

# Muslim Historical Literature in the Era of Early Muslim Nationalism: A Case Study of Sir Sayyid and Ta'ib

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Mid-nineteenth century Muslim historical literature, particularly on the mutiny-rebellion of 1857, presents an interesting contrast, and offers a fascinating study of the state of Muslim mind before and after 1857. This clearly comes out in the writings of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan (*Risalah Asbab-i Baghawat-i Hind*,<sup>1</sup> *Tarikh Sarkashi Dil'a Bijnawr*,<sup>2</sup> *Hunter par Hunter*,<sup>3</sup> *Loyal Mohammedans of India*,<sup>4</sup>), Fateh Muhammad Ta'ib (*Tarikh-i Ahmadi*),<sup>5</sup> Asad Ullah Khan Ghalib (*Dastabu in Kulliyat-i Nathr-i Ghalib*),<sup>6</sup> Mawlana Altaf Hussain Hali (*Hayati-i Jawid*),<sup>7</sup> Sayyid Zahiruddin Zahir Dihlawi (*Dastan-i Ghadr*),<sup>8</sup> Faqir Muhammad (*Jam' al-Tawarikh*),<sup>9</sup> Allamah Fadl-i Haq (*Baghi*

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<sup>1</sup>It was first written in 1858. In 1873 Sir Sayyid rendered it into the English language. Both the volumes have now been reprinted in Pakistan as well as India.

<sup>2</sup>English rendering: *History of the Bijnor Rebellion* was first written in 1859. In 1857 Sir Sayyid was a sub-judge at Bijnor. When the Muslims of Bijnor rose in rebellion against the British and surrounded the collector's house, Sir Sayyid tactfully helped the English to escape.

<sup>3</sup>This pamphlet Sir Sayyid wrote in 1873 in response to Sir W.W. Hunter's *The Mussulmans of India. Are They Bound in Conscience to Revolt against the Queen*. As expected, Sir Sayyid did not like Hunter's reading of the Muslim mind before and after the mutiny. In his *Hunter par Hunter*, he debates the question of Muslim loyalty with W.W. Hunter.

<sup>4</sup>This was a journal that Sir Sayyid started in the 1860's. The chief purpose of Sir Sayyid in starting this journal was to prove Muslim loyalty to the British.

<sup>5</sup>English rendering: *History of Ahmad Ullah Shah*. It was written in 1280 A.H. of the Muslim era, which approximately corresponds with 1863 A.D.

<sup>6</sup>Lucknow, 1884. This is an eyewitness account of the events of 1857 in India, especially in the city of Delhi.

<sup>7</sup>Lahore, 1957.

<sup>8</sup>Lahore, 1955.

<sup>9</sup>Calcutta, 1857.

*Hindustan*),<sup>10</sup> Mu'inuddin Hassan Khan ("Narrative of Mainodin" in Charles T. Metcalfe's *Two Native Narratives of the Mutiny in Delhi*).<sup>11</sup>

Curiously, all of the above writers presented different interpretations of the revolt of 1857. Indeed this had to be the case. During the revolt India lost freedom of the press; known different interpretations of the "mutiny" by natives were tantamount to treason and were visited by condign punishments. This was particularly true of the Muslims. Many Muslim newspapers were suppressed and their editors jailed.<sup>12</sup> After the "special" treatment which the Muslims received upon the fall of Delhi, the followers of Islam could not be sure of their destiny in South Asia in the post mutiny-rebellion period. It was so because the British assigned the primary responsibility for the revolt to Indian Muslims and rightly so. The reality of the excessively harsh British treatment of Indian Muslims is beginning to dawn upon the present-day British historians as well. Professor Peter Hardy in his very recent book, *The Muslims of British India*, observes:

For both the Muslims of northern India and the British, the events of 1857 were a trauma. The savage British suppression of the Mutiny and Rising, with its destruction of Delhi as a centre of Muslim culture, and the dispersion of the descendants of Akbar and Aurangzib by execution and exile, at last forced educated Muslims to realise not only that the British rule were in India to stay, but also that they intended to stay on their own terms. The last illusions that they were the mayors of the Mughal palace were dissipated; the last illusions that an education in Persian and Urdu and in the Muslim religious sciences would serve both a Muslim's eternal and his worldly welfare were torn away. The British, though a mere handful of men, had successfully defied the hosts of Zion, or rather of Mecca.<sup>13</sup>

Surely, the Muslims of India did fall under a heavy cloud. Condign, indeed barbaric punishments were reserved for them—punishments which offer few, if any, parallels in the nineteenth century history of the

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<sup>10</sup>*Baghi Hindustan* is Urdu translation of Allamah Fadl-i Haq's Arabic Qasidah by A.S.K. Sherwani. Bijnor, 1946.

<sup>11</sup>Mu'inuddin was so afraid of British retaliation for expressing his views on the events of 1857, that he requested Charles Metcalfe to publish his account after his death, which the latter did. Consequently, this account did not appear in print until 1898.

<sup>12</sup>R. Montgomery and R. Temple, *Selection from the Public Correspondence of the Administration for the Affairs of the Punjab* (Lahore: 1859), pp. 6-7; J.W. Kaye and G.B. Malleson, *History of the Indian Mutiny* (London: 1884-88), V, pp. 341-43; J. Cave-Browne, *The Punjab and Delhi in 1857*, II, p. 289; N.A. Chick (ed.) *Annals of the Indian Rebellion*, pp. 709; *Press List of Mutiny Papers, 1857*, p. 393; *Punjab Government Records: Mutiny Reports*, VIII, Pt. 2, pp. 202-203.

<sup>13</sup>P. Hardy, *The Mussulmans of British India* (Cambridge, England: 1972), p. 61.

world. William Howard Russell, the well-known first war correspondent of the Crimean fame and who covered the mutiny for *The Times*, observed: "Our antagonism to the followers of Muhammad is far stronger than that between us and the worshippers of Shiva and Vishnu. . . . If we could eradicate the traditions of Muhammad by one vigorous effort, it would indeed be well for the Christian faith and for the British rule."<sup>14</sup> Russell was not alone in his anti-Muslim feelings: his "our" and "we" were truly representative of a general sentiment among the British against the followers of Islam. Lord Roberts of Kandhar fame certainly spoke of his countrymen when on December 31, 1857, he wrote to his sister Harriet that the British should "work their life's best blood. . . and show these rascally Mussulmans that with God's help Englishmen will still be the masters of India."<sup>15</sup> Magistrate Philip Egerton and Judge Charles Raikes suggested the conversion of the *Jami' Masjid* of Delhi into a church, with each brick named after a "Christian martyr."<sup>16</sup> Another Englishman condemned Delhi for total destruction. He observed:

