character of Christianity and how it spread after the time of Jesus through the ministries of Peter and Paul, who was considered the twelfth disciple after the betrayal by Judas. It surveys the development of Christianity and the many rifts within the community, such as the differences between Roman Christians and Palestinian Christians, and the Eastern and European churches. It also explores accounts of the persecution of Christians by the Romans, the devotional significance of the cross, and Christianity's impact on the Roman Empire, which Sharar surmises led to the empire's demise. It discusses the writing of the Gospels and the differences between them, the Church Councils and other major and minor events in the history of Christianity.

At the heart of these historical accounts is an implicit comparison between Islam and Christianity. By proving that Christianity has become distorted, Sharar leaves open the alternative that Islam is the better religion.

SIGNIFICANCE

Many of Sharar's novels present an idealised view of Islam and an adulterated image of Christianity, explaining why some Muslims think their religion is superior to Christianity and they are superior to Christians. This view can be inferred from the novels, but in these two non-fictional works Sharar presents his position directly and systematically. While he comes to the predictable conclusion that Islam has superseded Christianity, the examples he adduces to support his points make them doubly convincing. These are not irenic accounts, but are openly polemical in character, tone and analysis.

Sharar's work has had considerable influence among the Urdu-speaking Muslim population of India.

PUBLICATIONS

ʿAbdulḥalīm Sharar, *Masīḥ aur Masīḥiyyat*, Lucknow, 1917
ʿAbdulḥalīm Sharar, *Qadīm Masīḥiyyat*, Lucknow, n.d.

Ṭāhirah

DATE 1923
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Urdu

DESCRIPTION

Ṭāhirah is a novel, though not a historical novel, more a sociological or social novel. Comprising 21 chapters in 160 pages, it is the story of Ṭāhirah *begum* as recounted by Lā'iquddaulah, who says he was educated by her rather than by a traditional religious teacher. Ṭāhirah (meaning 'pure woman') lived next door to Lā'iquddaulah's family in Lucknow in a house visited by English men and women but seldom by any Hindustanis. There were rumours that she had become a Christian, and she was called *karānī* (someone who has adopted the faith of the colonel, *karān*). Lā'iquddaulah's mother knew of this rumour and warned her son not to go to the house but he went anyway and asked Ṭāhirah why people said she was a *karānī*. Ṭāhirah invited his mother to visit and then elaborated on her life story. She related that she was the niece of Maulvī ʿAzīzullāh, who worked at the Lucknow Residency under Captain Mackintosh. Lady Mackintosh had taught her English in the same way that she would have taught her own daughter if she had had one.

Maulvī ʿAzīzullāh wanted his son, Walī Allāh, to marry Ṭāhirah, but she rejected the proposal because the young man had been taught at Firangī Maḥal, the influential seat of traditional Muslim learning, that if a Muslim ate with Christians and learnt their language, he was considered a non-Muslim and marriage with such a person was forbidden. Furthermore, any Muslim who converted to Christianity should be killed as an apostate. Maulvī ʿAzīzullāh resolutely opposed this teaching and, in a fit of rage, told his son to leave the house if he would not agree to marry Ṭāhirah. Walī left to go on Hajj without any money. His parents could not bear the pangs of separation and they died within a month. In her distress, Ṭāhirah forsook any idea of marriage and convinced Captain and Lady Mackintosh that she would remain single.

Initially, people working in her house kept pestering her with proposals of marriage, but she tired of politely rejecting them and dismissed them from her employment. This ended the stream of proposals, but led to the rumour that Ṭāhirah had converted to Christianity. When Ṭāhirah told the story to Lā'iquddaulah's mother, she understood the situation and was moved to seek happiness for Ṭāhirah. By some miracle, Walī Allāh returned to Lucknow, repented of his mistake, and asked for her hand in marriage. He had realised during his years in Egypt and Saudi Arabia that his teachers' *fatwā* was wrong. The two were married and moved to Egypt, where they lived happily and had three children.

SIGNIFICANCE

Sharar wrote many novels that recount aspects of life in north India. Critics have said that he wrote them in order to recall and preserve the past culture and society of Lucknow and also used them to challenge social practices and prejudices. Thus, in *Ṭāhirah* he criticises the traditional Muslim teachings of Firangī Maḥal for promulgating distrust of Christians and Europeans and for creating social boundaries that excluded those of other religions and of other Muslim schools of thought.

PUBLICATIONS

ʿAbdulḥalīm Sharar, *Ṭāhirah*, Lucknow, 1923, repr. Lahore, 1991
ʿAbdulḥalīm Sharar, *Ṭāhirah*, Lucknow, 1923[2]
ʿAbdulḥalīm Sharar, *Ṭāhirah*, Lucknow, 1934[3]
ʿAbdulḥalīm Sharar, *Ṭāhirah*, Lucknow, 1969

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A. Fatimi, *ʿAbdulḥalīm Sharar ba-haisiyat-i novel nigār*, Lucknow, 1986

Nukbah Taj Langah and Akhtar Mirza

Sulṭān Muḥammad Paul

DATE OF BIRTH 1881
PLACE OF BIRTH Barkibark Rajan, Logar, Afghanistan
DATE OF DEATH 1960
PLACE OF DEATH Possibly Lahore

BIOGRAPHY

Sulṭān Muḥammad Paul was an influential Christian polemicist in the first half of the 20th century, known for his debates with Muslim scholars following his conversion from Shīʿī Islam to Christianity. He wrote extensively on issues such as the miraculous nature (*iʿjāz*) of the Qur'an, salvation, the divinity and crucifixion of Jesus, the atonement, the Trinity, and the status of Jesus in relation to Muḥammad. His writings as a Christian caught the attention of Muslim theologians, promoting public debates and written exchanges. His command of Arabic and Persian, along with his use of original Islamic sources, earned him attention from Muslim scholars, who replied to his criticisms of Islam and the Prophet Muḥammad.

