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**The impact of British Christian missionaries on Indian religious, social
and cultural life between 1800 and 1857**

**With particular reference to the role of missionaries in the events
leading up to the 1857 Mutiny**

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Abstract

This study examines the impact of British Christian missionaries in the north of India between 1800 and 1857. The study focuses on the cross cultural encounter between the Christian Missionaries and the Muslim inhabitants of three Indian cities: Agra, Delhi and Peshawar. Alongside this, the role of the missionaries in creating anti – British sentiment in Agra and Delhi, is examined. Crucially, an assessment is made as to what extent Christian missionary involvement in these three cities influenced people to revolt against the British in 1857.

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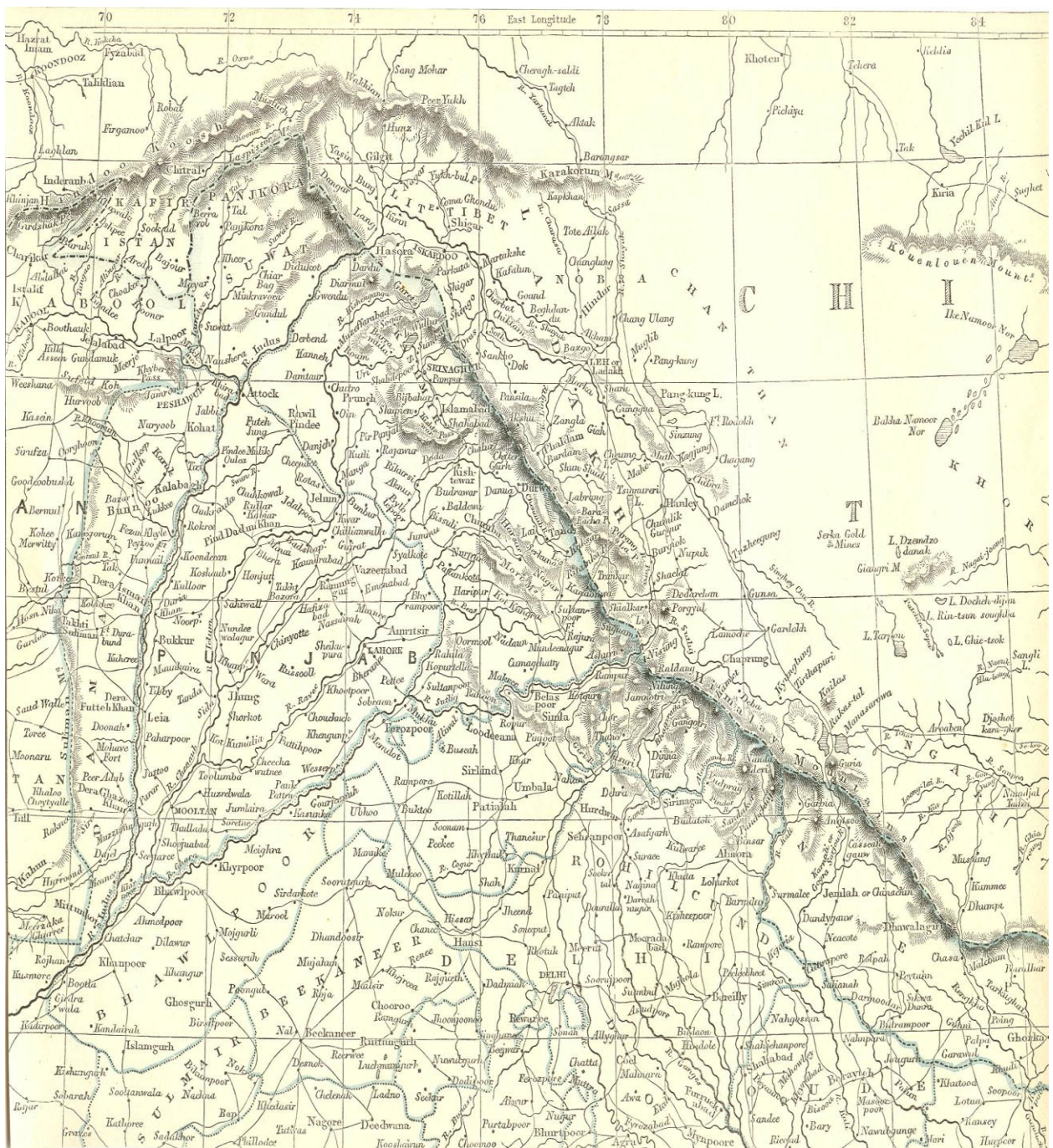
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Historical map of Northern India: The Mutiny 1857-1859 From A. Ward, *The Cambridge Modern History Atlas* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1912).



Map of North India showing Peshawar, Delhi, Agra and surrounding areas. From J. Lowry, *Lowry's Table Atlas* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1850).

Abbreviations

BFBS	British Foreign Bible Society
BMS	Baptist Missionary Society
CMS	Church Missionary Society
Molana	An expert in Islamic law
Molvis	Scholars and experts in Islamic law
Munazara	A public debate
Revd.	Reverend (clergyman)
ṣall Allāhu ‘alay-hi wa-sallam	This means blessings and peace of Allah be upon the prophet Muhammad (to be used after the name of the prophet Muhammad).
SPCK	Society for promoting Christian knowledge
SPG	Society for the propagation of the Gospel
USPG	United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel

Chapter 1. Religion and Empire

Literature review

The purpose of this thesis is not to argue whether the Mutiny of 1857 was a war of religion, rather to take a closer look at the role that religion played. It is important to assess the role of the missionaries in India in order to understand the reasons behind the events of 1857. Dalrymple states quite succinctly:

Religion is not the only force at work, nor perhaps the primary one; but to ignore its power and importance, at least in the rhetoric used to justify the uprising, seems to go against the huge weight of emphasis on this factor given in the rebels' own documents.¹

Although the literature on the Indian Mutiny of 1857 is wide ranging, scholarly works specific to the role of the missionaries in the Mutiny are limited. The role of the Ulema (plural of 'alim' defined as 'those who possess ilm or learning')² and their opposition to missionary activity is missing from many narratives of the Mutiny. The nationalist historians almost discredit them, and they seem to have little place in the existing literature. They did however, play an active role in the Mutiny.³ This thesis therefore seeks to delve further into the neglected subject of Christian

¹ W. Dalrymple, 'In defence of faith: religious rhetoric in the Delhi uprising of 1857', *History Biblio*, 7:3 (2007), p. 9.

² P. Hardy, 'The Ulama in British India', *Journal of Indian History*, Golden jubilee volume (Kerala: University of Kerala, 1973, p. 821).

³ S. Alavi, 'Jihadi Muslims and Hindu Sepoys, rewriting the 1857 narrative', *History Biblio*, 7:3 (2007), p. 10.

missionaries in India and examine the learned Muslim responses they drew, prior to the Mutiny of 1857.

Historians have argued that the evangelising efforts of the missionaries were partially responsible for the Mutiny of 1857; the Delhi mission has been described as ‘overtly Islamophobic’.⁴ This study questions this idea and researches the three cities of Delhi, Agra and Peshawar, which were bases of missions. Agra and Peshawar were home to the Anglican Church Missionary Society (CMS) missions. The German missionary Karl Gottlieb Pfander (1803-65), known for his famous Munazara (religious debate) with the Molvis of Agra and Delhi, had also been involved in the Peshawar and Agra missions.⁵ These cities have been selected as case studies, due to their significance, all three cities were visited by Pfander and in all three cities the missionaries encountered opposition.

⁴ W. Dalrymple, *The Last Mughal* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2006), p. 60.

⁵ A. Powell, *Muslims and Missionaries in pre – Mutiny India* (Richmond: Curzon Press, 1993), p. 68.

The Missionaries and their fields

Karl Gottlieb Pfander was a German Pietist Lutheran missionary who preached in Armenia, India and Turkey.⁶ He was born in 1803, and from an early age, was keen on becoming a missionary.⁷ He started off as a missionary at the age of 17 for the Basel Society.⁸ The society was based in the city of Basel,⁹ in Switzerland close to the German border.¹⁰ The Basel Mission College was established in 1815, its teaching focussed on the Bible. Initially the society focussed on educating missionaries and then allocating them to other societies such as the CMS.¹¹

Whilst at Basel, Pfander learnt more than the traditional subjects based on Christianity, offered by most missionary colleges, he studied Arabic too.¹² Prior to setting foot in India, Pfander had been on a mission in Armenia (which was part of the Ottoman Empire) and equipped himself with knowledge of Persian, this allowed him to write the 'Mizan Al Haqq' ('Balance of Truth') which was later revised in separate versions of 'Miftah Al Asrar' ('Key of Mysteries') and later 'Tariq Al Hayaat' ('Way of Life').¹³

⁶ C. Bennett, *Victorian images of Islam* (London: Grey Seal Books), p. 112

⁷ C. Bennett, 'The Legacy of Karl Gottlieb Pfander', *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, 20:2 (1996), p.76.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ B. Badley. B, *Indian Missionary Directory* (Lucknow: American Methodist Press, 1876), p. 146.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Powell, *Muslims and Missionaries in pre-Mutiny India*, p. 135.

¹³ M. Parsons, *Unveiling God: Contextualizing Christology for Islamic Culture* (Pasadena: William Carey, 2006), p. 5.

In 1822, Basel missionaries began to arrive in India.¹⁴ Pfander's first assignment in India was to Calcutta in 1835, which was home to a large Muslim population.¹⁵ He joined the CMS and continued to work on his language skills, improving his knowledge of Urdu whilst resident at Calcutta.¹⁶ However, in 1841, Pfander was posted to Agra and set to work on translating the 'Mizan' into Urdu. By 1847, he had published a further two books; 'Remarks on the nature of Mohammedanism', and 'Hall al Ishkal' ('Solution of difficulties').¹⁷

Pfander's controversial works had the potential to spark criticism in the Indian Muslim arena; he hammered his incorrect view that Islam was a violent, sword-driven religion, whereas Christianity was a peaceful faith.¹⁸ The debate between Pfander and the Agra Ulema would be a heated debate, because of Pfander's inflammatory views. Subsequent chapters assess the debate in more detail. Eventually, after the Munazara, Pfander was transferred to Peshawar and remained in India till 1861.¹⁹ The question arises, was Pfander a suitable personality for the purpose of this mission – what was the CMS's rationale for sending Pfander as opposed to other missionaries, when it was known he held such inflammatory views?

Pfander was not alone in holding such inflammatory views; the Reverend John Jennings's views also caused a stir in Delhi. Jennings initially left for India in 1833, on the pretext of his wife's ill health.²⁰ His first appointment was to Cawnpore.

¹⁴ *Church Missionary Intelligencer* (London: Seeley, Jackson and Halliday, 1866), p. 97.

¹⁵ Powell, *Muslims and Missionaries in pre-Mutiny India*, p. 132.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Bennett, 'The Legacy of Karl Gottlieb Pfander', p. 77.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 80.

²⁰ D. Hughes, *The Mutiny Chaplains* (Norwich: Michael Russell Publishing, 1991), p. 27.

He was known to be ‘always striving against carelessness and neglect in religious observances’.²¹ By 1852 Jennings was based at the Red Fort in Delhi and converted two well respected Hindus.²² The United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (USPG) supported local calls for a mission and dedicated financial support through its Jubilee fund, thereafter the mission began.²³ Throughout its short life, the mission managed to offer secret lessons in bible reading and a school was also set up.²⁴

The Delhi mission was set up in 1850, although officially it started in 1854.²⁵ Jennings had secured a post as a Company chaplain, as well as a missionary for the USPG.²⁶ Prior to Jennings’ mission in Delhi, Pfander had been visiting Delhi and distributing pamphlets; he had also engaged the Molvis of Delhi in the Agra Munazara and held debates with them in Lucknow.²⁷

Also, only a month prior to the Delhi missionaries arriving to work at the mission, the Molvis of Delhi, including Molana Rahmatullah Kairnawi, had published a book entitled ‘The Remover of Doubts’ or *kashf Al Shabuhat*.²⁸ The book was clearly written to counter the effects of missionary activity, as the Molana himself indicated:

²¹ M. Jennings, *Memoir of my father the Revd M. J. Jennings*, Jennings Papers, Bodleian library, USPG X1284.