The city which has been for centuries the stronghold of Islamism in India, and in which was hatched this last great conspiracy against the Christian religion should be utterly destroyed; and that on its site should be built another city, to be the centre from which victorious Christianity should radiate to every point from North to South, from East to West, from Bombay to Calcutta, from the Himalayas to the Cape Comorin.<sup>17</sup>

Introduction of torture via thumb-screw and the rask was recommended for "respectable" Muslims of Delhi.<sup>18</sup> The house of every follower of Islam in Delhi was ransacked and every Muslim inhabitant of the city was either banished or killed.<sup>19</sup>

But the spirit of British vengeance was not confined to the city of Delhi; indeed, it was India-wide. The chief mosque of Allahabad was converted into barracks for European soldiers.<sup>20</sup> After having failed to convince Sir John Lawrence and Lord Canning "to raze Delhi to the ground. . . as a heavy blow to Mahomedan religion," Major-General Sir James Outram, a very devout Christian known as the "Bayard of India," urged Lord

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<sup>14</sup>W.H. Russell, *My Diary in India* (London: 1860).

<sup>15</sup>Fred Roberts (Later Field Marshal Earl Roberts), *Letters Written During the Indian Mutiny* (London: 1924), p. 119.

<sup>16</sup>C. Raikes, *Notes on the Revolt in the North-Western Provinces of India*, pp. 78 and 78n.

<sup>17</sup>"A Few Worlds from the Khyber," *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, LXXXII, 1857, p. 613. For more similar views, also see: Russell, II, p. 73; *Christian Times*, August 28, 1857.

<sup>18</sup>See *The Nation*, Oct. 24, 1857.

<sup>19</sup>"Delhi as it is," *Fraser's Magazine*, LVIII, 1858, p. 63.

<sup>20</sup>*Kaye's Mutiny Papers*, 724 A, I, p. 159.

Canning to at least destroy Lucknow instead.<sup>21</sup> These were no mere suggestions. Captain Mowbray Thomson narrated to Sir Henry Cotton with the ease of a Cinderella story, how some of his Muslim prisoners “were tied to the ground stripped off their clothing, and deeply branded over every part of their bodies from head to foot with red-hot coppers.”<sup>22</sup> Robert Montgomery, Judicial Commissioner of the Panjab, congratulated Captain W.S.R. Hodson for his cold blooded murder of three Mughal princes (Mirza Mughal, Mirza Abu Bakr, and Mirza Khejo [sic] Sultan) after they had surrendered to Hodson at his urging. Montgomery hoped that the Captain “will bag many more.” And Hodson, who admitted the “deliberate” character of his shooting, gloried in having “the last of the House of Timur eat dirt.”<sup>23</sup> And a Captain of the 23rd Native Infantry described the “fiendish delight” with which, in his magisterial capacity, he burnt villages and officiated as a hangman near Mhow. He emphasized that if the matters were left in his hands “every Mohammedan should be strung for his faith.”<sup>24</sup>

Under these circumstances, Muslim writers of the time needed to be cautious, lest they suffered from British vindictiveness. That this was the case is clearly evident from the fact that Mu'inuddin Hassan Khan did not want his account of the revolt published until after his death—a pledge which Charles Theophilus Metcalfe, editor of the *Two Native Narratives of the Revolt in India* fully honoured.<sup>25</sup> To save his skin Zahir Dilhawi did not mind calling the rebels “bastards.” He feared chastisement by the British; in fact, he was under a cloud for a while, and therefore he assumed anti-Muslim, anti-rebellion attitude.<sup>26</sup> Ghalib and Hali were more of poets than chroniclers of events, even though a certain degree of sadness regarding the condition of their co-religionists during and after the suppression of the rebellion is evident in their writing. Indeed, the only works which take clearly different points of view of the state of Muslim mind before 1857 are the ones by Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan and Fateh Muhammad Ta'ib—one a religious nationalist even after the revolt of 1857 was suppressed, the other a saviour of the Muslim community in India in the light of what happened between 1857-1859. Dr. Tara Chand, in his foreward to Dr. Shan Muhammad's *Sir Syed Ahmad Khan: A Political Biography* correctly observes: “If greatness is

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<sup>21</sup>Secretary, Chief Commissioner of Oudh to Secretary Government of India, Jan 18, 1858, Secret Correspondence, Jan. 29, 1858, No. 361, cited in Thomas R. Metcalfe, *The Aftermath of the Revolt* (Princeton: 1964), p. 295.

<sup>22</sup>Edward Thompson, *The Other Side of the Medal* (New York: 1926), pp. 47-48.

<sup>23</sup>W.S.R. Hodson, *Twelve Years of a Soldier's Life in India* ed. by the Reverend G.H. Hodson (2nd. ed.; London: 1859), p. 302; R.M. Martin, *The Indian Empire—with a Full Account of the Mutiny of the Bengal Army*, II, p. 449; Cave-Browne, II, 193 and 193n, and 194.

<sup>24</sup>*Daily News*, Sept. 11, 1857.

<sup>25</sup>C.T. Metcalfe, p. 1.

<sup>26</sup>Zahir Dilhawi, *Dastan-i Ghadr*.

to be measured by the depth of the impression made on society and the extent of transformation affected in its thought and action, then Sir Syed Ahmad Khan deserves to be reckoned among the great. Sir Syed's main aim was that Muslims in India should come out of the past and acquire the knowledge and technique of the West."<sup>27</sup> Sir Sayyid was a realist and a far-sighted statesman. He clearly visualized the predicament of his co-religionists. He saw the difficult choices available to them: total submission to British rule with a chance of survival in the future, or virtual social, economic, and even physical annihilation. Dr. Muslehuddin Siddiqui in his unpublished Osmania University (Hyderabad, India) Ph.D. thesis rightly stresses that "the Indian revolt of 1857 left its indelible stamp on his [Sir Sayyid] thought world."<sup>28</sup> According to Dr. I. Topa, during and after the revolt of 1857, Sir Sayyid's soul was "in the throes of agitation and showed signs of awareness to a new social dynamics."<sup>29</sup> Consequently, Sir Sayyid was motivated by one overriding consideration; it was to save the economic, political, and educational plight of fellow Muslims at every cost.