Sulṭān Muḥammad was born in Afghanistan in 1881, the son of Colonel Pāyandah Khān, a prominent figure in the Afghan army, who was executed among other state notables shortly after ʿAbdurraḥmān Khān assumed power. His death marked the beginning of a series of hardships for his family, including the imprisonment and exile of his uncles. His family had to move and settled first among other Afghan exiles in Hasan Abdal in the Attock District of the Punjab. Despite initial attempts to return to Kabul, concerns about their security forced them to move on to India. They settled in Delhi, where Sulṭān Muḥammad was educated at Madrasa-i Fateḥpūrī.

Sulṭān Muḥammad's first significant encounter with Christians occurred at a public debate on the doctrine of the Trinity. He recounted later in his autobiography that a Christian pointed out that in Q 50:16, 'We [God] are closer to him than (his) jugular vein', God is referred to by the plural pronoun *naḥnu*, meaning 'we', and argued that if the purpose of the Qur'an had been to express absolute divine unicity the pronoun *anā*, meaning 'I', would have appeared. This was when Sulṭān Muḥammad first became aware of an interest in debate, and the incident led him to explore the popular polemical literature of the day, such as Raḥmatullāh Kairānavī's *Iẓhār ul-ḥaqq* ('Demonstration of the truth').

In 1902, Sulṭān Muḥammad began to attend Ḍīyā' al-Islām, a Muslim centre founded in 1895 to counter Christian missionaries and the Hindu Arya Samaj. It organised a weekly gathering at which missionaries, both indigenous and foreign, were invited to present their arguments and engage in debates. Many leading Christians attended, including Aḥmad Shah Shā'iq, the editor of *Al-Ḥaqq* magazine, Joseph Bihari Lal from Aurangabad in the Deccan, and Manṣūr Masīḥ, the head catechist of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel mission. In 1903, Manṣūr Masīḥ's address on salvation in Christianity and Islam led Sulṭān Muḥammad to look afresh at his beliefs, with the result that he accepted Christianity and was baptised into the Anglican Church under the name Sulṭān Muḥammad Paul at St Paul's Church in Bombay on 6 August 1903, when he was 22. He was mentored by Aḥmad Shāh at Kanpur, where he served as 'head maulvie' at Christ Church High School until 1906, when he moved to serve in a similar capacity at the mission school in Banda. He worked in various mission schools in north India and then eventually moved to Lahore to teach at Forman Christian College.

Paul wrote many essays and books. Within a few months of his conversion, he told his story for publication in *Epiphany* and *Nūr Afshān*. One of his first essays was a critique of the Muslim claim for the miraculous nature of the Qur'an entitled *Faṣāḥat-i Qur'ān* ('The eloquence of the Qur'an'). This attracted the attention of the editor of *Al-Balāgh*, who published a note about his conversion in which the editor argued that he had been driven to Christianity by his poverty and suggested that he should be renamed Sulṭān Masīḥ. Sulṭān Muḥammad wrote a rebuttal, which was published in *Nūr Afshān* (33 [March 1905] pp. 6-7). Such exchanges were common at this time. In an essay entitled *Nijāt ṣirf Masīḥ se hai* ('Salvation is only from Christ'), he argued that Islam does not offer true salvation but that only Christ possesses the authority to intercede for humankind before God. His rejoinder to the editor of *Al-Balāgh* and this argument about eternal salvation were included in his account of his early life, which was published in 1927 under the title *Main kiyūn Masīḥī ho gayā* ('Why I became a Christian').

Sulṭān Muḥammad's linguistic ability and aptitude for debate were admired by fellow scholars and later by prominent adversaries such as Sanā'ullāh Amritsarī (1868-1948), who engaged with him in several religious debates and wrote refutations of some of his works, including his commentary on the Qur'an, *Sulṭān al-tafāsīr*.

Another significant encounter in Sulṭān Muḥammad's intellectual development was with the writings of Mīrzā Ghulām Aḥmad (d. 1908), the

founder of the Aḥmadiyya. He criticised Ghulām Aḥmad's prediction of an earthquake on 4 April 1905, arguing that such events could be forecast by scientific measurement and had nothing to do with divine inspiration.

Sulṭān Muḥammad became an active figure in the polemical debates that characterised early and mid-20th-century Christian-Muslim interactions, composing numerous critical analyses and refutations of Muslim teachings. He also served as the editor of *Nūr Afshāṇ* from January 1929 to May 1933 and as professor of Arabic language and literature in Forman Christian College. He was regarded as a hero by fellow Christians and was known as *Sulṭān ul-munāẓirīn* ('master of debaters').

The exact year of Sulṭān Muḥammad's death is uncertain, though it was probably 1960. Aḥmad Dīn Gakharwī, in the preface to his *Majmūʿa-i rasāʾil Gakharwī*, which he was in the middle of writing on 15 June 1961, refers to Paul as being dead.

MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Primary

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Muhammad Paul, 'Warum Maulwi Sultan Mohammed Paul Christ würde', *Evangelisches Missionsmagazin* 72 (1928) 47-59

Secondary

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WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Writings against Islam

DATE 1920 and 1930s

ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Urdu

DESCRIPTION

Six of Sulṭān Muḥammad Paul's works are particularly informative for what they contain about his understanding of Islam and his attitude towards it. (There may be others from his later years, but attempts to discover these have not succeeded.)