²² Dalrymple, *The Last Mughal* , p. XXI.

²³ Powell, *Muslims and Missionaries in pre-Mutiny India* , p. 206.

²⁴ Dalrymple, *The Last Mughal*, p. 74.

²⁵ C. Crawfoot, ‘A Sketch of the S.P.G Mission at Delhi’, *Mission Life*, vol. 3, 1872, pp. 206- 211.

²⁶ Dalrymple, *The Last Mughal*, p. 60.

²⁷ Powell, *Muslims and Missionaries in pre-Mutiny India*, p. 68.

²⁸ F. Nizami, *Madrasahs, Scholars and Saints: Muslim Response to the British Presence in Delhi and the Upper Doab, 1803-1857*, unpublished Ph.D, (Oxford, 1983), p. 199.

For a time the ordinary Muslims shrank from listening to the preaching [of the missionaries] and from studying their books and pamphlets, therefore none of the Indian Ulema paid any attention to the refutation of these pamphlets. But after some time had passed there began to be a weakening in some of the people, and some of the illiterate [Muslims] were in danger of stumbling. Therefore some of us scholars of Islam turned their attention to their refutation.²⁹

The first place where this confrontation between the Muslim scholars and Evangelical missionaries took place was in Agra, the effects and causes of this encounter are explored in the third chapter.

²⁹Dalrymple, *The Last Mughal*, p. 70.

Delhi, Agra and Peshawar

The magnificent city of Delhi was the Mughal capital, its population during Aurangzeb's day was estimated to be approximately two million, according to the Reverend J. T. Thompson, the Baptist missionary who came first to preach in Delhi in 1818.³⁰ Like other cities which had begun life as capital cities or military cantonments, Delhi was able to survive in troubling political circumstances.³¹ The city was lined with long streets and masjids, and its central feature was the Juma Masjid, which stood at the very heart of the city.³²

The city was home to numerous Sufi resting places, which were respected by Hindus as well as Muslims.³³ Some of Delhi's Muslim population consisted of the Ashraf elite. Between 1837 and 1857, Delhi underwent what historians have termed a 'renaissance' in literature and the arts.³⁴ Delhi was a Muslim centre, Helen McKenzie (wife of Lieutenant General Colin McKenzie) in *Six years in India* (1857) declared: 'Benares is the most picturesque, being the most thoroughly Hindu. Agra has the most beautiful buildings, but Delhi is more like a Muhammadan capital'.³⁵

Yet it is important to note that Aurangzeb's successors did not imitate Aurangzeb's policy, the king Bahadur Zafar Shah himself was the child of a Hindu – Muslim marriage. He was known to have employed a Christian convert in

³⁰ *The Missionary register*, London, Seeley, Burnside and Seeley, vol. 33, 1845, p. 164.

³¹ S. Chandra, 'Cultural and political role of Delhi, 1675-1725', in *Delhi through the ages*, Ed. R. Frykenberg (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), p. 205.

³² Powell, *Muslims and Missionaries in pre-Mutiny India*, p. 47.

³³ W. Dalrymple, 'Believers and Infidels', *Calit review*, California, 1999, p. 7.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ H. McKenzie, *Six years in India* (London: Richard Bentley, 1857), p. 43.

his household too.³⁶ There is evidence to suggest that there was some religious tolerance between the two communities; Muslims and Hindus, besides half of Delhi's inhabitants were Muslim.³⁷ Some Muslim rulers gave endowments of land and granted tax exemptions for religious buildings such as Hindu temples. Hindu rulers sometimes did the same for their Muslim subjects.³⁸ However, there was also tension brewing, as there was disagreement regarding the slaughtering of cows and azaan (Muslim call to prayer) in masjids.³⁹ Cows were slaughtered regularly on Eid ul Fitr.⁴⁰ This issue was subject to intervention by the king and had to be addressed by Bahadur Zafar Shah.

Katherine Prior has argued that before British rule the boundaries between Indian religions were not solidified, as she states 'Before the British intervention no authority appears to have attempted to make permanent the public indicators of relations between a town's Hindus and Muslims'.⁴¹ Relations had not been made clear prior to this. The king himself, Bahadur Zafar Shah, took part in the spring festival of Holi; the king felt it quite important to preserve the religious harmony in Delhi, as in one instance, a group of Delhi's Muslims requested permission to slaughter cows at the Eid festival, to which the King's response was 'the religion of the Mussalman did not depend on the sacrifice of cows'.⁴²

³⁶ S. David, *The Indian Mutiny: 1857* (Michigan: Viking, 2002), p. 6.

³⁷ W. Dalrymple, 'In defence of faith: religious rhetoric in the Delhi uprising of 1857', p. 27.

³⁸ D. Lopez, *Religions of India in practice* (Princeton: Princeton University Press), 1995, p. 35.

³⁹ Alavi, 'Jihadi Muslims and Hindu Sepoys, rewriting the 1857 narrative', p. 11.

⁴⁰ K. Prior, 'Making History : the states intervention in urban religious disputes in the north western provinces in the early nineteenth century, *Modern Asian Studies*, 27:1 (1993), p. 185.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Dalrymple, 'Believers and Infidels', p. 7.

Though some historians maintain Delhi underwent a literary ‘renaissance’ during the early 1800s; other historians have termed this literary development as the ‘twilight’ of Delhi.⁴³ They have detected decline and believe that by the 1800s the Muslim community had lost its vibrancy and had developed weaknesses which the missionaries had identified.⁴⁴ Some historians have therefore seen it as ‘twilight’ or late flowering not a ‘renaissance’.

Pernau and Dalrymple both argue that the British officials of the time were affected by Indian influences and were:

much less intent on introducing their own culture into an Indian context, than they were themselves the outcome of an encounter with the east. In the dresses they wore, the women they loved, the children they begot, and the knowledge they imbibed and patronized, the deep affection of this generation for India is shown, before they were slowly replaced by self-righteous utilitarian and evangelical newcomers. This development took off in the 1830s and was sealed with the brutal repression of the revolt of 1857, never to be revived.⁴⁵

The validity of this argument shall be assessed in subsequent chapters.

⁴³ Powell, *Muslims and missionaries in India in pre-Mutiny India*, p. 49.

⁴⁴ R. Sharma, *Christian Missions in North India, 1813 – 1913* (Delhi: Mittal Publications, 1988), p. 178.

⁴⁵ M. Pernau, *The Delhi College, Traditional Elites, the Colonial State and Education before 1857* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p.11.

On the other hand, Agra had enjoyed prestige during Akbar's reign, as he preferred it to Delhi, thus it was called 'Akbarabad' for a period of time,⁴⁶ but the Mughal king Shah Jehan moved the capital back to Delhi.⁴⁷ As the Mughal Empire fell, Agra fell to the British.

Agra like Delhi had been a city of many streets and avenues,⁴⁸ being a historic city it was home to ancient ruins too, as the female missionary Mary Weitbrecht writes 'The whole of this great circuit is flat, and filled with the ruins of ancient grandeur'.⁴⁹ It was the place where Akbar had set up his syncretic religion 'Din e Elahi', which was a mixture of various religions. Prior to Pfander's mission in Agra, there had also been a Catholic Capuchin mission⁵⁰ and the city had some exposure to Portuguese and Armenian Missionaries.⁵¹ Agra was home to approximately seven hundred masjids.⁵² Agra was connected to Delhi through its intellectual circles as is discussed in further chapters; it drew Ulema from Delhi to its missionary debates.

Peshawar, a city located by the River Indus and situated between the Khyber hills, Hindu Kush and the Great Salt range, the population consisted of various tribes,

⁴⁶ M. Weitbrecht, *Missionary sketches in North India with reference to recent events* (London: James Nisbet, 1858), p. 424.

⁴⁷ Powell, *Muslims and Missionaries in pre-Mutiny India*, p. 47.

⁴⁸ *The Christian Observer* (London: Ellerton and Henderson), Vol 16, 1816, p. 121.

⁴⁹ Weitbrecht, *Missionary sketches in North India with reference to recent events*, p. 424.

⁵⁰ Powell, *Muslims and Missionaries in pre-Mutiny India*, p. 85.

⁵¹ A. Powell, 'Creating Christian Community in early nineteenth century Agra' in *India and the Indianess of Christianity*, ed. R. Young, and R. Frykenberg (Michigan: W.B. Eerdmans, 2009), p.156.

⁵² Weitbrecht, *Missionary sketches in North India with reference to recent events*, p. 425.

some of whom were heavily armed. The tribes were mainly Pashtuns consisting of: Afreedees, Mohmand, Yusufzai and Khattaks.⁵³

The city was known for its Muslim schools of learning.⁵⁴ Weitbrecht, stated: ‘The Mohammadan population of that city is singularly fanatical, and the city is encompassed with hill tribes as daring as they are fanatical’.⁵⁵ Eugene Stock, a late nineteenth century historian of evangelical missions also argued that Peshawar was a very dangerous city for the missionaries and their supporters, the city was easily accessible to the tribesmen from the mountains, and these men, ‘took a pride in killing infidels’.⁵⁶

Missionaries of the time estimated the population to be 60,000 inhabitants,⁵⁷ whereas others calculated it was nearly 100,000.⁵⁸ Stock argued the city required a garrison of 12000 men.⁵⁹ It would be easy then to imagine that Peshawar was unwelcoming to the British and would support the mutineers in 1857. Like Delhi and Agra the city was home to a Christian mission. However, Mutiny did not break out at Peshawar in 1857; regiments from Peshawar actually helped to put down the Mutiny.⁶⁰ Herbert Edwardes (Commissioner at Peshawar, 1898-68) commented in a letter ‘The police and people of the district are behaving splendidly. They catch all the deserters from the regiments, and bring them in with every rupee that was

⁵³ A. Barney, *A star in the east* (London: John F Shaw, 1860), p. 217.

⁵⁴ H. Edwardes, *Memorials of Major General Sir Herbert B. Edwardes* (London: Keegan, Paul and Trench, 1866), p. 301.

⁵⁵ Weitbrecht, *Missionary sketches in North India with reference to recent events*, p. xii.

⁵⁶ E. Stock, ‘The first work in the Punjab’, *Beginnings in India* (London: Central Board of Missions, 1917), p. 1.

⁵⁷ T. Hughes, *Church Missionary Paper* (London: Gilbert and Rivington, 1867), p. ccli.

⁵⁸ Barney, *A star in the east*, p. 217.

⁵⁹ Stock, ‘The first work in the Punjab’, *Beginnings in India*, p.1.

⁶⁰ Allen, *Soldier Sahibs: The men who made the north west frontier*, p. 267.

on them'.⁶¹ What was the reason for this? What had prevented the people of Peshawar from sympathising with the deserters?

Thomas Hughes who was a missionary, wrote to the *Church Missionary Paper* describing life in Peshawar:

Each section of a village has its guest chamber, and every chief of consequence keeps one ... as soon as a stranger arrives at a village guest-house, it is his duty to give the usual Muhammadan salaam.⁶²

As to the economic status of the inhabitants of Peshawar, the *CMS Intelligencer* indicated in 1854, that they were 'not wealthy'.

The Peshawar mission was only two years old when the Mutiny broke out in India, yet it is an interesting and important topic for research because it offers an insight into the attitudes of officials in the government, such as Herbert Edwardes. Edwardes (1819-68, Commissioner at Peshawar) believed that an officer should aim 'to be a pioneer of Christian civilisation in lands where idolatry too often occupies the temple'. Did all of the government officials in Delhi, Agra and Peshawar hold a similar view?