Sir Sayyid came of an orthodox Sunni family and was born on October 17, 1817. His training at home endowed him with the qualities of fearlessness, truthfulness, determination, and realism. He was fearless and truthful to the extent that as a young boy he almost missed his robe of honour from the Mughal Emperor by telling the true cause of his late appearance for the honour.<sup>30</sup> His determination is evident from his work on *Asar-us-Sanadid*, in which he describes Delhi, its environs, and its architecture, including inscriptions on every building. The 238 feet high six hundred years old Qutab Minar failed to deter him to climb the height of the minaret in a wooden box pulled up and down by ropes to read the inscription to each block. Also, he joined the British service as a clerk at a criminal court much against the wishes of his family. Sir Sayyid's realism is borne out by his refusal to accept a senior position at the court "because he had not had enough legal experience." The sessions judge in charge urged Sir Sayyid to change his mind, but he would not be budged.<sup>31</sup> In my view Sir Sayyid was a political child of the mutiny-rebellion. The sufferings of the Muslims of India gave him a new sense of his mission. The plight of the followers of Islam was such that he could not longer stand idly by and let it deteriorate further. There were three ways in which he could hope to get his co-religionists out of the post

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<sup>27</sup>Shan Muhammad, *Sir Syed Ahmad Khan. A Political Biography* (Meerut: 1969), p. 1.

<sup>28</sup>M. Muslehuddin Siddiqui, "Social Thought of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan," (Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Osmania University, Hyderabad, India, 1960) p. 1.

<sup>29</sup>I Topa, "Sir Syed Ahmad Khan—A Study in Social Thought," *Islamic Culture*, XXVII, 4, 1953, p. 225.

<sup>30</sup>Muhammad Sadiq, *The Founder of Aligarh* (Karachi-Lahore: 1968), pp. 1-2.

<sup>31</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 6-8.

mutiny quagmire: a) partly transfer the blame for the revolt to the British for creating unbearable social, political, religious, and economic conditions in India which gave birth to the rebellion of 1857; b) transfer part of the blame for the uprising to the Hindus; c) chide Muslims for their failure to come to grips with reality of the British rule, learn to live with it, and educate them for a better future. Consequently, the tone of his writings on the revolt was that of a debator and a pleader on behalf of the Muslims rather than that of even a non-professional nineteenth century historian.

Like Sir Sayyid, Ta'ib was also an orthodox Sunni Muslim. However, not much is known about his life story, except that he was a devout follower of the famous Ahmad Ullah Shah who preached a *Jihad* against the British from place to place long before the start of the mutiny-rebellion at Meerut.<sup>32</sup> The fact that Ta'ib wrote his account of Ahmad Ullah Shah within four years of the suppression of the revolt, justified the uprising, and told the story of Ahmad Ullah's anti-British activities the way he knew them or learnt about them is indicative of his fearlessness and determination. Even though Ta'ib's versified history of his preceptor did not receive much exposure,<sup>33</sup> there was the possibility of his being detected and severely punished by the victorious British. Ta'ib was fully aware of his separate Muslim identity and alien nature of the British rule. He knew that the only way the Muslims could preserve their cultural heritage and develop it further was by overthrowing the British. He fully agreed with the mission of Ahmad Ullah Shah. After Ahmad Ullah's tragic death,<sup>34</sup> he felt the need of recording a truthful account of the life and career of his spiritual preceptor, a great deal of which was spent in scheming and agitating against the British. He saw the advantage of doing it for the coming generations of Indian Muslims, and knew the necessity of doing so accurately. Ta'ib insisted that in writing his *Twarikh-i [History of] Ahmadi [Ahmad Ullah Shah]*, he was recording nothing but the truth. He observed:

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<sup>32</sup>G. Hutchinson, *Narrative of the Mutinies in Oude* (Calcutta: 1859), pp. 33-37; R.C. Majumdar, *The Sepoy Mutiny and the Revolt of 1857* (Calcutta: 1957), p. 169; G.B. Malleson, *The Indian Mutiny* (London: 1891), pp. 17-18; *Mutiny Papers, 1857*, p. 393; Fateh Muhammad Ta'ib, *Twarikh-i Ahmadi*, pp. 33-36.

<sup>33</sup>It is a rare book. Perhaps there is only one copy in the world, which is available in the British Museum.

<sup>34</sup>Ahmad Ullah Shah was one of the most astute rebel leaders. He defeated the British at Chinhut and inflicted heavy casualties upon them. Thereafter, he harassed Sir Colin Campbell and other British commanders all over Awadh and Rohilkhand. The British were so apprehensive of this Mujahid, that the Government offered a handsome prize of Rs. 50,000 for his head. Eventually, the British were able to achieve their objective through the treachery of Jagganath, the Hindu chief of Powain. Jagganath deceitfully had the Shah killed and availed himself of the British offer of prize money.

عیاں و نہاں سے جو آٹماہ ہے	میرے قول کا شاہد اللہ ہے
مجھے عادتِ حرزہ گھوٹی نہیں	لہرِ حرفِ دردِ اس میں کوئی نہیں
عجایب سے ضعفِ روایات سے	کیا ہے حذرِ اختلافات سے
بہت عقل سے دُور واللہ ہیں	وہ بے اصل باتیں جو افزاہ ہیں
کھلے حال جب آپڑے گنہگار	بنایا کریں بیٹھے باتیں عدو
فقط چشمِ العافِ درکار ہے	جواب ایسی باتوں کا بے مار ہے
میلے استراخوں کا ان کو جواب	اگر غور سے دیکھ لیں سب کتاب
یہ نغض و حسدِ دوسری بات ہے	بری عیب سے آپ کی ذات ہے
جو اس کو پڑھے کرے کامیاب	الہی تو مقبول کرے کتاب
زمانے میں رکھ اسکو ایمان سے	سلامت رہے حال سے جان سے

Thus, both Sir Sayyid and Ta'ib attempted to write on the revolt of 1857 in a way which reflected the state of Muslim mind in India prior to and in the course of the rebellion. But both presented the facts differently. While Sir Sayyid went out of his way to show that Indian Muslims were not as disloyal to the British as it was assumed, Ta'ib's depiction of Ahmad Ullah Shah revealed a different story. Hence the importance of the works of Sir Sayyid and Ta'ib. To plead the case of the Muslims, Sir Sayyid tended to misrepresent historical facts. But in order to bring out the well-meaning distortions by Sir Sayyid of the mutiny facts and the more historical presentation of at least Mawlawi Ahmad Ullah Shah by Ta'ib, it is essential to outline the general condition of Muslim mind before the rebellion of 1857, as it appears in other reliable sources—Hindu and British. Then we can weigh the views of Ta'ib and Sir Sayyid against the evidence presented by other eye-witness chroniclers of the uprising in India and judiciously evaluate them.

Muslim political, religious, and cultural nationalism in India from the early to the mid-nineteenth century is now an established historical fact. It is proven from a variety of different sources, British as well as Indian-Hindu and Muslim. Over a dozen very important books on the rebellion of 1857 by Englishmen and Hindus bring this point out very clearly.