Main kiyūn Masīḥī ho gayā (1921)

He published an account of his early life, *Main kiyūn Masīḥī ho gayā*, in Urdu in 1921; an English translation, 'Why I became a Christian', was published in 1928. The Urdu version is 47 pages long, 22 of them on his life, including his family background and conversion, and the remainder comprises reflections on the concept of salvation, which became a topic of debate and of later written exchanges with his Muslim rivals, most notably Sanā'ullāh Amritsarī (1868-1948), a prominent Muslim opponent. Paul argues that, in Christianity, salvation is attained through faith in Christ, who atoned for human sins when no human deed, no matter how good, could merit heaven, whereas Muslims claim that salvation can be earned by good deeds. He explains that, when he was studying the Qur'an, particularly Q 99:7-8 ('So whoever does an atom's weight of good will see it, and whoever does an atom's weight of evil will see it'), he struggled with the impossibility of only doing good and never evil, and he questioned whether a human could be perfect, or perfect enough for his good deeds to outweigh his evil ones. He came to the conclusion that this could not be true of anyone in history except Jesus Christ. In Christianity salvation comes through faith in the actions of Christ rather than merit from good deeds.

Amritsarī wrote a rebuttal, *Javābāt Naṣārā* ('Answers to the Christians', Gujranwala, 1930), in which he pointed out that when good deeds outweigh evil deeds salvation and bliss are indeed attained in the afterlife, and argued that Paul's conclusion from Q 99:7-8 was based on mistaken interpretation. He claimed that the emphasis in the verse does not mean that humans should somehow only perform good deeds but that, on the Day of Judgement, the one whose scale is laden more with good deeds than bad will be successful. Amritsarī argued that there are many verses in the Qur'an that associate salvation with faith in Muḥammad, including Q 3:31, and there are also verses in the Bible that link salvation with good deeds, such as Leviticus 25:18 (*Javābāt Naṣārā,* pp. 76-9). Paul rejected all these explanations.

Sher Afghān (1930)

Following Amritsarī's rebuttal, Paul responded with *Sher Afghān* ('Afghan lion'), the title of which was intended as a pun on Amritsarī's sobriquet, *Sher-i Punjāb* ('Lion of the Punjab'). It is 48 pages long and neither academic

nor irenic in tone. Paul includes many personal attacks on Amritsarī and his 'Wahhābī' school of thought, and compares him to Mīrzā Ghulām Aḥmad, the founder of the Aḥmadiyya, as one who was leading Muslims away from the traditional intent of Islam (*Sher Afghān*, p. 2). Amritsarī then replied with *Javāb ul-javāb* ('The answer to the answer'), which brought this series of exchanges to an end.

Habūṭ-i nasl insānī (1925)

On 7 April 1924, Paul engaged in debate with Khavāja Kamāluddīn (1870-1932), a prominent figure in the early Aḥmadiyya, on the issue of salvation. Paul argued in favour of the Christian doctrine of original sin and Kamāluddīn presented the Muslim view. Maulvī Muḥammad ʿAlī (1874-1951) wrote a brief but detailed note about the main issue they covered, which was whether humans are born in original sin and inherit a sinful nature because of the Fall in the Garden of Eden (*Paigham-i Ṣulḥ* 12/75 [1924] 2). In this, he emphasised that all humans are born with a virtuous nature and neither reason nor revelation provide a basis for the doctrine of original sin. In response, Paul wrote *Habūṭ-i nasl insānī* ('The fall of the human race') in 1925 (51 pages long), in which he countered ʿAlī's main idea, arguing that it cannot be supported from the either the Bible or the Qur'an.

Hamārā Qur'ān (1928)

Paul also wrote *Hamārā Qur'ān* ('Our Qur'an'), 124 pages long, in which he outlined various biblical teachings in the light of the Qur'an, including the unity of God and the attributes and being of God. Paul appealed to both Muslims and Christians to advance the mission of God together.

Sulṭān al-tafāsīr (1932-4)

Paul's commentary on the Qur'an entitled *Sulṭān al-tafāsīṛ* ('The Qur'an exegeses of Sulṭān' – obviously a play on Paul's name, though a straightforward translation is 'Authority over Qur'an exegeses') was published in monthly instalments from February 1932 to 1934 in the Lahore magazine *Mā'ida*. Aḥmaduddīn (1900-73), who responded to Sulṭān's autobiography *Main kiyūn Masīḥī ho gayā* with *Nijāt al-Islām* ('Salvation in Islam', 1961), notes that this was started expressly to publish the commentary. It was

later published in book form. Some parts were also published in *Al-Nijāt*, another Lahore journal.

To explain the exegetical method he uses here, Paul first translates the text of the Qur'an into Urdu. He then makes a detailed lexical analysis from which he deduces that the Qur'an was entirely Muḥammad's own work and not a revelation. For example, he argues that Muḥammad borrowed the main theme of the opening chapter from the poet Umayya ibn Abī l-Ṣalt, whom he encountered in Medina (*Sulṭān al-tafāsīr*, quoted in Sanā'ullāh Amritsarī, *Burhān al-tafsīr li-iṣlāḥ Sulṭān al-tafāsīr*, Gurjanwala, 2011, pp. 18-20). He also argues that many of the teachings of the Qur'an are derived from the Bible. Even the *Bismilla*, 'In the name of Allāh, the most gracious and merciful', he claims, was first revealed to the Hebrew 'prophet' Solomon, and Muḥammad translated it into Arabic (Amritsarī, *Burhān*, p. 10). Neverthelesss, the overall tone of the commentary is more irenic and academic than Paul's previous writings. He frequently highlights what he regards as positive aspects of the Qur'an, among them the opening chapter, in his view a completely sincere prayer to which everyone can say 'Amen' because its words are pearls from the Bible that have been strung together in a new arrangement and style (Amritsarī, *Burhān*, p. 21).