When analysing missionary literature, it becomes obvious that the missionary approach to India was far from ecumenical, has Geoffrey Cox argued:

⁶¹ Edwardes, *Memorials of Major General Sir Herbert B. Edwardes*, p. 392.

⁶² Hughes, *Church Missionary Paper*, p. ccli.iii.

Although historians of empire and South Asia think naturally of a ‘missionary movement’, in India the documentation is heavily denominational, reflecting the proliferation of distinct and often inward looking voluntary societies and denominations.⁶³

Many nationalist historians are accused of putting forward views which are ‘extreme’, in response to which it could also be argued that quite a few Western apologists of empire have taken a similar stance, and have themselves taken ‘extreme views’.⁶⁴ In the study of the Indian Mutiny, as with any other contentious historical subject, awareness of the particular bias of the historian is important. Such awareness helps to identify motives for bias, be that apologists for empire or nationalist historians. This thesis seeks to include secondary sources from different historians, including imperialists and nationalists. Although the scope of this M.Phil study has been limited to assessing the reaction of Indian Muslims, rather than Hindus or followers of other religions, it attempts to discuss the concerns of followers of other religions in relation to unity between followers of different religions. This approach has been adopted to allow a close analysis of the impact of the missionaries in India upon one group – the Indian Muslims. The limitations of this approach are that it leads to a linguistic bias as most of the sources used are English Language sources. However attempts have been made to keep the sources as balanced as possible.

Limited secondary literature exists regarding the Delhi mission, therefore much of the information used for this thesis has been obtained from the USPG

⁶³ As noted by J. Cox, *Imperial Fault Lines: Christianity and Colonial power in India* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), p. 3.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

(United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel) archive in Oxford. On the other hand, a wide range of sources exist relating to the CMS's Agra mission, such as Avril Powell's *Muslims and Missionaries in pre-Mutiny India*. Powell's study provides an in depth analysis of Pfander's activities in Agra and neighbouring villages. It is particularly valuable in offering an insight into the intellectual opposition to missionary activity in northern India.

Like the Delhi mission, there is limited secondary literature relating to the Peshawar mission. The CMS archives in Birmingham offer a wide range of information regarding the Agra and Peshawar missions. The limitations of utilising such archives must also be considered, as they may exclude mention of some segments of societies such as female missionaries, although some mention is made in missionaries' letters. The Reverend Christian Theophilus Hoernle (1804-1882, missionary at the Agra Mission) regularly sent a stream of letters, reports and other useful sources to the CMS office in England, all of which are useful in assessing the missionary contribution to Indian society.⁶⁵ The CMS's *Missionary Register* is also a useful source which the society published describing the state of its missions around the globe.

There were economic differences between Indians, as some regions were wealthier than others. This raises a further question: did different socio-economic groupings react differently to the missionary experience; did the citizens of the Mughal capital of Delhi react differently to the citizens of tribal Peshawar? Or did the missionaries themselves target specific socio economic groupings? However it is not within the scope of this thesis to deal with this aspect in depth.

⁶⁵ Cox, *Imperial Fault Lines: Christianity and Colonial power in India*, p. 1.

Although Powell's work draws upon a wide range of English language and Urdu sources and provides a valuable insight into the intellectual life of Delhi as she discusses the background to the Munazara and the environment at Delhi and Agra as well as the crisis at Delhi College – drawing together events in Agra and Delhi. She devotes a complete chapter to the debate in 1854 in which she seeks to display how both Pfander and Molana Rahmat Allah Kairnawi (a molvi from Kayranah) tried to reach the 'truth', but had different criteria. As Peter Hardy argues:

For Pfander, 'a true revelation should be in accordance with the dictates of the conscience which God has established in man's heart', and should be adjudged true by its conformity to the 'wants', cravings, necessities of the human sinner in his search for 'spiritual happiness.'⁶⁶

Whereas for Molana Rahmat Allah Kairnawi, the criteria was textual authenticity.

Powell argues that Molana Rahmat Allah Kairnawi increased the morale of the Ulema, arguing that his role had effects for years to come. In her conclusion she follows Wazir Khan's activities into the Mutiny of 1857. Importantly she moves away from an interpretation which had become entrenched, that those who participated in 1857 for religious reasons were 'bigoted Wahabis'. Powell demonstrates this quite well as she seeks to show the role of Sufism, and how the *Ashraf* (cultural elite) was very diverse.⁶⁷

⁶⁶ P. Hardy 'Review: Muslims and Missionaries in Pre Mutiny India', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 57:2 (1994), pp. 406-7.

⁶⁷ Powell, *Muslims and Missionaries in Pre- Mutiny India*, p. 291.

Powell's research does not tie in neatly with William Wilson Hunter's (an Indian administrator and historian, 1840-1900) theory put forward in *The Indian Mussalmans: are they bound in conscience to rebel against the Queen?* in 1871, in which he emphasises the role of the 'Wahabi movement'. Hunter was a member of the Indian Civil Service and his work is an important source as it was written by an English civil servant after the Mutiny, and therefore offers an insight into the British view on the causes of the Mutiny, in the post Mutiny period.⁶⁸

The limitations to Powell's approach are that she draws upon the effects of the Munazara rather than mission work – she does not devote much attention to the details of the mission work at Agra. This leaves interesting avenues for research, some of which are taken up by this study, such as the workings of the Agra and Delhi Mission and Pfander's last Indian mission to Peshawar. Hardy has also identified that Powell has not emphasised the authenticity of scripture is a key part of the Muslim faith: he argues 'perhaps this consideration offers a less instrumentalist explanation than that already offered for the contemporary Muslim interest in Powell's theme'.⁶⁹ Other historians have also examined the controversy with Pfander, such as Christine Schirmacher in *Mit den Waffen des Gegners* (1992).

Raj Sharma's work *Christian Missions in North India 1813 – 1913*, is an insightful work for the purpose of this thesis as Sharma draws upon many original resources – missionary and primary. However its scope is limited in that it covers the districts of Dehra Dun and Meerut, North of Delhi. Nevertheless it gives an insight into the religious life of Muslims and other Indian communities prior to 1857.

⁶⁸ W. Hunter, *The Indian Mussalmans: are they bound in conscience to rebel against the Queen?* (London: Trubner and Company, 1871), pp. 4-6.

⁶⁹ Hardy 'Review: Muslims and Missionaries in Pre Mutiny India', pp. 406-7.

Sharma holds the view that the Mutiny was fought for religious reasons – he draws our attention to the speeches of Molvis of the time and missionary works such as *Mizan Ul Haq* (Balance of truth) and *Remarks on the nature of Muhammedanism* which caused tensions.⁷⁰

Another controversial point is whether India was divided, or as Indian nationalist historians argue it had ‘geographical integrity’.⁷¹ This itself poses problems for this study, as conflicting views with regards to the success or failure in missionary activity arise. If India’s geographical conditions cannot be generalised, the theme of missionary activity itself cannot be generalised, as it varied in nature between the

1800s and 1870s. What similarities, after all were there, in the cultures of Delhi, Agra and Peshawar? What languages were spoken, how well were missionaries equipped to preach in these languages?

India was a large country, which was divided on more than one level; it was home to believers of more than three different religions, and it was divided in terms of history, as invaders had settled in particular areas.⁷² Thus in many cases there were varied cultures, traditions and customs. The caste system was one clear form of division. Yet there was no clear line between different religions. Religions themselves had subgroups, such as the Deoband and ‘Wahabi’ movements in Indian Islam. As Judith Brown has stated:

⁷⁰ Sharma, *Christian Missions in North India*, p. 104.

⁷¹ Hardy ‘Review: Muslims and Missionaries in Pre Mutiny India’, pp. 406-7.

⁷² A. Seal, *The Emergence Of Indian Nationalism* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1971), p. 26.

It is as difficult to talk about British policy towards Muslims as about Indian Muslims. Just as Muslims differed in characteristics and needs according to locality, so provincial governments related to Muslims according to local problems and opportunities.⁷³

The historian's understanding of the word 'culture' must be explained in order to assess the impact of missionaries on Indian culture between 1800 and 1860. For this study, the word 'culture' shall be defined as 'the customs, ideas and social behaviour of a particular people or group'.⁷⁴ Susan Bayly focuses her cultural examination of India, on law, education, science, religion and modernisation.⁷⁵ Bayly's study also highlights the particular importance of studying religion in India, as she argues that in this 'arena', the 'most far reaching confrontations' took place.⁷⁶ It is for this reason that this research is largely dedicated to examining the educational impact of the missionaries in Agra, Delhi and Peshawar. Pfander had visited all three cities and had been involved in the education and schooling of local Indians there, his role will be examined in detail in subsequent chapters.

In examining the encounter between the missionaries and Indians, this study also investigates the relationship between missionaries and the East India Company. This approach can be problematic as there were different types of responses to this encounter at different times in history and therefore chronology must be

⁷³ J. Brown, *Modern India: The Origins of An Asian Democracy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 151.

⁷⁴ C. Soanes, *Concise Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

⁷⁵ S. Bayly, 'The Evolution of Colonial Cultures: Nineteenth-Century Asia', *The Nineteenth Century*, Volume 3 ed. A. Porter (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 449.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

emphasised as the situation was changing constantly.⁷⁷ Evidence of this can be seen by comparing the East India Company's initial stance on missionary activity in India with later amendments made along with the 'pious clause'.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

The situation in Britain - The Evangelicals and their battle in England

In the eighteenth century, England was coping with a growth in population alongside social developments such as industrialisation and a change in traditional hierarchies.⁷⁸ Although most English people lived in agricultural society, a working - class group was developing.⁷⁹ The Evangelical ‘revival’ in England was also a psychological reaction to the changing social and economic conditions in England.⁸⁰

‘Evangelical’ (from the word ‘evangel’ meaning good news)⁸¹ was a term that was coined in the late eighteenth century, for people who were ‘over-enthusiastic’ in their religion.⁸² The term ‘Evangelical’ literally means to spread the gospel. The Evangelicals wanted to spread the gospel through various means and used the pulpit as well as other methods such as the distribution of tracts to do so.⁸³ Evangelicals believed in improving their own souls first and then concentrating their efforts on helping others, such as praying for them and conversing with them regarding religious matters.⁸⁴

For the purpose of this study, the term ‘Evangelicalism’ is defined. Where ‘evangelical’ with a lower case is used, it refers to ‘of the gospel’ but when used with

⁷⁸ M. Crawford, ‘Origins of the Eighteenth Century Revival: England and New England compared’, *The Journal of British Studies*, 26:4 (1987), p. 364.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ P. Carson, *Soldiers of Christ: Evangelicals and India 1784-1833*, unpublished Ph.D thesis (London, 1988), p. 26.

⁸² Ibid., p. 22.

⁸³ O. Chadwick, *The Victorian Church Part 2*, (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1979) , p. 442.

⁸⁴ S. Meacham, ‘The Evangelical Inheritance’, *The Journal of British Studies*, 3:1 (1963), p. 91.

a capital letter 'Evangelical' it relates to the movement which began in the 1730s.⁸⁵ In their mission to 'save souls from eternal death', many Evangelicals concentrated their efforts at home; but a number began to look to the 'heathen abroad'.⁸⁶ Some of these missions would extend to India. Most missionaries who set out to India before 1860 were from the middle class, usually from trade backgrounds⁸⁷ (although some missionaries had some form of teaching experience),⁸⁸ and were opposed to pre-determined hereditary hierarchies. These 'soldiers of Christ'⁸⁹ set out to convert the Indians who were, in the missionary view, 'vain in their imaginations and their foolish hearts darkened'.⁹⁰

Unsurprisingly, not all Christians were pleased with this idea; there were many groups in opposition to the Evangelicals: Quakers, Presbyterians, Unitarians and some Baptists did not approve of many Evangelical activities.⁹¹ Furthermore, many of the upper classes in Britain were not keen on the possibility that the faith of the poor would be strengthened and that they might become susceptible to new ideas and challenge the existing order.⁹²

Evangelicalism is a broad term that has encompassed various Christian denominations of the Church. As David Bebbington argues, the term has

⁸⁵ D. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: a history from the 1730s to the 1980s* (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 1.