They are: W.H. Carey, *The Mahommedan Rebellion: Its Premonitory Symptoms, the Outbreak, and its Suppression* and *The Good Old Days of John Company*, Vol. III, Chapter VIII; M.A. Sherring, *Indian Church during the Great Rebellion*; Dr. Alexander Duff, *The Rebellion in India, its Causes and Results*; W.W. Hunter, *The Indian Mussulmans. Are They bound in Conscience to Revolt against the Queen; Investigation into Some of the Causes Which have Produced the Rebellion in India*; C. Raikes, *Notes on the Revolt in the North-Western Provinces of India*; J. Cave-Browne, *The Punjab and Delhi in 1857*; F.H. Cooper, *The Crisis in the Punjab from the 10th of May until the Fall of Delhi*; W.O. Swanston, *My Journal: or What I Did And Saw between the 9th June and 25th November, 1857*; W. Taylor, *The Patna Crisis*; J.L. Archer, *Indian Mutinies Accounted For*; Kanahya Lal, *Baghawat-i Hind, 1857, msuamma bih Muharabah-i 'Azim*, and many more. The first book by Carey and the one by Sherring are especially valuable in that both the authors act as compilers of original accounts and, therefore, contain first-hand experiences of scores of Englishmen in the course of the revolt. Unfortunately, very few scholars, or, perhaps it might even be safer to say that none of the modern scholars has made use of Carey's book. All of the above accounts as well as a variety of official documents of the British clearly portray the fact that the Muslims of India never really reconciled themselves to the establishment of British rule in India, except of course the vested interest among them.

Starting from the time of Tipu Sultan to 1857, Muslim acceptance of British rule was purely perfunctory and time-serving. If Tipu's opposition to the British is well-known, how about the sentimental plea of a Muslim soldier in the service of the King of Awadh to Captain Lockitt of Bishop Heber's entourage in 1824. In his conversation with Captain Lockitt this soldier was highly critical of his King and the administration of Awadh. But when Captain Lockitt offered him the alternative of British rule, the soldier fervently pleaded: "Miserable as we are, of all miseries keep us from that [the British rule]." He insisted that the remedy suggested was worse than the disease. "By accepting it," he emphasized, "the name of Oude and the honour of our nation [meaning Muslims] would be at an end." After reporting this conversation, the well-known Bishop Heber of Calcutta commented:

There are, indeed, many reasons why high-born and ambitious men must be exceedingly averse to our rule; but the preceding expression of one in humble rank savours more of national feeling and personal frankness than is always met with in India. He was a soldier, however, and a Mussulman who spoke thus. A Hindoo Ryut might have answered differently.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>35</sup>Taib, pp. 9-11.



The overriding British consideration in continuing the powerless Mughal sovereignty at Delhi was to make the British rule more palatable to the Muslims, who were still living in their past political glory in India. Though supreme rulers of India for a long time, the British pretended to rule the country in the name of Mughal Emperor and offered him all the courtesies which were the due of a sovereign. They did so because such a policy tended to mute Muslim opposition to their rule. As soon as the British felt strong, they slowly began to dispense with their urbanity toward the Mughal royalty, but not without effect among Indian Muslims. The new British policy toward the Mughals also led to a change in Muslim attitude toward the British.<sup>36</sup> Bishop Heber observed:

If a fair opportunity offered the Mussulmans more particularly would gladly avail themselves of it to rise against us. But this is from political not religious feeling; and it has been increased of late years by the conduct of Lord Hastings to the Old Emperor of Delhi. . . Lord Hastings' refusal to pay him the same homage which all his predecessors had courted every opportunity of doing and which even the Maharattas did not neglect when the late Shah Aullum was their prisoner have awakened questions and scruples among the fierce Mohammedans about obeying an unbelieving nation which were quite forgotten while the English company acted as the servant and 'Dewan' of the House of Timur.<sup>37</sup>

Around fifteen years after Heber's observations and soon after the Afghan disasters of 1839-42, one of General Nott's staff continued to wear his Afghan dress as he returned from Kabul and passed through the North-Western Provinces. His knowledge of native languages and customs enabled him to visit native places of worship, especially mosques. Everywhere "he heard the same avowal of rancorous hate [for the British] from the lips of Mussulmans." Around the same time, another Englishman went through a similar experience in the British Indian capital of Calcutta when he attended a gathering of 2,000 high class Muslims. Unnoticed in his Mughal dress, the European guest heard from all sides the eager and oft-repeated hope that the star of the Frangi (Frank, European; in this case, Englishmen) had set. He stressed that in that secure assemblage of the faithful, all native officers had put off the smiling mask and had come out in their true colours. All of them shared common hatred for the British rule and an eager desire for the return of the old Muslim glory in India.<sup>38</sup> Twelve years later (around 1854), Major

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<sup>36</sup>Metcalf, pp. 11, 14, and 17; Zahir Dilhawi, pp. 73-75.

<sup>37</sup>Heber, I, pp. 393-94.

<sup>38</sup>"The Revolt of the Bengal Army," *Dublin University Magazine*, L. 1857, pp. 385-86. Also see: *Manchester Guardian*, July 23, 1857.

General Sir W.H. Sleeman added the following observation as a gist of his varied and rich administrative experience in India insofar as the Muslims were concerned:

The Muslims of India sigh for the restoration of the old Mahomedan regime. 'We pray,' said they 'for the Emperor and his family! As a result of personal inquiry, I am enabled to state that for nearly the last hundred years daily prayers have been offered in the mosques throughout India for the House of Timur and the reestablishment of the King of Delhi on the throne of his ancestors—a fact probably, which at this moment is wholly unknown to the British rulers of the time.<sup>39</sup>

This evidence on Muslim prayers is also corroborated by other highly knowledgeable sources, especially Dr. Alexander Duff of the Scottish Missionary Society, and some British Indian correspondents of the *Manchester Guardian*.<sup>40</sup>

Apart from its political aspect, Muslim nationalism in India carried strong religious overtones. The Reverend Edward Storrow, author of *India and Christian Missions*, maintained that the Muslims were convinced of "the absolute truth in Islam against Christianity." Consequently, he added, "Christianity has no foe in India, so fierce and formidable as Mahomedanism."<sup>41</sup> As a result, Muslims were not only impossible to convert, they were intolerant of Christian missionary efforts even among the Hindus. Whenever possible, they tried to obstruct Christian evangelism, or ridicule a missionary by posing difficult-to-answer questions on Christian theology. Take for example a personal experience of the Reverend John MacKay of the Baptist Missionary Society. In one of his letters home, written long before the mutiny-rebellion, MacKay reported: "Sometime ago a Mahomedan came to me, and in a very simple manner put the question, 'Does God know all things?' Of course, I was bound to answer, yes. 'And is Jesus Christ God?' Yes, I again replied. 'Then Jesus Christ must know all things?' As I did not know what the man was driving at, I again answered with some hesitation, yes. Upon which with an air of triumph, he quoted Mark XIII, 32, "But of that day and that hour knowth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father."<sup>42</sup>

At times, Muslim *zamindars* sent their servants among the Hindu audience of a Christian missionary, and that was sufficient to deprive the

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<sup>39</sup>"State Intervention in the Religions of India," *Missionary Magazine*, XXI, 1858, p. 226.