Amritsarī responded to Paul's exegesis in a weekly series of articles in the magazine *Ahl-i Ḥadīth* between May 1932 and May 1935, which he printed on his own press in Amritsar. These were much later published as *Burhān al-tafsīr li-iṣlāḥ Sulṭān al-tafāsīr*. Like Paul, he is also more moderate in tone here than in his earlier writings, acknowledging, for example, that the Qur'an does not claim to bring new teachings but that its rendition in Arabic is miraculous. He also challenges Paul to locate the verse *Bismi-llāhi r-raḥmāni r-raḥīm* in these exact Arabic words in any of the previous scriptures (*Burhān al-tafsīr*, p. 97).

Ḥaqā'iq-i Qur'ān (s.d.)

In *Ḥaqā'iq-i Qur'ān* ('The facts of the Qur'an'), Paul gives 14 reasons from the Qur'an for Jesus's superiority over Muḥammad, including his virgin birth, the supremacy of Mary over other women, the occurrence of remarkable and unusual incidents before his birth, his speaking in the cradle, his ascension to heaven, raising the dead, power of creation and healing the blind. (This information is given by A.A. Bhatti, *Aina ḥaqā'iq-i Qur'ān*, Lahore: Islami Mision Sannt Nagar [s.d.], p. 3.)

SIGNIFICANCE

Paul's works, though polemical and often controversial, circulated widely, with many editions published until they were banned in Pakistan in the 1960s for what was regarded as their blasphemous content and inflammatory language (resulting in many of them being difficult to find). Nevertheless, pirated copies remain accessible online and Paul's contributions to Christian anti-Muslim polemical literature continue to be an important source of information for scholars studying interfaith debates of this era.

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Farman Ali

Barakat Ullāh

DATE OF BIRTH 16 August 1891
PLACE OF BIRTH Narowal, British India
DATE OF DEATH 8 October 1972
PLACE OF DEATH Delhi

BIOGRAPHY

Barakat Ullāh (who should not be confused with Maulānā Barkatullāh, d. 1927, a Muslim missionary and revolutionary from Bhopal), was born on 16 August 1891 as Barakat ʿAlī into a high-caste Shīʿī family in the small town of Narowal located in the Punjab province of British India. One of his maternal uncles had permanently moved to Karbalāʾ in Iraq, which connected the family with one of the holiest sites of Shīʿī Islam. In 1878, 13 years before Barakat ʿAlī's birth, his paternal uncle, Iḥsān ʿAlī, converted to Christianity and changed his name to Iḥsān Ullāh to emphasise his belief in the saving qualities of Jesus versus those of ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib, the first spiritual leader of the Shīʿī community after Muḥammad. Following his conversion, Iḥsān Ullāh was employed by the Anglican Church Missionary Society (CMS) as a 'native catechist', a Bible teacher serving local Christian communities. In 1907, Iḥsān Ullāh's brother Raḥmat ʿAlī, Barakat ʿAlī's father, also converted after a 20-year sustained engagement with biblical texts. This was prompted by his wife, Barakat ʿAlī's mother, contracting the plague, Raḥmat ʿAlī praying to the 'God of the Bible' for healing, and his wife miraculously recovering from her illness. He then adopted Raḥmat Ullāh as his new name, following the pattern set by his older brother. His wife and two younger children converted as well, and they were baptised together as a family.

Barakat ʿAlī, who was attending high school in Batala at the time, at first opposed his father's decision but, after discussions with his parents, he also converted. Following his baptism in the same year, Barakat ʿAlī changed his name to Barakat Ullāh. As a result of the entire family leaving Shīʿī Islam, its members were declared casteless (*ḥuqqā pānī band*, lit. a ban on sharing the water pipe and water) by the local community.

As a child, Barakat Ullāh received a typical high-caste Muslim education, both at home and at the hands of a local teacher, Sayyid Saʿīd Shāh. His training included memorising the Qur'an and reading Persian poetry and prose. In addition, he attended a local primary school run by Christian

missionaries and later the A.L.O.E. (A Lady of England) Mission High School at Batala. In 1908, he enrolled at Forman Christian College, Lahore, to study philosophy, and in 1910 at St Stephen's College, Delhi, obtaining a master's degree in philosophy in 1914. From 1914 until 1918, he taught English and philosophy at Edwardes College, Peshawar, and from 1918 until 1923 at both Forman Christian College and Government College, Lahore. In 1919, he married Sarah Massey, the daughter of an Afghan convert.

After studying theology privately for several years, Barakat Ullāh was ordained as an Anglican deacon and joined the CMS in 1923. His ordination as a priest followed in 1924, after which the CMS employed him as a catechist in his hometown of Narowal. In 1929, he was posted to Fatehgarh in the Batala district, where he became involved in bazaar preaching, set up a study circle to discuss Christian doctrines, organised meetings on religious topics, met with leading Muslim scholars, invited prominent Christian lecturers, and founded a Christian library and reading room.

From 1936, Barakat Ullāh served in various positions in the Anglican Church of India, as vicar of Holy Trinity Church, Lahore (1936-40), instructor in religious education at Baring Christian College, Batala (1944-9), assessor to the Episcopal Synod and eventually archdeacon of Amritsar (1952-7). During the 1947 Partition, Barakat Ullāh opted to stay in India. In 1957, he was appointed as a lecturer at the Henry Martyn Institute at Aligarh. He moved to Delhi in the 1960s on account of ill health, and died there on 8 October 1972. He was survived by his wife, Sarah Massey, and three daughters.