⁸⁶ Chadwick, *The Victorian Church Part 2*, p. 5.

⁸⁷ D. Forrester, *Caste and Christianity: Attitudes and policies on caste of Anglo Saxon Protestant Missionaries in India* (London: Curzon Press, 1980), p. 22.

⁸⁸ M. Laird, 'The contribution of the Serampore Missionaries to education in Bengal, 1793 – 1837', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 31:1, (1968), p. 92.

⁸⁹ Carson, *Soldiers of Christ: Evangelicals and India 1784-1833*, p. 319.

⁹⁰ Sharma, *Christian Missions in North India*, p. 194.

⁹¹ Carson, *Soldiers of Christ: Evangelicals and India 1784-1833*, p. 37.

⁹² Chadwick, *The Victorian Church Part 2*, p. 2.

encompassed all those ‘that have not consisted of all those strands in Protestantism that have not been either too high in Churchmanship or too broad in theology to qualify for acceptance’.⁹³ Some of the first Evangelicals sympathised with Methodists but by the turn of the nineteenth century, a group of the Evangelicals broke away to form a separate sect, and those who remained as part of the Church of England were referred to as ‘Evangelicals’.⁹⁴

Evangelicalism was based on four main themes; conversion, activism, emphasis on the Bible and the symbolism of the Cross.⁹⁵ Evangelicalism itself was non denominational: it encompassed groups that were part of the established Church as well as those who were not.⁹⁶ Evangelicals often held large gatherings; there was open expression of emotion, convulsions, fainting, prayer and mass conversion.⁹⁷ The Bible itself was seen as the sole authority.⁹⁸

Evangelicals believed that a Christian needed to change his or her life by living according to the Gospel and that it was the duty of Christians to spread the gospel at home and abroad.⁹⁹ However, the Evangelical belief in sin sometimes led to disagreements with those concerned with social improvement, as Evangelicals saw suffering as a consequence of human sin.¹⁰⁰ The Religious Society of Friends or

⁹³ Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: a history from the 1730s to the 1980s*, p. 1.

⁹⁴ I. Bradley, *The Call to Seriousness: the Evangelical impact on the Victorians* (London: Cape, 1976), p. 16.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 362.

⁹⁶ D. Bebbington, ‘The Gospel in the nineteenth century’, *Vox Evangelica*, 13:19 (1983), p. 19.

⁹⁷ Meacham, ‘The Evangelical Inheritance’, p. 91.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 89.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ M. Roberts, *Making English Morals, Voluntary Associations and Reform* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 47.

Quakers, most closely associated with philanthropic activities, often worked alongside Evangelicals, because they wanted to make the world a better place to live. Meacham states that ‘This allegiance to a higher than human morality distinguishes the Evangelical from the humanitarian’.¹⁰¹

Evangelicals used various methods to influence society; Evangelical societies had ‘hearers’ as well as members – the former were people who attended gatherings but did not join the societies.¹⁰² Crawford argues that the Evangelical revival owed a lot to its preaching of death and damnation: this drew a lot of young people who were conscious of sin.¹⁰³ Those brought up in ‘pious’ families were likely to find Evangelicalism appealing.¹⁰⁴ Likewise those who attended Evangelical Society schools were more likely to become Evangelicals.¹⁰⁵

Evangelicals provided a link between Protestant Nonconformists and the Established Church;¹⁰⁶ they placed importance on sin, new birth and forgiveness.¹⁰⁷ For some, the appeal of Evangelicalism was its emotional symbolism, compared to the religion of the Established Church.¹⁰⁸ The symbolism of the cross was central to Evangelical Christianity.¹⁰⁹ Evangelicalism had some continuity with previous

¹⁰¹ Meacham, ‘The Evangelical Inheritance’, p. 92.

¹⁰² Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: a history from the 1730s to the 1980s*, p. 25.

¹⁰³ Crawford, ‘Origins of the Eighteenth Century Revival: England and New England compared’, p. 365.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 371.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁶ Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: a history from the 1730s to the 1980s*, preface page.

¹⁰⁷ Crawford, ‘Origins of the Eighteenth Century Revival: England and New England compared’, p. 364.

¹⁰⁸ Meacham, ‘The Evangelical Inheritance’, p. 89.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 91.

religious formations, yet in some ways it was also a break with the past.¹¹⁰ Evangelicals had varied emphases: some believed Jesus was a saviour and their sins as Christians would be forgiven, but others differed and believed that this was not enough, and this would lead to a licence for immorality if people believed their sins would be forgiven.¹¹¹

The French Revolution meant that dissent was seen as radicalism by some and so the Evangelicals had to separate themselves from the Dissenters.¹¹² The mission of the Evangelicals was to preach in order to convert.¹¹³ The Evangelicals gained more power and increased in number at the end of the eighteenth century; the revival was emotional and based on the idea of salvation depending on faith.¹¹⁴ To their delight, between 1800 and 1853, Evangelicalism gained a larger following.¹¹⁵

There were distinctions of outlook between the generations of Evangelical missionaries in India between 1800 and 1860. Standish Meacham has argued that, ‘Without an awareness of the depth of the first and second generations’ beliefs, one cannot appreciate the way in which those of the third and fourth lost their vigour’.¹¹⁶ Could this have been a reason behind the differing levels of success or impact which the different generations of missionaries achieved in India?

Alongside variations in beliefs, there were also differing approaches amongst Evangelicals. From the 1830 onwards, the older leaders of the Evangelical movement

¹¹⁰ Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: a history from the 1730s to the 1980s*, p. 28.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² E. Jay, *The Religion of the Heart* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1979), p. 18.

¹¹³ Chadwick, *The Victorian Church Part 2*, p. 2

¹¹⁴ Bradley, *The Call to Seriousness: the Evangelical impact on the Victorians*, p. 15.

¹¹⁵ Jay, *The Religion of the Heart*, p. 72.

¹¹⁶ Meacham, ‘The Evangelical Inheritance’, p. 91.

were dying, and the newer generation of Evangelicals were less cautious about their beliefs: they believed that their views should be voiced.¹¹⁷ Charles Smyth identifies that Charles Simeon (a clergyman and a founder of the CMS, 1759-1836) believed that despite the generational differences, the essential beliefs were the same.¹¹⁸

By the second half of the nineteenth century, attending church had become a mark of respectability.¹¹⁹ The segments of society which appeared to find Evangelicalism more appealing were those who worked in the commerce and manufacturing industry, whereas rural labourers and landed interests were not affected by Evangelicalism to the same extent. Crawford argues that those who worked in manufacturing and industry were precisely those whom the Church could not cater for, due to the effects of population increase.¹²⁰ Meacham on the other hand maintains that Evangelicals came mainly from the middle and upper middle classes, most of them having been educated at university.¹²¹ Evangelicalism was not common amongst the very rich or the very poor.¹²² Ian Bradley argues that the Evangelical revival was a reaction against materialism and the ‘complacency of eighteenth century England’.¹²³

Richard Price offers an insight into the problems of historiography:

¹¹⁷ Ibid., p. 96.

¹¹⁸ C. Smyth, ‘The Evangelical movement in perspective’, *Cambridge Historical Journal*, 7:3 (1943), p. 168.

¹¹⁹ Bebbington, ‘The Gospel in the nineteenth century’, p.19.

¹²⁰ Crawford, ‘Origins of the Eighteenth Century Revival: England and New England compared’, p. 367.

¹²¹ Meacham, ‘The Evangelical Inheritance’, p. 94.

¹²² Bebbington, ‘The Gospel in the nineteenth century’, p. 25.

¹²³ Bradley, *The Call to Seriousness: the Evangelical impact on the Victorians*, p. 19.

It is worth noting that this version of ‘middle class’ (characteristic of both traditional and revisionist historiography) conflates the Evangelical middle classes with the whole in an act of borrowing that writes the version of history concocted by the Evangelical middle classes themselves.¹²⁴

Michael Roberts has also associated the conversion to evangelicalism with class experience.¹²⁵

Other perspectives on the Evangelical revival have also been offered. For example William Ewart Gladstone (prime minister and author, 1809-98) stated that the Evangelical movement was ‘a strong, systematic, outspoken and determined reaction against the prevailing standards both of life and preaching’.¹²⁶ There was a change in clerical strategies: after anti-clericalism and secularisation, many clerics felt the need to restore ‘respect’ in the Church. Thus they set about pioneering the Evangelical revival.¹²⁷ However Evangelicalism gathered a large following in the cities and amongst workers in the manufacturing trade, because of the social change; workers had left traditional hierarchies and faced ‘social insecurity’. Evangelicalism gave them a sense of belonging.¹²⁸

¹²⁴ R. Price, ‘Historiography, Narrative, and the Nineteenth Century’, *The Journal of British Studies*, 35:2 (1996), p. 63.

¹²⁵ Roberts, *Making English: Morals, Voluntary Association and moral reform*, p. 7.

¹²⁶ Smyth, ‘The Evangelical movement in perspective’, p. 169.

¹²⁷ Crawford, ‘Origins of the Eighteenth Century Revival: England and New England compared’, p. 375.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 367.

Unsurprisingly, almost all the chaplains, deacons and bishops in India between 1813 and 1913 were ‘evangelists’.¹²⁹ Evangelicalism was the strongest religious movement and influenced various denominations.¹³⁰ There was also a sense of shared identity expressed between dissenters and the British and Foreign Bible Society (formed in 1804). The society aimed to distribute copies of the Bible throughout the world. Owen Chadwick commented on the Evangelicals that, ‘Shoulder to shoulder with dissenters they stood on platforms of the British and Foreign Bible Society and worked to distribute cheap editions of scripture’.¹³¹

The prospect of preaching in India was very attractive for Evangelical missionaries as they believed India was drowning in sin. As Ian Bradley comments: ‘The twenty Million inhabitants of India, sunk deep in Hindu idolatry, seemed to cry out for conversion’,¹³² and so began the campaign in 1793 to open up the missionary route to India.

¹²⁹ Sharma, *Christian Missions in North India*, p. 82.

¹³⁰ Chadwick, *The Victorian Church Part 2*, p. 5.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 441.

¹³² Bradley, *The Call to Seriousness: the Evangelical impact on the Victorians*, p. 75.

Early missions and the battles with parliament

Amongst the various missionary societies set up in India that were related to the established Church, the most notable were the Society for the Propagation of Gospel (SPG), The Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge (SPCK) ; and the Church Missionary Society (CMS).¹³³ The SPCK was the only Protestant Missionary Society in India by 1793.¹³⁴ It was later joined by the Church Missionary Society in 1807. The CMS formed in April 1799,¹³⁵ was important as it was the largest of the societies¹³⁶ and also the most ‘adventurous’ as it operated in the furthest frontiers of India.¹³⁷

A group of Christian chaplains in North India supported the work of the CMS and formed a committee in Calcutta, and this began the society’s work in India.¹³⁸

Amongst supporters of the society were people like John Venn (a clergyman, 1759-1813), William Wilberforce (politician and philanthropist, 1759-1833) and Charles Grant (philanthropist and director of the East India Company, 1746-1823), whom Ralph Wardlaw Thompson (secretary of the London Missionary Society) describes as ‘men of large hearts, broad and sound conceptions of duty and fearless courage’.¹³⁹ These were the people who pushed for missionary activity in India and who battled in Parliament for its support.¹⁴⁰

¹³³ Sharma, *Christian Missions in North India*, p. 82.

¹³⁴ Carson, *Soldiers of Christ: Evangelicals and India 1784-1833*, p. 55.

¹³⁵ Badley, *Indian Missionary Directory*, p. 71.

¹³⁶ Cox, *Imperial Fault Lines: Christianity and Colonial power in India*, p. 1.