<sup>40</sup>Dr. Alexander Duff, *The Indian Rebellion, its Causes and Results*, p. 107; *Manchester Guardian*, Sept. 3, 1857, and July 23, 1858.

<sup>41</sup>Edward Storrow, *India and Christian Missions* (London: 1859), pp. 15-16.

<sup>42</sup>James Culross, *The Missionary Martyr of Delhi. A Memoir of the Reverend John MacKay* (London: 1860), pp. 123-24.

evangelist of a fair number of his listeners.<sup>43</sup> As a result, Henry Mead, a journalist of ten years residence in India and an Englishman who was highly critical of the policies of the Government of India, observed: "The bitter hatred with which Orangemen and Roman Catholics used to regard each other in Ireland has its intensified type in the feeling entertained towards us by the whole Mussulman race [sic]. Fierce antipathy to our creed, intense loathing of our persons, and never ceasing dread of English valour and ability, make up the impression which is stamped on the minds of their children in their early infancy, and deepens with every year of growth."<sup>44</sup>

But Muslim cultural nationalism was even more acute. It is clearly borne out by their virtual boycott of British education. The followers of Islam knew the consequences of not sending their children to schools established by the British, still the idea of doing so was totally repugnant to them. The well-informed author of *What Shall We Do to the Mussulmans* pointed out that the "Muslims have a strong and proper attachment to their literature and are not willing to barter its study for that of the English language or a position under the British."<sup>45</sup> Commenting on the conspicuous absence of Muslim children from the British schools, the Reverend John MacKay added (January 25, 1857; three and a half months before the revolt started at Meerut) that in the case of Muslims "it was not only the religious, but the national prejudices of the people which we [teachers, lay and missionary] have to contend."<sup>46</sup>

It is a well-known fact that in the beginning even Sir Sayyid himself found it difficult to convince his fellow Muslims to send their children to the school founded by him at Aligarh to receive English education. But that was not the first time that a Muslim made that effort. Earlier too, Sir Sayyid-type efforts were made, but the result, insofar as Muslim study of the English language or Western philosophy and sciences was concerned, was practically zero. The cases in point are: a) Hoogly College founded in 1836, entirely out of an endowment established by a devout Muslim, Haji Muhammad Muhsin. (In 1842-43, of the 1,031 students in the English classes, only thirty-one were Muslims, 948 Hindus, and thirty-four Christians; but this trend among the Muslims was reversed when it came to studying Arabic and Persian at the same College.) Of the 219 students in the Oriental Department of the College, 138 were Muslims and eighty-one Hindus.<sup>47</sup> Likewise, a Muslim schoolmaster at Jessore attempted to introduce the English language at his school, but his attempts were thwarted by his coreligionists.<sup>48</sup> Statistical figures on

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<sup>43</sup>The Reverend Anderson (extracts of his journal), *Missionary Herald*, I, 1858, p. 255.

<sup>44</sup>H. Mead, *The Sepoy Revolt: Its Causes and Consequences* (London: 1857), p. 24.

<sup>45</sup>*What Shall We Do to the Mussulmans?* (Calcutta: 1858), pp. 6-7.

<sup>46</sup>Culros,

<sup>47</sup>*General Report on Public Instructions in the Lower Provinces, 1842-43*, p. 258.

<sup>48</sup>The Reverend Sale (letter from), *Missionary Herald*, L, 1858, pp. 182-83.

Muslim enrollments in the Presidency of Madras, in the Province of Bihar, in the Bengal Presidency as a whole, and elsewhere in India clearly and loudly proclaimed of a general Muslim antipathy toward English education. This was in spite of the fact that the Government of India took special interest in encouraging Muslims to join British educational facilities.<sup>50</sup> Between 1845 and 1856 no Muslim student ever passed the test to secure a place on the list of the Council of Education, and that was a prerequisite to obtaining service under the British.<sup>51</sup> Because of strong Muslim antipathy toward the British schools all over India, these institutions—missionary as well as government—became primary targets of Muslim rebels everywhere. Consequently, burning of English libraries became a popular phenomenon among Muslims.<sup>52</sup> Bakht Khan, the Commander-in-Chief of the rebel army at Delhi, and the Nawab of Bareilly arrested even those natives of India who spoke English.<sup>53</sup>

Finally, the Muslim inspired rebellion did not come about all that suddenly. The Government of India did receive a number of warnings about the forthcoming events a great deal ahead of time, but it chose to ignore or ridicule them. For instance, on April 1, 1857, an *Ishthar* signed by a Muslim named Muhammad Sadiq appeared on the walls of *Jami' Masjid* (mosque for Friday congregational prayers) in Delhi. The placard announced the outbreak of the impending rebellion in May, 1857. But the government did nothing beyond removing the incendiary poster.<sup>54</sup> Francis Sistan, a European Inspector of Police at Sitapore in Awadh, received valuable hints about the forthcoming rebellion from Nawab Ahmad Ullah Khan of Nageenah, earlier a *Tahsildar* (an important officer of the revenue department) in the service of the East India Company, and later an important leader of the rebels at Bijnor. Sistan was dressed in the Muslim style. Mistaking Sistan for a Muslim from Awadh and upon knowing his service, Nawab Ahmad Ullah instinctively inquired of him about the situation in Awadh. R.H.W. Dunlop, a Magistrate at Meerut, reported the dialogue with his own

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<sup>49</sup>"Education in Madras," *Calcutta Review*, XXVI, 1856, pp. 250-56; *Report, Calcutta Colleges, Annual Report of Hoogly College, 1853-54*; "Muslim Education in Bihar," *Journal of Indian History*, 1971; *Bengal Education Consultations*, Oct. 10, 1844, Nos. 1-2, 1842-43.

<sup>50</sup>W.H. Sharp, *Selections from Educational Records*, Pt. 1, 1771-1839 (Calcutta: 1920), pp. 124-25; *Report, General Committee of Public Instruction, 1842-43* p. 66, cited in *British Policy and the Muslims in Bengal*, A.R. Mallick (Dacca: 1961), p. 233.

<sup>51</sup>*Bengal Education Consultations*, 10 Oct. 1844, Nos. 1-2, cited in Mallick, p. 233.

<sup>52</sup>The Rev. Sale (letter from), *Missionary Herald*, 1858, pp. 182-83; M.A. Sherring, *The Indian Church during the Great Rebellion* (London: 1859), pp. ; Duff, pp. 39-40.

<sup>53</sup>Mahdi Husain *Bahadur Shah II and the War of 1857 with its Unforgettable Scenes* (Delhi: 1858), pp. LX-LXI.