Starting from the mid-1920s, Barakat Ullāh published about 30 books and pamphlets as well as many journal articles. His writings appeared in Christian, Muslim and non-denominational journals, including *Nūr Afshān* (published by the American Presbyterian Mission from Ludhiana), *Qāsid*, *The Masīḥī* (a fortnightly Urdu Christian journal from Lahore), *The Epiphany* (published from Calcutta), *The Light* (published by the Aḥmadiyya Anjuman-i Ishā'at-i Islam in Lahore), and *The Indian Social Reformer* (published in Bombay). In his writings, he engaged with a wide range of topics such as the natural sciences, the religious thought of the Indian Muslim reformer Sayyid Aḥmad Khān, early Islamic history, the position of women in Islam and Christianity, Indian church history, biblical exegesis, and political ideologies such as socialism. Many of his writings can be categorised as polemics and apologetics that came out of his exchange with Muslims, such as the Ahl-i Hadith and the Aḥmadiyya. Early in his career, Barakat Ullāh became involved in a written controversy with Khawāja Kamāluddīn (d. 1932), one of the most important leaders and

missionaries of the Lahore wing of the Aḥmadiyya, which emerged after an internal split in 1914. In the late 1940s, Barakat Ullāh engaged in another written controversy carried out via books and pamphlets with Sanāʾullāh Amritsarī, one of the central figures in the Ahl-i Hadith movement.

Most of Barakat Ullāh's writings are characterised by a highly elaborate Urdu style that relies heavily on Arabic and Persian diction. They engage with key Islamic concepts informed by his Shīʿī background and education, and they assume an audience of well-educated, high-caste readers rather than converts from a low-caste background who formed the backbone of the Christian community in the Punjab at the time. Exceptions to this are the numerous prayer books and collections of hymns that he wrote in Punjabi for use in village churches, published in both Arabic *nastaʿlīq* and *Gurmukhī* scripts. While Barakat Ullāh himself served former untouchables as a pastor, he often bemoaned the general absence of high-caste converts in the Indian church. The majority of his intellectual output can be characterised as an attempt to indigenise Christian thought, translate it into an elaborate structure that could be understood by the educated (non-Christian) elites of his time and would be capable of offering a rich intellectual and spiritual tradition that connected to concepts with which people were already familiar. At the same time, it can also be seen as an attempt to set Christianity apart from Islam as a tradition in its own right and present it as a more 'modern' and progressive religion by employing the latest research by European authors in sociology, psychoanalysis and comparative religious studies.

Barakat Ullāh's oeuvre also displays a concern to demonstrate the distinctness, intellectual superiority and comprehensiveness of Christianity vis-à-vis Islam as a means of dealing with problems caused by people following a hybrid mix of religious traditions at a time when an increasing hardening of religious boundaries can be observed. Writings such as his also represent a tension in the South Asian, and particularly Punjabi, church, in which most members came from low-caste or casteless backgrounds and often remained voiceless and invisible in the historical record, whereas a small number of elite converts gained high visibility through their intellectual achievements.

The three works by Barakat Ullāh presented below continue a tradition of oral and written debates between Muslim and Christian intellectuals, particularly converts, in 18th- and 19th-century South Asia. Although these were published outside the terminal date (1914) of *CMR*, they provide valuable insights and context for these earlier debates and their subsequent trajectories. *Nūr al-hudā* carries forward the controversy between

members of the Aḥmadiyya and Christian missionaries begun in the 1880s. *Muhammad ʿArabī* intervenes in debates around the person of the Prophet Muḥammad that raged in South Asia throughout the colonial period, with the participation of Muslim modernists, such as Sayyid Aḥmad Khān and Shiblī Nuʿmānī, missionaries-cum-orientalists, such as William Muir, and representatives of the so-called traditionalist spectrum, such as the Barelvis. *Dīn-i fiṭrat* stands in a line of public exchange between scholars affiliated to the Ahl-i Hadith movement and members of the local South Asian Christian community. All three works exemplify how patterns of earlier controversies persisted throughout the late colonial period, how *munāẓarah*s (public religious debates) were carried forward in written form even after having lost much of their relevance and appeal as a spoken and performed public genre, and how themes of Muslim-Christian polemical exchange were transformed and adapted as a result of a changing intellectual and political climate.

MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION

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Extracts from the annual letters of the missionaries, London, 1905-11

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J. Verghese, 'Barakat Ullah', n.d. (unpublished MS in the Ashoka University Archives, Delhi, B.G. Verghese Collection)

J. Verghese, 'Sarah', 1998 (unpublished MS in the Ashoka University Archives, Delhi, B.G. Verghese Collection)

M. Fuchs, 'Adding layers. Convert identities in the late colonial Punjab', Oxford, 2012 (MA Diss. University of Oxford)

WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

Nūr al-hudā, bi-javāb Yanābīʿ al-Masīḥiyyat
'The light of salvation, in response to "Sources of Christianity"'