¹³⁷ S. Neil, *A history of Christianity in India: 1797-1858* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), p. 33.

¹³⁸ W. Thompson and A. Johnson, *British Foreign Missions* (London: Blake and Son, 1899), p. 15.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

¹⁴⁰ P. Carson, ‘The British Raj and the Awakening of the Evangelical Conscience’, *Christian Missions and the enlightenment*, Ed. B. Stanley (Grand Rapids: W.B. Erdmans, 2001), p. 47.

The USPG was set up in 1699,¹⁴¹ its aims being:

i) providing a maintenance for an orthodox clergy in the plantations, colonies, and factories of Great Britain beyond the seas, for the instruction of the king's loving subjects in the Christian religion; (2) making such other provision as may be necessary for the propagation of the Gospel in those parts; and (3) receiving managing and disposing of the charity his majesty's subjects for these purposes.¹⁴²

The USPG's activities in India were supported by parliamentary grants and it had been set up by royal charter,¹⁴³ by William III.¹⁴⁴

Initially the Company thought it a good idea to have churches for the Christian Settlements¹⁴⁵ and so the 'pious clause' was introduced in 1792¹⁴⁶:

that it is the peculiar and bounden duty of the legislature to promote by all just and prudent means, the interests and happiness of the inhabitants of the British dominions in India; and that for these ends, such measure

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Thompson and Johnson, *British Foreign Missions*, p. 16.

¹⁴³ Carson, 'The British Raj and the Awakening of the Evangelical Conscience', *Christian Missions and the enlightenment*, p. 47.

¹⁴⁴ Badley, *Indian Missionary Directory*, p. 97.

¹⁴⁵ A. Porter, 'Religion, Missionary enthusiasm and power', *The Nineteenth Century*, Volume 3, ed. A. Porter (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 222.

¹⁴⁶ N. Etherington, *Missions and Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 109.

ought to be adopted as may gradually tend to their advancement in useful knowledge, and to their religious and moral improvement.¹⁴⁷

However by 1799, the government's approach to missionaries had changed: in some areas of India corresponding societies had been branded illegal, and their activities came to be seen as seditious in anti-Jacobin Britain during the French wars.¹⁴⁸ The reason behind this was partially a fear that the French might invade India and so the East India Company was trying to maintain social control. Some Company officials felt the missionaries were causing trouble and were suspicious that the missionaries were French agents.¹⁴⁹ As a result, missionaries were regularly questioned and the Court of the Board of Control and the Company decided that missionaries who did not possess a licence should be arrested. Societies such as the Baptists Missionary Society (BMS) relocated to other areas such as Danish Serampore.¹⁵⁰

The mission at Serampore was led by Joshua Marshman (1768-1837), William Carey (1761-1834) and William Ward (1769-1823), known as the 'Serampore Trio'.¹⁵¹ By 1818, there was a split between the Baptist Missionaries at Serampore: one group formed its own mission based at Calcutta. Furthermore, by 1827, there was a separation between the BMS and the Serampore Trio, after

¹⁴⁷ Carson, *Soldiers of Christ: Evangelicals and India 1784-1833*, p. 55.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 66.

¹⁴⁹ Sharma, *Christian Missions in North India*, p. 194.

¹⁵⁰ Carson, *Soldiers of Christ: Evangelicals and India 1784-1833*, p. 81.

¹⁵¹ M. Laird, *Bishop Heber in Northern India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), pp. 54-5.

continuous disputes between the two sides.¹⁵² However this separation was not to last long, as the Serampore Trio found that they could not continue with their efforts without financial backing; thus they were forced back into an alliance with the BMS in 1837.¹⁵³ In this very year, the last of the original Serampore Trio died.¹⁵⁴

By 1799, some British people regarded the missionaries as ‘maniacs’ and ‘ill-educated fanatic dissenters’¹⁵⁵ whose activity was pointless.¹⁵⁶ Some British officials concluded that the missionary presence in India was causing danger to the social structure of Britain, as the lower classes might revolt against the existing order due to their dissatisfaction with their position in society. Missionaries were even accused of ‘Jacobinism’.¹⁵⁷

Furthermore, even a number of British officials argued that there was a danger that missionary activity would also lead to a desire for change and political reform in India.¹⁵⁸ As Christian denominations such as the Baptists and other nonconformist groups were being persecuted in England, they had moved out to India. It was against this backdrop that some missionaries, moved to India and set up a bases for their activity¹⁵⁹ whereas others moved into India to convert the masses

¹⁵² Ibid., p. 92.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵ A. Porter, ‘Commerce and Christianity: The Rise and Fall of a Nineteenth-Century Missionary slogan’, *The Historical Journal*, 28:3 (1985), p. 604.

¹⁵⁶ Laird, *Bishop Heber in Northern India*, p. 53.

¹⁵⁷ Carson, *Soldiers of Christ: Evangelicals and India 1784-1833*, p. 67.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 63.

¹⁵⁹ K. Raj, ‘Colonial Encounters and the Forging of New Knowledge and National Identities: Great Britain and India, 1760-1850’, R. Mcleod (ed.), *Nature and empire: Science and the colonial enterprise* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2000), p. 125.

who were crying out for education.¹⁶⁰

In 1806 the Vellore Mutiny against the British occurred at Vellore (South India), Ramachandran has argued that this mutiny was significant as it signalled to the British, what was to come in 1857: ‘the sepoys fired a warning shot at Vellore, which gave the British an inkling of what grief they could come to, should they ever be insensitive with the native troops’.¹⁶¹ Questions were raised within the East India Company as to the cause of the Mutiny – was it true that the acts of officials, ordering the removal of caste marks from the heads of sepoys and the making of changes to their dress and turbans¹⁶², had led to the interpretation of an ‘attack on religion’?¹⁶³ Some of the sepoys believed these changes were all part of an attempt to convert them to Christianity.¹⁶⁴ During these debates, the role of the missionaries also came under fire.¹⁶⁵ Thus a missionary hunt followed: many were now convinced that this was a French conspiracy.¹⁶⁶

Missionary societies worked hard to mobilise the masses at home for financial support, through means including magazines such as *Evangelical Magazine*, *The Observer* and *Missionary Magazine*.¹⁶⁷ Propaganda was also provided in the form of the *Missionary Register*, a monthly magazine published by the CMS

¹⁶⁰ Letter M. Jennings to Mr Hawkins, *Jennings Papers*, USPG CLR 13 – 453, Bodleian Library.

¹⁶¹ D. Ramachandran, *Empire’s First Soldiers* (Delhi: Lancer Publishers, 2008), p. 101.

¹⁶² P. Mason, *A matter of honour* (New York: Holt, Rhinehart and Winston, 1974), p. 239.

¹⁶³ P. Marshall, ‘The East India Company: Britain and India 1757-1813’, London, Taylor and Francis, 1968, p. 160.

¹⁶⁴ Ramachandran, *Empire’s First Soldiers*, p. 102.

¹⁶⁵ Letter M. Jennings to Mr Hawkins, *Jennings Papers*, USPG CLR 13 – 453, Bodleian Library.

¹⁶⁶ Carson, *Soldiers of Christ: Evangelicals and India 1784-1833*, p. 83.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 197-8.

and the *Friend of India*, published by the Baptist Missionary Society at Serampore (near Calcutta), but circulated both in India and England.¹⁶⁸ Between April and June 1813, many societies sent off their petitions in support of missionary activity in India. This was fed by the idea that ‘if Britain did not perform her Christian duty, divine vengeance would be wreaked upon her’.¹⁶⁹ They had tried to convince the government that if the natives became Christian, it would be easier to govern them and thus they pushed for ‘wholesale Anglicisation’.¹⁷⁰

William Wilberforce argued that the USPG was beneficial for the empire and it would be beneficial for the government, if the USPG was allowed to operate in India in order to preach not only to the British population in India, but also to the Indians. As he stated in a petition to the House of Commons:

while the natives of those countries have long been and still continue in a state of deplorable ignorance, and addicted to various idolatrous and superstitious usages of the most degrading and horrible description, many of our own countrymen, members of the Church of Scotland, employed in the different civil and military departments in India, are precluded from enjoying the ordinances of Christianity agreeably to the forms of the Church to which they are attached.¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁸ K. Ingham, ‘The English Evangelicals and the Pilgrim Tax in India 1800-1862’, *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 3:2 (1952), p. 196.

¹⁶⁹ Carson, *Soldiers of Christ: Evangelicals and India 1784-1833*, p. 43.

¹⁷⁰ P. Burroughs, ‘Institutions of Empire’, *The Nineteenth Century*, Volume 3, ed. A. Porter (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 174.

¹⁷¹ Parliamentary debates, *Petition respecting the East India Company, from protecting the society in Scotland for propagating Christian Knowledge*, vol. 24, 19 February 1813, cols. 654-5.

The prejudices of people such as Wilberforce are evident within this petition, in the way in which he refers to the customs of India.

July 1813 appeared to have been a fruitful month for supporters of missionary activity, as there was a renewal of the Company charter into which the ‘pious clause’ was inserted.¹⁷² This meant that India was now more widely accessible for missionary adventurers.¹⁷³ The clause was the fruit of the efforts of many such as William Wilberforce and the Clapham Sect. The Clapham Sect consisted of Wilberforce and other like-minded groups and individuals, some of whom were members of Parliament such as Zachary Macaulay (1768-1838) and Thomas Babbington (1758-1837) who believed that more needed to be done on a religious level in India, they worked hard to ensure that a clause such as this would be inserted into the Charter.¹⁷⁴

Before 1813, the missionaries had not won many converts.¹⁷⁵ J. Deasy and W. Green comment: ‘Their conversions were few, but they made their mark through social reform’.¹⁷⁶ It became clear that many Indians desired education but did not desire conversion.¹⁷⁷ A new challenge arose by 1829: sati had been abolished by law and missionary activity was under attack – missionary schools were physically attacked, and there was a crackdown on missionary activity once again in many

¹⁷² Etherington, *Missions and Empire*, p. 109.

¹⁷³ P. Spear, *A History of India*, (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1965), p. 123.

¹⁷⁴ Porter, ‘Religion, Missionary enthusiasm and power’, p. 222.

¹⁷⁵ Carson, *Soldiers of Christ: Evangelicals and India 1784-1833*, p. 319.

¹⁷⁶ W. Green and, J. Deasy, ‘Unifying Themes in the History of British India, 1757-1857: An Historiographical Analysis’, *Albion*, 17:1 (1985), p. 31.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

cities, such as Tinnevely in the south of India.¹⁷⁸ There had been the reverse of conversion in Tinnevely; hundreds of reconversions to Hinduism took place, when the desired economic benefits of conversion did not materialise.¹⁷⁹ Sharma observes: ‘The quality of converts during the period (up until 1857) was seldom a subject of dispute or discussion’.¹⁸⁰

There was opposition at home too. *The Oriental Herald and Colonial Review* argued that preaching in India would lead to discontent, but the missionaries continued to push for access to India. In 1824 *The Oriental Herald and Colonial review* commented:

It is vain to hope that schools can be established in the East, and idolatry, ignorance and patient submission to arbitrary rule still maintain their ground there. It is in vain to try the experiment of preaching the Gospel in the West, and still hope to keep the multitude there as contented with slavery before. The two things are incompatible.¹⁸¹

Despite the opposition, in 1833 to the delight of the missionaries, the Company Charter was renewed and it was agreed (with reference to the Indians) that:

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 354.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 355.

¹⁸⁰ Sharma, *Christian Missions in North India, 1813-1913*, p. 33.

¹⁸¹ J. Buckingham, *The Oriental Herald and journal of general literature* (London: J.M. Richardson, 1824), p.10.