<sup>54</sup>Khanaya Lal, *Baghawat-i Hind, 1857, musamma bih Muharabah-i 'Azim*, p. 55.

comments as follows: "What news from Oude? said the Tehsildar; 'how does the work progress brother?' 'If we have work in Oude, your Highness will know it well,' replied Sistan, who had inherited a good deal of Hindoostanee suspicion, and made the Tehsildar thus think him not ignorant but cautious. The trifling mutinies at Barrackpore, as they were then thought, had commenced. 'Depend upon it, we will succeed this time,' said the Tehsildar; 'the direction of business is in able hands.'"<sup>55</sup>

Likewise, in January, 1857, the Reverend Haycock of the Scottish Missionary Society at Kanpur was threatened by a Muslim teacher that the "British will soon feel the sharpness of the Mussulman's sword."<sup>56</sup> Gulab Singh, the well-known ruler of Kahsmir, wrote a letter to Canning in November, 1856, and warned the Governor-General of the Muslim intentions to rise and overthrow the government.<sup>57</sup> On March 27, 1857, Muhammad Darwesh, a native Muslim loyal to the British, informed John Russell Colvin, Lieutenant Governor of the NorthWestern Provinces, that Bahadur Shah sent one of his courtiers, Sidi Qambar, to Persia to seek aid from that Muslim country to overthrow the British.<sup>58</sup>

In the light of the incontrovertible facts discussed above, Sir Sayyid's treatment of the mutiny-rebellion in which he repudiates the possibility of a Muslim conspiracy as well as some of the most conspicuous signs preceding the outbreak becomes highly questionable. To acknowledge the facts and to try to find an excuse for them is justifiable. But, on the other hand, to set one's fact against facts clearly established by authentic evidence, the way Sir Sayyid does, raises doubts about the authenticity of his assessment of the intensity of Muslim nationalism before the revolt of 1857 in India. Take for example the position that Sir Sayyid takes on the influence that Bahadur Shah wielded in the city of Delhi and its suburbs. He argues that the inhabitants of Delhi and its neighbourhood paid scant attention to the Mughal Emperor.

”الّا خاص دلی کے اور اس کے قرب و جوار میں رہنے والے

بادشاہ کی کچھ بھی وقعت خیال میں نہ لاتے تھے۔“<sup>59</sup>

This point of view is clearly in contradiction with the evidence provided by Charles Theophilous Metcalfe (the Magistrate of Delhi), Jiwan Lal,

<sup>55</sup>R.H.W. Dunlop, *Service and Adventure with the Khakee Resselah; or, Meerut Volunteer Horse, during the Mutinies of 1857-58* (London: 1858), pp. 152-55.

<sup>56</sup>Sherring, p. 168; *The Indian Mutiny: Thoughts and Facts* (London: 1857), p. 21.

<sup>57</sup>"The Mutiny in India and the Government," *Free Press*, Dec. 16, 1857. Also see: "Indian Blunders of the Cabinet," *Tait's Edinburgh Magazine*, XXIV, 1857, p. 581.

<sup>58</sup>Metcalfe, p. 2; Duff, p. 301.

<sup>59</sup>Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan, *Asbab-i Baghawat-i Hind* edited by Dr. Abu al Ais Siddiqui (Karachi: 1957), p. 104, and Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan, *Causes of the Indian Revolt*, English rendering of the Urdu original (Lahore: n.d.), pp. 8-9.

Mu'inuddin Hassan Khan, and Zahir Dihlawi. Zahir, himself a Muslim inhabitant of Delhi but a person who was opposed to the rebels and called them names, reports that before the revolt the Muslims of Delhi and the Mughal Emperor maintained a highly cordial and favourable relationship. So much so that the two sides expected support from each other. In evidence he cites the two cases involving the butcher and dairy communities of Delhi. At the "instigation and machinations" of Hindus, the two Muslim communities in question were ordered out of Delhi by the British Resident. The evictees quickly appealed the matter to Bahadur Shah. In turn, the Mughal Emperor summoned the British to his palace and interceded with him on behalf of his fellow Muslims. Describing them as his "*ra'iyat* and children", Bahadur threatened to leave the city and "take residence with his people unless the orders of their eviction were withdrawn and the victims rehabilitated. "Where my subjects live," the enraged Mughal continued, "I will live. . . How can I separate them from me. We are as inseparable from each other as nails from the pulp."

”بھئی جہاں میری رعیت دہاں میں۔ رعیت میرے بال بچے ہیں۔ میں  
 60 آئیں کیونکر اپنے سے جدا کروں۔ کہیں گشت سے ناخن بھی جدا ہوتے ہیں“

The reader must also remember that it was at Bahadur Shah's call that on September 12, 1857, 1,000 Muslims of Delhi offered to lay down their lives and fight the British to a finish near the *Jami' Masjid*.<sup>61</sup>

As far as the distant parts of India are concerned, there is no dearth of evidence to show that the Muslims of India looked to Bahadur Shah for guidance and deliverance from the British rule. For instance, a soldier at Banaras cried out to the Reverend Heinig: "My God [sic] is in Delhi!" "My God [sic] is in Delhi!"<sup>62</sup> Another Muslim soldier at Aligarh, a *subahdar*, acted with great kindness toward his British commander and allowed him to take all his private effects. But he ordered him not to touch public property, because it belonged to the Mughal Emperor at Delhi.<sup>63</sup> The

<sup>60</sup>Zahir Dihlawi, pp. 61-63. Also see: Metcalfe, p. 15.

<sup>61</sup>W. Carey, *The Mahomedan Rebellion; its Premonitory Symptoms, the Outbreak, and its Suppression* (Roorkee, India: 1857), pp. 62-64; *People's Paper*, Aug. 22, 1857; "The Martyrs and Confessors of Delhi," *Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine*, 5th Series, IV, 1858, pp. 548-49; J. Kingsmill, *British Rule and British Christianity in India*, (London: 1859), pp. 70-84; *The Sixty-sixth Annual Report of the Baptist Missionary Society, ending March 1858*, p. 4; "Foreign Intelligence—India," *Missionary Herald*, L. 1858, pp. 253-54; R. Meek, *The Martyr of Allahabad. Memorials of Ensign Arthur Marcus Hill Cheek of the 6th N.B.I., murdered by the Sepoys at Allahbad* (London: 1858), p. 30; Sherring, pp. 151, 182, 260, 279-80, 283-93, and 303-304; "India: Flight and Deliverance of Native Christians," *CEM*, XLIV, 1858, pp. 319-20.

<sup>62</sup>*Sixty-sixth Annual Report of the Baptist Missionary Society, ending March 1858*, p. 43.