DATE 1929
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Urdu

DESCRIPTION

Nūr al-hudā (127 pages long) was written in response to *Yanābīʿ al-Masīḥiyyat* (Lahore, 1923, translated into English as *Sources of Christianity*, Woking, 1924), authored by the above-mentioned Aḥmadī missionary Khawāja Kamāluddīn (1870-1932), who claimed that the original Christian message was distorted by 'pagan' teachings that produced the textual differences between qur'anic and biblical representations of Jesus. Soon after Jesus's death, Kamāluddīn argues, mystical and philosophical (i.e. Greek) beliefs were added by St Paul, whom Kamāluddīn blames for constructing a superstructure that obscured the simple and pure message of Jesus. His book reiterates well-established tropes in Muslim discussions of Christianity, which tended to identify Paul as the main promoter of the deification of Christ. Kamāluddīn cites contemporary historical-critical scholarship by European theologians to add substance to his claims. His book not only stands in a long tradition of Muslim writings on Christianity, but also continues a history of polemical exchange between Aḥmadīs and Christian missionaries begun in late 19th- and early 20th-century India. In 1906, Mīrzā Ghulām Aḥmad, founder of the Aḥmadiyya movement, published *Chashme Masīḥī* (trans. into English as *Fountain of Christianity*) in response to the Urdu translation of William Tisdall's (*CMR* 20, 285-309) *The sources of Islam* (Urdu title *Yanābīʿ al-Islām*, Lahore, 1899). In *The sources of Islam*, which was originally written in Persian and translated into English by William Muir (1819-1905, *CMR* 24, 666-96), Tisdall claimed that the Qur'an does not contain any new teachings but merely reproduces Jewish and Christian scriptures. To this, Mīrzā Ghulām Aḥmad responded by reiterating Muslim claims about the distortion of the original Christian scriptures at the hands of Paul and pointing out the unique character of the Qur'an.

In his response to Khawāja Kamāluddīn, Barakat Ullāh first traces the history of this polemical exchange and then goes on to demonstrate that Christianity is a unique religion whose teachings are fundamentally

different from the contents of both Greek mythology and polytheistic creeds. In a comparative religious studies fashion, he summarises the contents of Greek and Roman mythology as well as the histories of its associated societies before focusing on the person of Jesus and the origins of Christianity. The final part of his book (pp. 110-25) is an underlining of the merits of Christian teachings and salvation.

SIGNIFICANCE

Debates about the alleged Christian distortion of Jesus's message, and of qur'anic reliance on non-Islamic sources, have a long history in Muslim-Christian relations. This work carries forward the controversy between members of the Aḥmadiyya and Christian missionaries begun in the 1880s. That authors such as the founder of the Aḥmadiyya, Mīrzā Ghulām Aḥmad, and his disciple Khawāja Kamāluddīn, picked up the thread of this conversation again in the early 20th century must be regarded not only as part of the defence of Islam against Christian polemics prevalent at the time, but also as part of an intra-Islamic struggle for authority within South Asia's Muslim community. In this context, the Aḥmadiyya attempted to position itself as the main defender of Muḥammad's prophethood in order to gain greater legitimacy among Muslim critics, thereby countering claims that its founder Mīrzā Ghulām Aḥmad deviated from central Islamic doctrines in making claims to prophethood himself. In the same vein, Barakat Ullāh, by publishing a response to Kamāluddīn's book, makes a bid for intellectual leadership within the nascent north Indian Christian community, aiming at putting converts with a high-caste and former Muslim background at its helm. By demonstrating his familiarity with European religious scholarship, Barakat Ullāh seeks to demonstrate that he is on a par with the Aḥmadiyya's skilful writers and apologists such as Kamāluddīn. He also attempts to indigenise Christianity for English-educated Muslims in India and translate its key message into an idiom accessible to them. *Nūr al-hudā* carries into the 20th century earlier exchanges between Muslim and Christian intellectuals and provides additional insights and context for these debates and their subsequent trajectories.

PUBLICATIONS

Barakat Ullāh, *Nūr al-hudā*, Lahore, 1929

STUDIES

Fuchs, 'Adding layers', pp. 3-4, 25

Y. Friedmann, *Prophecy continuous. Aspects of Aḥmadī religious thought and its medieval background*, Berkeley CA, 1989, pp. 6-7, 106-21, 180-9

Muḥammad ʿArabī
'Muḥammad the Arab'

DATE 1932
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Urdu

DESCRIPTION
For this detailed account of the life of Muḥammad (220 pages), Barakat Ullāh drew primarily on Muslim sources, especially modernist writings, such as the Indian reformer and educationist Sayyid Aḥmad Khān's *Al-khuṭubāt al-Aḥmadiyya*, and Shiblī Nuʿmānī and Sayyid Sulaimān Nadvī's *Sīrat un-nabī*. (translated into English by Fazlur Rahman, *Allamah Shibli's Sirat al-Nabi*, Karachi, 1970-1). Other sources include the 8th-century biography by Ibn Isḥāq in the 9th-century edition by Ibn Hishām, the 9th-century Hadith collection of al-Bukhārī, the *Tārīkh* of the Mamluk-era Syrian historian Abū l-Fidāʾ, and the *Ṭabaqāt* of the 9th-century scholar Ibn Saʿd. In this, as well as other writings, he quotes the English translation of the Qur'an by the Aḥmadī Muḥammad ʿAlī, earning him the accusation by the Ahl-i Hadith theologian Sanā'ullāh Amritsarī of being an Aḥmadī himself. Even though European Orientalist scholarship was highly popular among Indian intellectuals at the time, Barakat Ullāh cited no European works, which was probably an attempt to thwart criticism of over-reliance on this scholarship.

In the preface, Barakat Ullāh states that his motivation for writing the book is to provide an informative and historically accurate account of the Prophet's life for both Christian and non-Christian readers that does not perpetuate the pattern of religious controversy prevalent in late 19th- and early 20th-century South Asia (pp. 10-11). In *munāẓarah*s (public religious debates) and *mubāḥasah*s (religious disputes), representatives of different religious communities often harshly attacked, criticised and ridiculed each other's belief systems. At the forefront of this were European and American Christian missionaries who wrote polemical treatises, such as William Muir's *Life of Mahomet* (1861). Local Christians, often Urdu-speaking converts, became embroiled in these controversies as well. Barakat Ullāh mentions ʿImāduddīn Lāhiz as an example of a high-caste convert who wrote a polemical account of the life of Muḥammad in Urdu (p. 11). In contrast, Barakat Ullāh's work approaches the person of the Prophet with respect and aims at creating an unbiased portrayal, though he carefully avoids statements that could be read as supporting Muḥammad's claims to prophethood. As a former Muslim, Barakat Ullāh

appears to have been hurt by the negative representation of Muḥammad's life by both foreign and local Christians, representations which he sought to rectify. He argues that, because Muḥammad was a major political leader, social reformer and founder of a world religion, it is important to be familiar with his life (p. 10). The result is a book that comes close to contemporary Muslim accounts of early Islam in terms of the historical chronology and main events, but differs markedly in its interpretation.