Such measures ought to be adopted as may tend to the introduction among them of useful knowledge, and of religious and moral improvement ... sufficient facilities ought to be afforded by law of persons desirous of going to and remaining in India.¹⁸²

No sooner had this been passed than an influx of missionaries arrived in India, including Wesleyan Methodists, Baptists and Congregationalists.¹⁸³ Whether the 1833 charter was a real success for the missionaries is a separate matter, but the Indians were convinced after the arrival of more missionaries in 1833 that the intention was to convert India – their fears had found a basis.¹⁸⁴ Wardlaw Thompson however, believed that the charter came about because of the changes which occurred in Britain. Thompson, writing in 1899, commented that it was the result of:

the broad and healthy spirit which was the result of the first great reform agitation in England. It threw open the whole continent of India as a place of residence for all subjects of His Majesty...It also struck the last blow at the official connection of the Government with idolatry.¹⁸⁵

Penny Carson argues that although the missionaries saw the renewal of the

¹⁸² Carson, *Soldiers of Christ: Evangelicals and India 1784-1833*, p. 411.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

¹⁸⁴ C. Bayly, *Indian Society and the making of the British Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 115.

¹⁸⁵ Thompson and Johnson, *British Foreign Missions*, p. 30.

Charter in 1833 as a great triumph, it was not exactly what they had wished for. The clause was ambiguous and the responsibility for implementing it was left to the presidency governments who acted on their own discretion.¹⁸⁶ This did not stop government officials such as Dalhousie from funding missionary activities, such as the setting up of mission medical schools, with his own money.¹⁸⁷

Though the 1833 charter signified that the court of directors and Company shareholders were no longer a priority for them, missionaries now needed to persuade and win over civil service officers and people in the government of India. As Raj Sharma argues ‘These people they realised, were more helpful if wooed and equally harmful if annoyed’.¹⁸⁸

This was, in William Hunter’s words, ‘the early time of promise ... when the spirit of improvement woke up from its long lethargy, and each year brought forth some great measure’.¹⁸⁹ But these great measures allowed the missionaries to openly attack Indian religions and practices and to anger the Indians. As David Arnold argues:

their vehement denunciation of Hindu beliefs and practices. The protective stance which the Company had hitherto taken towards Hindu institutions and festivals, and the revenue which it collected from Hindu

¹⁸⁶ Carson, *Soldiers of Christ: Evangelicals and India 1784-1833*, p. 395.

¹⁸⁷ Spear, *A History of India*, p. 123.

¹⁸⁸ Sharma, *Christian Missions in North India*, p. 33.

¹⁸⁹ W. Hunter, *The Old Missionary*, (London: Henry Frowde, 1896), p. 18.

temples and their pilgrims now came under fire from the missionaries as state idolatry.¹⁹⁰

Some officials had been concerned about sending missionaries to India, because of the potential that this move might lead to political and economic instability. Their prime concern was not consideration of Indian cultural sensitivities.¹⁹¹ As Raj Sharma observed they ‘opposed sending of Christian missionaries to India from considerations of political expediency’.¹⁹² Likewise, Stephen Neil has argued in relation to the missionaries and Company officials ‘On the whole the two groups as far as possible kept out of one another’s way. They worked on parallel rather than on convergent lines’.¹⁹³

Neil goes on to comment that despite this, both would join hands again: missionaries needed the support of the government, and the government needed them - it was bound by duty to take into consideration the rights and needs of the Christians in its colonies.¹⁹⁴ Although Lutheran missionaries, who followed the doctrine of Martin Luther, did not operate under the Company, the Company offered to them free passages and allowances as well as a free mail service. This was in Carson’s words ‘more than toleration’ but she argues that such official favour was subject to the missionaries’ behaviour, which was judged according to the standards

¹⁹⁰ D. Arnold, ‘Cholera and colonialism in British India’, *Past and Present*, 113:1 (1986), p. 140.

¹⁹¹ Sharma, *Christian Mission in North India 1813- 1913*, p. 30.

¹⁹² Ibid.

¹⁹³ Neil, *A History of Christianity in India: 1707-1858*, p. 33.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

of their local officials.¹⁹⁵ Porter has also argued that the companies attitude towards the missionaries was more welcoming by the beginning of the nineteenth century.¹⁹⁶

Despite all the support the missionaries had tried to mobilise, some officials did warn against the dangers of sending missionaries to India, in particular John Malcolm (Governor General of Bombay, 1827-30) who advised that:

There are few but general motives that could unite communities of men so divided and many of whom are of a weak and timid character but it is to be remembered that there is one feeling common to all that is an attachment to their religion and prejudices and this is so strong that I have myself seen it change in an instant the lowest the most timid and most servile Indian into a ferocious barbarian.¹⁹⁷

When the charter for missionary activity was passed in 1833, it symbolised the fact that the general public had been swayed by missionary propaganda, something which the Court of Directors could not ignore. As Kenneth Ingham notes 'the Court of Directors were unmoved by this weight of propaganda, but the English public was not'.¹⁹⁸ The question is how would the Indians react to the charter?

¹⁹⁵ Carson, 'The British Raj and the Awakening of the Evangelical Conscience, p. 52.

¹⁹⁶ A. Porter, *Religion versus empire?* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), p. 68.

¹⁹⁷ Sharma, *Christian Mission in North India 1813- 1913*, p. 30.

¹⁹⁸ Ingham, 'The English Evangelicals and the Pilgrim Tax in India 1800-1862', p. 197.

Chapter 2. India: 'The land of romance',¹⁹⁹

The Mughal Setting

India has been home to many religions. For the purpose of this chapter, when referring to 'India', refers to the 'Gangetic core' of India. This is because this study focuses on the Muslim reaction to missionary activity and there was a Muslim majority in North-West India. The most notable Muslim-missionary confrontations took place on the Gangetic core such as that between the Agra Ulema and Pfander.²⁰⁰ Reference is made to the reactions of the Hindu community only when these are related to Muslim reactions.

Though the Mughal rulers were Muslim, their subjects were followers of different religions including Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism and Buddhism.²⁰¹ The Emperor Akbar carried out policies which caused tension amongst Muslims in India: for example he discouraged the use of Arabic in schools, masjids were converted into stables in centres of rebellion and he set up his own religion, known as 'Din E Elahi', in 1581.²⁰² Akbar was married to both Hindu and Christian women. His favourite wife was a Hindu and Akbar promoted the worship of the sun, claiming to be a 'prophet' of his new sect.²⁰³

In contrast to this, Akbar's great grandson Aurangzeb (who ruled between

¹⁹⁹ Taken from J. Murdoch, *The Indian Missionary Manual* (Madras: Graves Cookson, 1864), p. i.

²⁰⁰ Powell, *Muslims and missionaries in India in pre-Mutiny India*, p. 1.

²⁰¹ K. Munshi, *The Delhi Sultanate* (Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1960), p. 6.

²⁰² M. Sastri, *The Din I Ilahi or religion of Akbar* (Calcutta, University of Calcutta, 1941), p. 221.

²⁰³ H. Whitehead, *Indian religious problems in religion, education and politics* (London: Constable and Co, 1924), p. 47

1658 and 1707) implemented Hanafi law prohibiting the consumption of wine and cannabis.²⁰⁴ Aurangzeb was an orthodox Muslim²⁰⁵ and ordered Jizyah tax to be paid by all subjects who were not Muslim.²⁰⁶ He had agreed to apply the *Fatawa-i-Alamgiri*. The significance of this was that the British administrators entered an India in which Shariah law was applied. As Hardy observes ‘the jurisdiction of the Shariah in India, even in criminal matters, was never so active as then’.²⁰⁷ The *Fatawa- i-Alamgiri* was agreed upon by respected Ulema of the time. They had aimed to cover all the social, economic and political issues of Indian society.²⁰⁸

Christopher Bayly has argued that there was a religious change in Indian society between 1650 and 1700.:

So too, the expansion of the power of a locally-rooted Muslim gentry after 1650 and the decentralisation of power from Delhi to provincial centres after 1700 spread pockets of purist Islamic practice both deeper and more widely across the face of Indian society. An autonomous desire for reputation, religion and respectability among Muslim artisans ensured a popular interest in these new currents. Among Hindus, too, there were some developments which tended to greater uniformity within the great

²⁰⁴ M. Ali, *The Ulema, Sufis and intellectuals* (Lahore: Fiction House, 1996), p. 72.

²⁰⁵ Whitehead, *Indian religious problems in religion, education and politics*, p. 48.

²⁰⁶ Munshi, *The Delhi Sultanate*, p. 450.

²⁰⁷ Hardy, ‘The Ulama in British India’, p. 831.

²⁰⁸ Ali, *The Ulema, Sufis and intellectuals*, p. 72.

range of beliefs and practice.²⁰⁹

Religious revivalism was also taking place.²¹⁰ A more detailed analysis of the revival follows in the latter part of this chapter.

As Aurangzeb's power weakened, threats grew. Sikh military power was developing and the Rajput states were in rebellion against Mughal rule.²¹¹ By the time of Aurangzeb's death (1707), the Mughal Empire, which had 170 million inhabitants, faced evident, although perhaps not fatal, weaknesses.²¹² Various powers competed to make the most of the empire's demise. At the outset, Britain did not present a major threat, as very few British politicians had given any serious consideration to the possibility of taking over the weakened empire, and rather they were more concerned with a relationship which would help facilitate trading.²¹³

²⁰⁹ C. Bayly, 'The pre history of 'communalism'? Religious conflict in India, 1700 – 1860', *Modern Asian Studies*, 19:2 (1982, p. 179).

²¹⁰ A. Jalal, *Partisans of Allah, Jihad in South Asia* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2008), p. 42.

²¹¹ Whitehead, *Indian religious problems in religion, education and politics*, p. 48.

²¹² Munshi, *The Delhi Sultanate*, p. 1.

²¹³ *Ibid.*

British intervention and divisions within the Indian Community

The year 1803 marked the beginning of the East India Company's responsibility for affairs of the Mughal court.²¹⁴ What the British encountered in India was a range of varied beliefs which missionaries found difficult to comprehend: to them Indian practices ranged from infanticide to Sati.²¹⁵ Missionary literature makes mention of Indians murdering their daughters and sacrificing their children to crocodiles.²¹⁶

The Missionaries gave eye-witness accounts of festivals such as hook swinging²¹⁷ and participating in the car of Jaggunath or 'Juggernaut'. They also made mention of the 'thugs of Kali' – a cult which carried out robbery and murder.²¹⁸ Missionaries described what in their view were acts of religious 'fanaticism' and the violence of armed religious groups.²¹⁹ However, there were regional differences. In Hindu religious rituals, for example, Sati was less common in Delhi compared to other cities.²²⁰

The majority of Muslims in north India were Hanafi Sunnis, and others were Shia. Shias were a minority but they were powerful in centres such as Lucknow, where the Nawabi rulers exercised their power.²²¹ The Sufis were active in India

²¹⁴ Powell, *Muslims and missionaries in India in pre-Mutiny India*, p. 48.

²¹⁵ Munshi, *The Delhi Sultanate*, p. 450.

²¹⁶ P. Woodruff, *The men who ruled India – the founders part 1* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1954), p. 248.

²¹⁷ N. Dirks, 'The Policing of Tradition: Colonialism and Anthropology in southern India', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 39:1 (1997), p. 183.

²¹⁸ B. Stanley, *Christian missions and the enlightenment* (Michigan: Wm. B Eerdmanns Publishing, 2001), p. 116.

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 118.

²²⁰ Woodruff, *The men who ruled India – the founders part 1*, p. 257.

²²¹ Powell, *Muslims and missionaries in India in pre-Mutiny India*, p. 57.

before the Ghaznavid period (1151–1187). The Naqshbandi and Qadri Sufi orders had considerable influence at the Mughal court,²²² Bahadur Zafar Shah was interested in Sufi writings.²²³ Warren Fusfeld identifies the role of Sufis as follows:

their explicit sense of mission led them to assume a role through which they intended to provide general leadership for the diverse social collectivity which they conceived of as being the ‘Muslim community’.²²⁴

The Ulema came mainly from the surrounding villages rather than from the large cities, as in the case of Delhi.²²⁵ In Delhi, there were two separate schools: the Madrassah Rahimiyah which focussed on the study of the scriptures and the Khairabad Madrassah which also focused on philosophy.²²⁶ Both these Madrassahs were Sunni.²²⁷ The role of the Madrassahs in the revival is a large topic itself, and thus in this assessment, only the aspects of their relevance to the 1857 Mutiny is be discussed.