<sup>63</sup>"Review of the Crisis in India: Its Causes and Proposed Remedies," *The Athenaeum*, Aug. 29, 1857.

Muslims of Hyderabad, of Gogira, of Murree, of Bareilly, of Moradabad, and several other places declared themselves for the resurrected Mughal royalty at Delhi.<sup>64</sup> The First Cavalry Regiment at Aurangabad, the 8th Madras Cavalry, and the Bhopal Regiment in Bhopal raised the standard of Islam and refused to march against their co-religionists at Delhi.<sup>65</sup> Indeed the attitude of the rebel soldiers toward the Mughal Emperor puzzled the British the most. Take for instance the surprise registered by a correspondent of *The Times* at Ambala:

It is to be remarked throughout the rebellion that all the mutinous troops within several hundred miles of Delhi seem to have made for that place as the centre and nucleus of the rebellion. They have established no local posts, indulged in none of the cares of districts or their own, but have marched to the point where a common stand was to be made against the Common enemy—the *Ferringhee*. Still more strange, they have generally not divided the plundered treasure; no man has been permitted to act for himself... They have, almost all in the regular order, marched to Delhi with the treasure, as public treasure. Indeed, the quiet, orderly, the peculiar character of the sepoy has been throughout the rebellion our greatest difficulty.<sup>66</sup>

Likewise, Sir Sayyid contends that there was no conspiracy among the Muslims prior to the revolt.

”مسلمانوں کا بہت روزوں سے آپس میں سازش اور مشورہ  
کرنا اس ارادے سے کہ باہم متفق ہو کر غیر مذہب کے لوگوں  
پر جہاد کریں اور ان کی حکومت سے آزاد ہو جائیں نہایت بے  
بنیاد بات ہے۔ جبکہ مسلمان ہماری حکومت کے متسامن تھے کسی طرح  
گورنمنٹ کی عمل داری میں جہاد نہیں کر سکتے تھے۔“<sup>67</sup>

Once again Sir Sayyid's point of view is not borne out by the abundance of evidence that has been discussed above.

Sir Sayyid's assertion that ”چھپاتی ہٹنا کوئی سازش کی بات نہ تھی۔“<sup>68</sup>

<sup>64</sup>”Madras—From the Bombay Gazette,” *The Nation*, Oct. 3, 1857; “Further Papers Relative to the Indian Mutinies,” *Sessional Papers*, 1857, Sess. 2, XXX, Incl. 1, p. 499.

<sup>65</sup>*The Times*, Sept. 29, 1857; “Further Papers. . .,” *Ibid*.

<sup>66</sup>Quoted by the *Manchester Guardian*, Oct. 31, 1857.

<sup>67</sup>Sir Sayyid, Urdu edition by Siddiqui, pp. 104-105, and English rendering, pp. 9-10.

<sup>68</sup>Sir Sayyid, Urdu edition by Siddiqui, p. 97, and English rendering, pp. 3-4.

the circulation of *chapatis* had no conspiratorial object" is also out of tune with the facts of the mutiny-rebellion. He perhaps did not know that a similar movement of sugar distribution preceded the Vellore mutiny of 1807, which had the establishment of the House of Tipu Sultan upon the throne of Mysore as its objective.<sup>69</sup> With this precedent in view and the fact that *chapatis* were circulated through extensive regions of Central India over a long period of time, it becomes difficult to deny ulterior motives to the pancake phenomenon. All the more so when one learns that alongside the pancakes which were distributed among civilians, lotus flower was circulated among native soldiers of India.<sup>70</sup> The two movements cannot be dispensed with as mere coincidences.

But perhaps the most important of Sir Sayyid's assertions is that "there are no grounds for supposing that the Muhammadans had for a long time been conspiring or plotting a simultaneous rise, or a religious crusade against the British."<sup>71</sup> This point of view is indicative of either Sir Sayyid's total ignorance of the psyche of Indian Muslims (which cannot be the case), or a deliberate effort on his part to protect them from the wrath of the victorious British. If there was no *jihadi* sentiment among Indian Muslims, where did the *jihadis* come from at Sittana, in Awadh, and at Delhi? What was the Patna conspiracy about that Commissioner William Taylor stressed so hard that he wrote several pamphlets on the subject?<sup>72</sup> In Awadh, the *jihadis* were popularly called *ghazis*, who came ready to lay down their lives in the name of Islam.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>69</sup>"India," *Edinburgh Review*, CVI, 1857, p. 564n; Kaye and Malleon, VI, pp. 86'86 and 87n, and I, pp. 178-83.

<sup>70</sup>Kaye and Malleon, I, p. 420; *Annual Register*, 1857, p. 245; Martin, II, p. 138; *Manchester Guardian*, April 15, 1857; G.B. Norton, *The Rebellion in India; How to Prevent Another* (London: 1857), 141; "The Poorbeah Mutiny; The Punjab,-- *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, LXXXIII, 1858, p. 96; "Sepoy Symbols of the Mutiny," *Household Words*, XVI, 1857, p. 231, *The Spectator*, Sept. 26, 1857; *Illustrated London News*, Nov. 28, 1857.

<sup>71</sup>Sir Sayyid, Urdu Edition, pp. 104-105, and English rendering, p. 9-10.

<sup>72</sup>William Taylor, *The Patna Crisis* (3rd ed.; London: 1857) *Correspondence Connected with the Removal of Mr. William Taylor from the Commissionership of Patna. Correspondence Connected with the Arrest and Trial of Looft Ali Khan, a Banker in Patna. Mr. Taylor's Orders under which the officers at Gaya, Mozufferpur, Barth, Mowada, Shergholty, and Chumparum Abandoned their Stations. Remarks by Mr. Samuells on Mr. Taylor's "Brief Narrative of Events" connected with his removal;* "India," *Missionary Herald*, LXIX, 1857, pp. 648-49; [Montgomery and Temple], pp. 8687; Cave Browne, I, pp. 156-57n; Kaye and Malleon, III, pp. 34-37; "India-Government Action and Missionary Procedure: A Contrast," *Church Missionary Intelligencer*, IX, 1858, pp. 76-77.