Muḥammad ʿArabī is organised into three parts: Muḥammad's time in Mecca, his years in Medina, and his rule over both. In the preface, Barakat Ullāh introduces major sources about Muḥammad's life to his readers, such as those mentioned above, and explains the historical content of the Hadith. This is aimed at a Christian readership and attempts to counter misconceptions about the alleged lack of accuracy in Islamic historiography. The subsequent chapters narrate the most important events in the Prophet's life, beginning with his birth, followed by the different stages of his prophetic career, his migration to Medina, his marriages, military campaigns, relationship with Jewish tribes, death, and his successors.

Three things stand out. First, Barakat Ullāh strongly emphasises Christian influences on Muḥammad, such as his meeting as a young boy with the monk Baḥīrā, who, Barakat Ullāh says, brought home to him the evils of *shirk* (polytheism) and *but-parastī* (idol-worship). In addition, he claims that the Christian acquaintances and relatives of Muḥammad's first wife Khadīja were decisive in teaching the Prophet about the unity of God and the necessity for *dīnī aur dunyāwī iṣlāḥ* (religious and worldly reform), a terminology that reflects intra-Islamic reform discourses popular during Barakat Ullāh's lifetime.

Second, his biography is strongly influenced by Sayyid Aḥmad Khān's 'rationalist' theology. Like Sayyid Aḥmad, Barakat Ullāh argues that miracles are events that can be rationalised and do not stand in contradiction to natural science or human reason. For example, in Barakat Ullāh's account of Muḥammad's night-journey, the Prophet did not leave his body but only travelled in spirit to Jerusalem and the heavens.

Third, in this and other writings such as *Masīḥiyyat kī ʿālamgīrī* ('The universality of Christianity'), Barakat Ullāh claims that Muḥammad was sent as a prophet particularly to the Arabs, indicating that Barakat Ullāh regarded Islam as a specific religion for a specific time and place, whereas Christianity was universal. In the preface, Barakat Ullāh states that Muḥammad was for Arabia what the Buddha was for India, Zoroaster for Iran, Confucius for China, and Moses for the people of Israel. From Arabia, Islam spread to the rest of the world, which is why it is important

to understand its origins, but its character essentially remains shaped by its origins in the Arabian desert.

Finally, a slight tinge of polemics can be detected in the appendices (pp. 207-20) in which Barakat Ullāh lists Muḥammad's military campaigns and marriages, indicating that he was mainly a military leader, and apart from that also a worldly person – quite in contrast to Christian representations of Jesus.

SIGNIFICANCE

While *Muḥammad ʿArabī* appears to have triggered reactions by Muslim scholars and other contemporaries of Barakat Ullāh, its reception has not yet received any scholarly attention. It falls squarely within larger debates that gathered steam in the charged atmosphere of late 19th- and early 20th-century India, in which religious polemics between Muslims, Christian missionaries and members of other religions made Muslims particularly conscious of the image of the Prophet. Through it, Barakat Ullāh joined in debates about the person of Muḥammad that raged in South Asia throughout the colonial period, with the participation of Muslim modernists such as Sayyid Aḥmad Khān and Shiblī Nuʿmānī, missionaries-cum-orientalists such as William Muir, and representatives of the so-called traditionalist spectrum such as Barelvi Muslims.

Responses by Muslim authors to writings such as *Muḥammad ʿArabī* should be interpreted in the light of the fact that different reformist groups within Islam tried to authenticate their brand of the religion by referring back to the person of the Prophet. Often, these works were not so much directed against Christian groups or authors, or even Christianity as a system of belief, but rather reflected an attempt to reassert the place of Islam vis-à-vis Christianity as a political ideology in the context of colonial rule, thereby mirroring themes of Muslim-Christian encounters in the Middle East and elsewhere.

PUBLICATIONS

Barakat Ullāh, *Muḥammad ʿArabī*, Lahore, 1932

STUDIES

S. Tareen, *Defending Muḥammad in modernity*, Notre Dame IN, 2020
K. Ali, *The lives of Muhammad*, Cambridge MA, 2016
Fuchs, 'Adding layers', p. 29

Dīn-i fiṭrat, Islām ya Masīḥiyyat? What satisfies human instincts, Islam or Christianity?

DATE 1938
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Urdu

DESCRIPTION

Dīn-i fiṭrat (248 pages long) is part of a longer textual controversy between Barakat Ullāh and the Ahl-i Hadith theologian Sanā'ullāh Amritsarī (1868-1948). Amritsarī was an accomplished reformist author, Qur'an commentator, and one of the main debaters of the Ahl-i Hadith movement who took on members of the Arya Samaj and Aḥmadiyya, as well as local Christian converts in polemical contestations. He replied to three books by Barakat Ullāh, *Tauẓīḥ al-Qur'ān* ('Elucidation of the Qur'an'), *Masīḥiyyat kī ʿālamgīrī* ('The universality of Christianity') and *Dīn-i fiṭrat* itself (subtitled *What satisfies human instincts, Islam or Christianity?*), with a long exposition of his own titled *Islām aur Masīḥiyyat* ('Islam and Christianity', Amritsar, 1941, 248 pages).