Madrassahs of the eighteenth century were attended by Muslims and Hindus alike.²²⁸ The curriculum taught various sciences including Islamic sciences, and on

²²² Lopez, *Religions of India in practice*, p. 35.

²²³ Dalrymple, *The Last Mughal*, p. 68.

²²⁴ W. Fusfeld, *The shaping of Sufi leadership in Delhi: The Naqshbandiyya Mujaddidiyya 1750 to 1920*, (Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania, unpublished Ph.D, 1981), p. 2.

²²⁵ C. Bayly, ‘Delhi and other cities of North India during the twilight’, in *Delhi through the ages*, Ed. R. Frykenberg (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), p. 223.

²²⁶ Munshi, *The Delhi Sultanate*, p. 135.

²²⁷ Powell, *Muslims and missionaries in India in pre-Mutiny India*, p. 67.

²²⁸ Dalrymple, ‘In defence of faith: religious rhetoric in the Delhi uprising of 1857’, p. 27.

Hindu religious festivals, Hindu pupils brought sweets and food for their Muslim teachers.²²⁹ Yet, according to a British enquiry carried out in Delhi in 1823, although there were numerous madrassahs in the city, they were funded by Muslims and their intake of students was small, compared to the number of people living in the city, and ‘their attendance was irregular and the quality of teaching low’.²³⁰ In response to this the government arranged a grant of 600 rupees a month for the education of Delhi’s Muslims. The Delhi College was founded on the foundations of the Madrassah Ghaziu’Din two years later.²³¹ However, Madrassahs were usually neither government sponsored, nor centralised.²³²

India also felt the force of the ‘Mujahideen’ movement. Some historians have argued these ideas were promoted by Abd Al Wahab (1703–1787), and were imported from Arabia.²³³ In the 1820s the Mujahideen gathered support in India. Their aim was to return to what they regarded as ‘pure Islam’, free from what they saw as ‘Hindu and pagan customs’.²³⁴ The history of the revival in Indian religious and spiritual life is relevant, with the revival itself being attributed mainly to Shah Wali Allah of Delhi (1703–1762), as is discussed in subsequent chapters.²³⁵

²²⁹ Ibid.

²³⁰ Pernau, *The Delhi College, Traditional Elites, the Colonial State and Education before 1857*, pp. 11-12.

²³¹ Ibid.

²³² Powell, *Muslims and missionaries in India in pre-Mutiny India*, pp. 64-5.

²³³ Munshi, *The Delhi Sultanate*, p. 135.

²³⁴ S. Tangri, ‘Intellectuals and Society in Nineteenth-Century India’, *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 3:4 (1961), p. 382.

²³⁵ W. Smith, ‘The Ulama in Indian Politics’, *Politics and Society in India*, Ed. C. Phillips (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd, 1963), p. 46.

In the years 1827–1830 the Mujahideen movement won followers in the Punjab.²³⁶ This was due to grievances the peasantry had with the upper classes.²³⁷

The Muslim nobility was facing social and economic hardship and many soldiers found themselves disbanded after the East India Company took over states.²³⁸

Mubarak Ali comments that:

The sermons of Sayyid Ahmad and Shah Ismail attracted a large number of people and ended the lethargic atmosphere of the society. The Ulema and the people of the middle class joined his movement in the hope of reviving golden days.²³⁹

Sajjad Qureshi argues that a ‘conspiracy’ was formed to overthrow the British in the 1830s, actively through Sayed Ahmed Shahid’s ‘Tarriqiyah Muhammadiya’ (Path of Muhammad) movement²⁴⁰ (The scholarly debate about whether the Mujahideen movement was really the same as the ‘Wahabi’ movement will be examined at a later stage in detail).

In northern India there was also a revival of the Sunni Sufi movement. The Sufi shrines maintained their importance despite all the political upheaval in India

²³⁶ S. Chaudhuri, *Civil Disturbances during the British Rule in India 1765-1857* (Calcutta: World Press, 1995), p. 50.

²³⁷ Ibid.

²³⁸ Ali, *The Ulema, Sufis and intellectuals*, p. 82.

²³⁹ Ibid., p. 84.

²⁴⁰ S. Qureshi, *Cry for freedom: Proclamations of Muslim revolutionaries 1857* (Lahore: Sang – e – meel publications, 1997), p. 16.

before the Mutiny.²⁴¹ Warren Fusfeld has identified the Sufi Sheikhs as members of the cultural ‘elite’ in Delhi; ‘they were not however limited in their interaction – they provided leadership and guidance to the wider Muslim community’.²⁴² Furthermore, the Gangetic core was immersed in what the historian Francis Robinson has termed a ‘Persio-Islamic culture’, ‘framed by the people of central and western Asia’.²⁴³

It was from this culture that there arose the ‘Ashraf’ class – many of them traced their history to central Asia and were influential in Indian Muslim society, as Robinson observed ‘The Ashraf shared a well-defined version of themselves. They had come from abroad to rule; the wielding of power was their birthright’.²⁴⁴ Avril Powell has argued that it would be from these classes of Muslims that the opposition to the missionaries would hail, it would be from these classes that the ‘defenders of Islam would eventually emerge’, as some of the Ulema and scholars in Madrassahs were from the ‘Ashraf’ class.²⁴⁵ Despite the adverse political circumstances, their old traditions and roles remained as Gail Minault put it ‘The political realities had changed, to be sure, but the old customs and etiquette of Sharif culture persisted’.²⁴⁶ Sharif (Ashraf) culture was a distinct culture and had specified traditions.²⁴⁷

The inhabitants of the Gangetic core were further divided by caste distinction.

²⁴¹ Ibid.

²⁴² Fusfeld, *The shaping of Sufi leadership in Delhi: The Naqshbandiyya Mujaddidiyya 1750 to 1920*, p. 11.

²⁴³ F. Robinson, *Ulema of Farangi Mahall* (London: Hurst and Company, 2001), p. 9.

²⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 11.

²⁴⁵ Powell, *Muslims and missionaries in India in pre-Mutiny India*, p. 47.

²⁴⁶ G. Minault, ‘Sayyid Ahmad Dehlavi and the Delhi Renaissance’, in *Delhi through the ages*, Ed. R. Frykenberg, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), p. 289.

²⁴⁷ For a detailed study of Sharif culture, see D. Lelyveld, M. Hasan, *Aligarh’s first generation: Muslim solidarity in British India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 2003.

The caste system comprised of four main levels or *Varnas*, namely ‘warriors’, ‘priests’, ‘farmers’ and the ‘untouchables’. Hindus believed that these four castes came from the four different parts of Vishnu’s body.²⁴⁸ Over time, the caste system had been adapted, resulting in the priests taking the highest rank. The caste system because of its religious nature and importance in Hinduism held more importance amongst Hindus.²⁴⁹ Some historians have proposed that ‘lower caste’ Hindus found Islam appealing because of its principle of equality.²⁵⁰ It has been argued that there was a stronger sense of unity amongst Muslims because of the absence of caste.²⁵¹

The Hindu community was also facing changes, which led to more uniformity, between the beliefs of its members, as for example a Brahmin defined interpretation of Hinduism, was being propagated by Hindu sects such as the Ramanandis.²⁵² In terms of Hindu-Muslim relations throughout the period it is significant that a revival of Muslim consciousness did not lead to large scale Hindu-Muslim tension in Delhi throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth century.²⁵³ The settling of relations between Hindu and Muslim took concrete form with the incorporation of Islamic motifs in Hindu religious buildings.²⁵⁴

²⁴⁸ Munshi, *The Struggle for Empire* (Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1960), p. 474.

²⁴⁹ Whitehead, *Indian religious problems in religion, education and politics*, p. 16.

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

²⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

²⁵² Bayly, ‘The pre-history of ‘communalism? Religious conflict in India, 1700-1860’, p. 180.

²⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 179.

²⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 181.

Early reactions to British missionaries

Prior to the large - scale entry of British missionaries in India, communities of Syrian Christians had been living on the south west coast of India for over 1500 years.²⁵⁵

Until the eighteenth century, small-scale Christian missions operated in India, but by the turn of the century as Dickinson argues, the East India Company restricted the entry of missionaries to only a ‘few hundred Christians’ until 1813.²⁵⁶ Some Indians had begun to take an interest in Christianity. Some had learnt of it, but Christian missionaries were not perceived as a major threat.²⁵⁷

In 1813, the Company changed its charter and more missionaries entered India, India had ‘become part of the world of Christianity’.²⁵⁸ Some historians have attributed this to the fact that from 1786 onwards, officials began to penetrate the administrative sections, which were more sympathetic to Evangelical persuasions.²⁵⁹

The early missionaries and many Indians also perceived Christians as ‘simple minded’ and thought that many of the officers were ‘ungodly’.²⁶⁰ But initial reaction to missionary activity was uncoordinated and weak.²⁶¹

Kanaiyalal Munshi has argued that confrontation was ‘inevitable’ because Hinduism was based on the caste system – which solidified divisions:

²⁵⁵ Whitehead, *Indian religious problems in religion, education and politics*, p. 55.

²⁵⁶ R. Dickinson, *The Christian College in developing India - A sociological inquiry* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 4.

²⁵⁷ Munshi, *The Delhi Sultanate*, p. 3.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 146.

²⁶⁰ A. Ward, *Our bones are scattered* (New York: Henry Holt, 1996), p. 90.

²⁶¹ Sharma, *Christian missions in North India*, p. 32.

The Christian tradition, though often violated in practice, rests on the firm conviction of the equality of all men in the sight of God.

Confrontation between these different systems was inevitable; it was more than likely that confrontation would at times lead to violent conflict.²⁶²

The Company also appointed chaplains in order to minister to the British community resident in India. In 1813 the Letters Patent were introduced – this resulted in all Church of England ‘paraphernalia’ being introduced in India under the ‘aegis’ of the Company.²⁶³ The Company directors were supporters of non-interference and reminded missionaries to exercise caution in 1822.²⁶⁴

Initially the Ulema allowed Muslims to take up employment with the Company, stating it was permissible as long as Muslims were not asked to undertake duties which were in breach of their religious beliefs, but many would later take a different stance, for example Allamah Fazlul Haqq Khayrabadi (1797-1861)²⁶⁵ did not recommend it after he himself left a Company post.²⁶⁶

It was Muslims from the judicial services who were some of the first critics of missionary activity in India; to them it seemed that the British were affecting their status. Although on the surface of it, Muslims held their judicial positions, some of

²⁶² Munshi, *The Delhi Sultanate*, p. 4.

²⁶³ Whitehead, *Indian religious problems in religion, education and politics*, p. 97.

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 126.

²⁶⁵ Jalal, *Partisans of Allah, Jihad in South Asia*, p. 80.

²⁶⁶ Nizami, *Madrasahs, Scholars and Saints: Muslim Response to the British Presence in Delhi and the Upper Doab*, p. 168.

the Muslim families who had historically served in the judiciary feared their status was deteriorating.²⁶⁷

²⁶⁷ Powell, *Muslims and missionaries in India in pre-Mutiny India*, p. 59.