<sup>73</sup>Lieut. W.H. Greathed to the Lieut. Governor of the NorthWestern Provinces, Delhi Cantonment, June 10, 1857, *Sessional Papers*, 1857, Sess. 2, XXX, p. 592; Russell, II, p. 16; Kaye and Malleon, III, p. 192, IV, pp. 352 and 368; [Montgomery and Temple], pp. 97-102, and 80; Cave-Browne, II, p. 93 and 93n; "India—Government Action and Missionary Procedure: A Contrast," *Church Missionary Intelligencer*, IX, 1858, p. 77; *The Times*, Septe. 29, 1857; Taylor, *The Patna Crisis*, pp. 50-51 and 66-67; *Annual Register*, 1857, p. 257; Kingsmill, pp. 64-68; Meek, p. 30; Hutchinson, pp. 35-36, and 111; Carey, pp. 166-68;



Even Muslim women were fired with this sentiment. What would Sir Sayyid say about the daily speeches of a Muslim lady on the streets of Delhi exhorting her co-religionists to unite and expel the British? She even led a sortie against the British outside of Delhi, fought valiantly, but was captured. Greathed, the Political Commissioner at Delhi, described her as a "Joan of Arc." At the time of her capture, she was dressed in male attire, and her head was covered with a green turban.<sup>74</sup>

Fateh Muhammad Ta'ib, on the other hand, is more straightforward. He wrote his book not to save fellow Muslims from the fury of the British, not to regenerate them by teaching them Western philosophy, but to tell the truth about Ahmad Ullah Shah. Unlike Sir Sayyid, Ta'ib wanted to tell Indian Muslims that Ahmad Ullah did not die in vain and that he held the cause of India above his life. Ta'ib's description of the lecture tours and *jihad* preachings of Ahmad Ullah also clearly belie the views held by Sir Sayyid. From Ta'ib we learn that for years Ahmad Ullah was specifically trained to fight a holy war against the alien rulers of India. He observes:

نہاری سے رہتی تھی جنگ و جہل      تلگوں سے ہر روز رد و بدل  
 پریشانیوں گرد تھیں رات دن      ولین دل شاہ تھا مطمئن  
 علوم اور آداب میں فرد تھے      سخی و دیرد جاں مرد تھے  
 جو مکتب سے ان کو فرانت ملی      بڑھا سوئے شمشیر شوق ولی  
 وہ پہلے سپاہی بنے نام کو      کہ حاصل کریں خوب ہر کام کو  
 عروج و مکاں سب آئی ہڑا      پیادہ بڑھایا کہ فرزی ہڑا  
 ہرے طاق بندوق و شمشیر میں      لگانا ہرے نیزہ و سیر میں

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*Manchester Guardian*, April 15 and Sept. 14, 1857; M.R. Gubbins, *An Account of the Mutinies in Oudh* (London: 1858), p. 137; Meadows Taylor, *Letters from Meadows Taylor Esqr. . . Written during the Indian Rebellion*, 1857, p. 20; H. Frazer, *Our Faithful Ally: The Nizam: Being a Historical Sketch of Events showing the Value of the Nizam's Alliance to the British Government in India and his Services during the Mutinies* (London: 1865), pp. 287-88; G.W. Forest (ed.) *A History of the Indian Mutiny*, III, pp. 401-402. Zahir Dihlawi, pp. 14142; H.H. Greathed, *Letters Written During the Indian Mutiny* ed. by Mrs. H.H. Greathed (London: 1858), p. 130; Hodson, p. 259. Cf. "The Mutiny in India by a Correspondent before Delhi," *Illustrated London News*, Sept. 17, 1857.

<sup>75</sup>Ta'ib, pp. 13, and 29.

The fact of the matter is that Ahmad Ullah Shah was a widely travelled person—in and outside of India. During his foreign travels, Ahmad Ullah particularly visited Iran, Arabia, and England. Nowhere did he fail to express his disdain for the British—in words and in deeds.<sup>76</sup> His views, therefore, were not just that of a novice, politically immature, or emotional person. He was a well-educated and well-informed person. He sincerely believed that the British did not belong in India, and that it was his religious and moral duty to fight to expel them. Mehrab Shah, a Sufi saint at Jaipur, had a strong hand in moulding the religious and political views of Ahmad Ullah. In fact, it was not until Mehrab Shah gave Ahmad Ullah permission to launch a crusade against the British, did Ahmad Ullah embark upon his extensive Indian travels to preach *jihad* against the Nazarene rule in India. Discussing this permission and Ahmad Ullah's activities thereafter, Ta'ib observed:

سفر کو دہاں سے جو دھفت ملی      پئے جنگ و پیکار اجازت ملی  
 غنی اور درویش آنے لگے      عقیدت سے سب پیش آنے لگے  
 نصاریٰ سے جو حکم پیکار تھا      ہر اک شخص سے اس کا اظہار تھا  
 کہ بچنے کے یہ ہم سے ہرگز نہیں      زبردست ہیں ان سے عاجز نہیں  
 ہمیں حکم حق بھر پیکار ہے      کوئی دم میں سر اور تلوار ہے  
 اگر دل میں ہے آرزوئے جہاد      کشتاں نیرت دیں ہے سُوئے جہاد

Once Ahmad Ullah Shah started his anti-British campaign, there was no stopping it. He was arrested and released several times. Before the revolt Ahmad Ullah fought his most important action against the British at Faizabad, in Awadh, in February, 1857. Several of his followers were killed and Ahmad Ullah was arrested and jailed. At the start of the revolt in May, Ahmad Ullah was released by the Muslims of the town. Thereafter, he became one of the most important leaders of the revolt. He fought the British valiantly in several arenas of the war and always escaped falling into their hands. Finally, in June 1858, the British set a prize of 50,000 rupees for Ahmad Ullah's arrest. It was on June 15, 1858, that Ahmad Ullah was betrayed by the Hindu feudal lord of Powian and killed.<sup>78</sup>

<sup>76</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 13-16, 23, 27-30, 33-36, and 47.

<sup>77</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 53.

<sup>78</sup>Mu'in -ul Haq, *The Great Revolution* (Karachi: 1968), p. 545.

Thus we realize that Sir Sayyid and Ta'ib offer two completely differing pictures of the extent of Muslim nationalism in India before 1857. In this case one cannot escape the conclusion that Sir Sayyid's most important role was that of a social, political, religious, and educational reformer of Indian Muslims in the post-1857 era. Sir Sayyid realized that the regeneration of the followers of Islam in India could not be achieved without the cooperation and goodwill of the British. He saw this need to such an extent that he always identified himself with the British rule and invariably used the expression "our government" to describe the British Government in India. But as far as Sir Sayyid's reading of the Muslim mind before and during 1857 is concerned, his interpretations may best be described as those of an "apologist" and a "pleader". This description of Sir Sayyid clearly forces itself upon the reader's mind in his *Hunter per Hunter*, *Causes of the Indian Rebellion*, and the *Loyal Muhammadans of India*. Sir Sayyid did succeed in regenerating Indian Muslims and that was a highly legitimate goal. But insofar as writing of history was concerned, Sir Sayyid certainly did not have the metal of a historian and his works were rather unhistorically written. Fateh Muhammad Ta'ib, on the other hand, is an unknown entity in the history of India. But his *Twarikh-i Ahmadi*, of which there is only one copy available at the British Museum, is sure to emerge as a significant historian of Muslim India before 1857.