Barakat Ullāh's *Dīn-i fiṭrat* is written in an ornate Urdu style that makes abundant use of Arabic and Persian terms and is directed at an educated Muslim readership with an interest in European thought. In it, he introduces the concept of naturalism as it was understood by the modernist Muslim reformer Sayyid Aḥmad Khān (d. 1898) to mean that Islam is fully compatible with the natural sciences and that there is no contradiction between the two, and he compares it with discussions among European philosophers. After summarising Sayyid Aḥmad's argument, Barakat Ullāh states that Sayyid Aḥmad overlooked the fact that the concept of natural religion was under attack in Europe. Barakat Ullāh cites works on psychoanalysis by European authors to demonstrate that 'natural religion' meant something other than naturalism. He tries to prove from these works that scholarly insights about the nature of humans are always evolving, and that this has led to new questions. For this reason, no scientific insight is ever conclusive and, consequently, the spiritual core of any religious message remains untouched. However, because the Muslim community is too embroiled in past issues, it is not open to new developments. Christianity, in contrast, is the true universal religion, Barakat Ullāh claims, as it answers all questions related to human instincts, such as fear, sexuality, parenthood and childhood. In the same way, his books *Tauẓīḥ al-Qur'ān* and *Masīḥiyyat kī ʿālamgīrī* make claims about the universality of Christianity in contrast with Islam.

Sanāʾullāh Amritsarī's reply, *Islām aur Masīḥiyyat*, provides a point-by-point response to Barakat Ullāh's arguments, demonstrating close familiarity with biblical texts, church history and writings by local Christian converts. Many of the topics discussed in the exchange between the two authors hark back to well-established tropes and themes in Muslim-Christian encounters over the centuries, such as the Trinity, the Atonement, the concept of jihad, the nature of the relationship between God and human beings and the position of women in Islam and Christianity. However, some arguments are also specific to the Indian situation, such as discussions about ritual animal sacrifice in Islam, which was a main point in contestations between different communities in the colonial period and represented for Barakat Ullāh a proof of why Islam could not be a universal religion.

To provide some examples of the debate between the two writers: to Barakat Ullāh's assertions regarding established Christian beliefs such as the Trinity, Amritsarī replies with references to the long history of disagreement over the exact definition of the nature of God in Christianity, going into great detail about the history of the First Council of Nicaea to make his point; to Barakat Ullāh's argument that only the God of the Bible is merciful and forgiving, Amritsarī responds by quoting biblical verses about hell and punishment for sins (pp. 33-5). When it comes to jihad, Amritsarī defends it as a central concept in Islam, though he argues that it is subject to specific circumstances and must be applied carefully. He contrasts this with narratives about the Israelites taking revenge on their enemies and other instances of violence found in the Old Testament, and argues that the Qur'an is mild in comparison.

SIGNIFICANCE

The history of Muslim-Christian encounter in late 19th- and early 20th-century India, particularly in the Punjab region, still awaits full scholarly attention. The exchange between Barakat Ullāh and Sanāʾullāh Amritsarī forms an important part of it, but must also be seen in light of a longer tradition of Muslim-Christian controversies that reach back to the earliest years of Islam. Such encounters gained new momentum during the time of European colonial expansion, which was often regarded as going hand in hand with the spread of an aggressive form of evangelical Protestant missionary Christianity. The German missionary Karl Pfander's book *Mīzān al-ḥaqq* ('The balance of truth', originally written in German; a Persian translation was published in 1835) was a landmark publication

for Muslim-Christian relations in India, along with the ensuing debate between him and the Indian Muslim writer Raḥmatullāh Kairānavī in 1854 at Agra, which culminated in the publication of Kairānavī's book *Iẓhār ul-ḥaqq* ('The revelation of truth', 1867). Both the debate and its publication history provided the blueprint for later controversies between Muslims and Christians in South Asia. Barakat Ullāh and Amritsarī's exchange follows this pattern to a certain extent in that it does not aim so much at swapping arguments and ideas, but rather at displaying the skill and eloquence of the writer and thinker of each group as a means of heightening the community's public image. Ṣanā'ullāh also adopted Kairānavī's approach of taking on his opponent with his own weapons, so to speak (in Pfander's case historical-critical scholarship in European theology), by pointing out disagreements and the history of sectarian strife in Christianity.

What stands out about this exchange is that Amritsarī thought it worth his time to respond to Barakat Ullāh, even though the latter was not a European missionary. Amritsarī took the other's writings seriously, mostly because of Barakat Ullāh's high-caste origin, *sharīf* (Muslim upper-class, and upper-caste) education and use of an Urdu idiom that reflected this educational background, which made his ideas accessible (and therefore potentially attractive) to educated Indian Muslims. Still, Amritsarī identified Christianity mostly with European political powers, despite the presence of local converts. In his book, he accuses Barakat Ullāh of 'Westernisation' and ridicules him by claiming that, although he might have studied logic (Amritsarī uses the English term in Urdu transliteration), he does not know the first thing about *manṭiq* (logic in Arabic, one of the disciplines of classical Islamic learning), indicating that Barakat Ullāh learned to think like the colonisers while at the same time rejecting his own intellectual origins. In other parts of *Islām aur Masīḥiyyat*, Amritsarī also argumentatively moves Barakat Ullāh close to the Aḥmadiyya, whose members were staunchly loyal to British rule throughout the colonial period, implying that local Christians as well as Aḥmadīs should essentially be regarded as enemies of both Islam and India.

PUBLICATIONS

Barakat Ullāh, *Dīn-i fiṭrat, Islām ya Masīḥiyyat?*, Lahore, 1938

STUDIES

Fuchs, 'Adding layers', pp. 27-9

Maria-Magdalena Pruss

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