Chapter 3. Agra: ‘The cradle of Christianity in north India’²⁶⁸

Agra – The early days of the CMS Mission

By 1815, the CMS possessed a church, school house and catechists residence, at the Kattrra in Agra²⁶⁹ (the Kattrra was a court, the building was purchased by an Englishman who gave it as a gift to the CMS).²⁷⁰ Daniel Corrie was appointed as chaplain at Agra in 1812; taking Abdul Masih (otherwise known as Sheikh Salih before conversion) with him to Agra.²⁷¹ Yet there is inconsistency amongst sources, as a CMS report by Daniel Corries states that he arrived at Agra on 18 March 1813, a few days after Abdul Masih.²⁷²

Abdul Masih had been converted at Calcutta by Henry Martin. Abdul Masih became the pastor at Agra and was instrumental in making converts at Agra, Stock has estimated that he bought some fifty converts to Corrie for baptism in the seven years that he worked as a missionary there.²⁷³ It appears he was very active – he preached on the streets every Sunday, according to a letter from Corrie to George Udny the CMS secretary, Abdul Masih was targeting the poor primarily on his preaching rounds, but he attracted a very large number of hearers and so the Agra missionaries felt it necessary to purchase a house for the purpose of preaching and

²⁶⁸ Sharma, *Christian Missions in north India*, p. 16.

²⁶⁹ *CMS Missionary register*, (London: Seeley, Burnside and Seeley, 1845), vol. 33, p. 168.

²⁷⁰ Weitbrecht, *Missionary sketches in north India with reference to recent events*, p. 435.

²⁷¹ E. Stock, *An Heroic Bishop, The Life – story of French of Lahore* (London,: Hodder and Stoughton, 1913), p. 1.

²⁷² Report by Daniel Corrie, *CMS Archive*, CMS CIE/12, Cadbury Research Library, Birmingham University.

²⁷³ Stock, *An Heroic Bishop, The Life – story of French of Lahore*, p. 1.

schooling.²⁷⁴

The missionaries tried to ensure they were preaching on the level of their audience, as they offered different translations for different levels of society ‘as it does not abound with those Arabian and Persian words which captivate the ear of the more polished reader’.²⁷⁵ The missionaries anticipated objection to this but then hoped that once this had been done a few times, then opposition to it would diminish.²⁷⁶ Abdul Masih joined Lieutenant McDonald on his visit to Delhi, he alleges a copy of the Bible was sent to the king.²⁷⁷

Abdul Masih educated Christian youths aged ten to twelve years old and preached to a native congregation of about fifty to sixty native Christians.²⁷⁸ Letters from Lieutenant McDonald at Agra reveal that by June 1815, the Sunday congregation was still four and the schools were in a ‘declining’ position.²⁷⁹ People had even prevented their children from attending the schools ‘stopping their sons, like deaf adder, to the voice of truth, they will listen to no proposal that does not hold out a prospect of primary advantage’.²⁸⁰ In the schools, only such books were used which were of a Christian nature, the children would be explained these and then

²⁷⁴ Letter from D. Corrie to G. Udny, *CMS Archive*, CMS CIE/14, Cadbury Research Library, Birmingham University.

²⁷⁵ Letter from H. Fisher to Thomason, 14 July 1817, *CMS Archive*, CMS/B/OMS/CI1 E1/67, Cadbury Research Library.

²⁷⁶ Letter from Lieutenant A. McDonald to Calcutta Corresponding Committee, 15 December 1817, *CMS Archive*, CMS/B/OMS/CI1 E1/63/11, Cadbury Research Library.

²⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁸ *CMS Missionary register* (London: Seeley, Burnside and Seeley, 1845), vol. 33, p. 333.

²⁷⁹ Letter from lieutenant A. McDonald to Thomason, 7 December 1815, *CMS Archive*, CMS/B/OMS/CI1 E1/15, Cadbury Research Library.

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

take regular examinations in them.²⁸¹

The state of the teachers did not help the mission at Agra either, as McDonald complained:

The native teachers are so indolent and inattentive that without consistent superintendence they will never do their duty, and without it is their interest to excuse the constant and regular attendance of their scholars, they will rather discourage them – I would therefore propose that no fixed salary be given to them.²⁸²

This provides evidence that the teachers in the schools were not co-operating with the missionaries, and the mission had difficulties, ‘teething problems’.

Yet again, this letter reflected a different story regarding the state of schools ‘The state of our schools is by no means favourable, of children having made very poor progress in reading’. Private letters often reflect a different story to what the missionary registers did.²⁸³ It appears however that some of the officials in Agra were too busy to assist in Christianising Agra, in this instance Captain Phipps was so engaged in official business that he was ‘of little use as an observer ... all of the good young officers were removed ... on account of war’.²⁸⁴

²⁸¹ Letter from Lieutenant A. McDonald to Calcutta Corresponding Committee, 15 December 1817, *CMS Archive*, CMS/B/OMS/CI1 E1/63/11, Cadbury Research Library.

²⁸² Letter from lieutenant A. McDonald to Thomason, 7 December 1815, *CMS Archive*, CMS/B/OMS/CI1 E1/15, Cadbury Research Library.

²⁸³ Letter from T. Thomason to Corrie, 31 August, 1815, *CMS Archive*, CMS/B/OMS/CI1 E1/6, Cadbury Research Library.

²⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

Although initially medical provision was provided for the benefit of the British people who settled in India, it wasn't long before the missionaries extended this benefit to the Indians²⁸⁵. For example, medicine was used at Agra to attract potential converts; Abdul used his medical skill as a 'hakeem' or doctor to promote his evangelistic beliefs. He made no secret of this and the intentions behind this act were clear 'but the sooner than they are well of their diseases they come no more, many copies of the Gospels have been distributed – but have failed to excite attention'.²⁸⁶ The mission does not appear to have obtained converts in hundreds, as a letter of 1813, states 41 adults and 14 children were baptised since 1812.²⁸⁷ There were also reconversions in some cases such as a man named 'Fazil Munseek' and 'Talib Munseek' – 'these had both fallen in the snares of the devil ... one of them through the wiley arts of a Maulvee denied the Lord Jesus Christ'. The other man reconverted after his father died.²⁸⁸

The CMS Missionaries were well paid - their salaries were fixed at £100 per annum, for a single man, and £125 for a married man, with an additional £10 for each child. However any increases to this would be at the discretion of the society in different areas.²⁸⁹ Sometimes missionaries returned to England to recruit new

²⁸⁵ M. Vaughan, *Curing their ills, colonial power and African illness*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991), p. 37.

²⁸⁶ Letter from Lieutenant A. McDonald to Thomason, 7 December 1815, *CMS Archive*, CMS/B/OMS/CI1 E1/15, Cadbury Research Library.

²⁸⁷ Letter from D. Corrie to Pratt, 31 December, 1813, *CMS Archive*, CMS/B/OMS/CIE/ 26, Cadbury Research Library.

²⁸⁸ Translation of a letter from A. Masih to J. Pratt, 8 July, 1815, *CMS Archive*, CMS/B/OMS/CI1 E1/17A, Cadbury Research Library.

²⁸⁹ Letter from J. Pratt to Thomason, 8 July, 1815, *CMS Archive*, CMS/B/OMS/CI1 E1/3, Cadbury Research Library.

missionaries, as when Corrie returned to England in 1814, Thomason hoped that he would not return alone.²⁹⁰

In the 1815, when Corrie returned to England, Thomason was left in charge of the ‘management’ of affairs at Agra – he found this very difficult.²⁹¹ A letter shows that relationships between missionaries were not always light and cheerful, as Reverend Thomason described the conflict between Abdul Masih and Mr. Bowley: Bowley had made some comments which Abdul Masih had found offensive, so he responded which resulted in the leave of Mr. Bowley.²⁹² Abdul made it clear that if Bowley stayed in Agra, he would leave it.²⁹³ Thomason did not want the division of what he referred to as an ‘infant church’ and so he asked Corrie for advice.²⁹⁴

Bowley expressed his worries that Abdul was becoming concerned with material things, as he wrote:

He is in danger of giving way to indolence as I told him. There was a plump and sleek appearance about him, which he had not in Calcutta, which rather denoted a habit of self indulgence.²⁹⁵

This was not the only complaint; it was also a concern that Abdul was not keeping a

²⁹⁰ Letter from T. Thomason to Pratt, 15 December, 1814, *CMS Archive*, CMS/B/OMS/CIE/ 85, Cadbury Research Library.

²⁹¹ Letter from T. Thomason to Corrie, 31 August, 1815, *CMS Archive*, CMS/B/OMS/CI1 E1/6, Cadbury Research Library.

²⁹² *Ibid.*

²⁹³ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

regular account (journals) of the proceedings of the mission.²⁹⁶ Abdul's character was presenting issues but Thomason did not want to pick an argument, he was after all their main convert.²⁹⁷ Eventually, Bowley decided to quit the Kuttra.²⁹⁸

Abdul was not the only convert who presented a cause for concern. Another convert named Munsoor was 'suffering from some symptoms of a worldly spirit'. Munsoor's heart was set on getting a sircar's place; he wanted a new place of residence and he demanded more pay.²⁹⁹ This leads us to question the motives for conversion. Surely there were material benefits of conversion; this may have motivated the converts at Agra.

When Abdul Masih died in 1827, there was no pastor for nine years at Agra.³⁰⁰ However despite such conversion activities, The CMS only decided to send a missionary to Agra in 1837.³⁰¹ In order to fund the arrival of the missionary, a bungalow was built, for which subscriptions were collected.³⁰² This shows that missionaries were provided places of residence when they arrived at Agra.

Agra was finally occupied as a mission station on the arrival of Pfander in 1840,³⁰³ and his co-missionaries between 1838 and 1840.³⁰⁴ Pfander's co-missionaries included Christian Theophilus Hoernle, a German missionary F.E

²⁹⁶ Ibid.

²⁹⁷ Ibid.

²⁹⁸ Ibid.

²⁹⁹ Ibid.

³⁰⁰ McKenzie, *Six years in India*, p. 38.

³⁰¹ Letter-book: 19 December 1857- 25 January 1862, *CMS Archive*, CMS/B/OMS/CI1 L5, pp. 470 – 480, Cadbury Research Library.

³⁰² Ibid.

³⁰³ Barney, *A star in the east*, p. 170.

³⁰⁴ Stock, *An Heroic Bishop, The Life – story of French of Lahore*, p. 1.

Schneider and F.A. Kreiss.³⁰⁵ Pfander and Kreiss took up preaching in the city of Agra, whilst Hoernle and Schneider took up the duty to Christianise at Secundra, a nearby village.³⁰⁶

A brief description of Secundra can be found in a letter from Hoernle, in which he describes the building of the Church at Secundra in 1842 ‘Situating as it is, in the midst of a number of pagan villages and Mohammedan ruins’.³⁰⁷ In 1845, the congregation at Agra was made up of fifty people consisting of twenty nine adults and twenty one children.³⁰⁸ Growing numbers of converts led to the need for a chapel, which was opened at Agra in 1854; at which preaching took place four times a week.³⁰⁹ In 1857 there were three hundred Christians in Agra;³¹⁰ Pfander also had fifty converts in neighbouring villages. Pfander’s mission work and influence extended beyond the boundaries of Agra, as he laboured in nearby villages,³¹¹ similar to Reverend Jennings’ labours in the village of Roorkee (near Delhi).

The Reverend Thomas Valpy French (later to become the principal of St. John’s College in Agra)³¹² had applied to join the CMS and was successful in April 1850. He entered Agra in February 1851. Eager to make progress, he first set himself the task of learning the native languages. He appears to have achieved this as he

³⁰⁵ *CMS Missionary register* (London: Seeley, Burnside and Seeley, 1845), vol. 33, p. 316.

³⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁷ Letter from T. Hoernle to CMS Secretary, *CMS Archive*, CMS/B/OMS C11/O140/15, Cadbury Research Library.

³⁰⁸ *CMS Missionary register* (London: Seeley, Burnside and Seeley, 1845), vol. 33, p. 316.

³⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 168.

³¹⁰ McKenzie, *Six years in India*, p. 38.

³¹¹ *Ibid.*

³¹² See: H. Birks, *The life and correspondence of Thomas Valpy French, First Bishop of Lahore*, (London: John Murray, 1895).

preached his first sermon in Hindi in August of that very year.³¹³ Thereafter he continued to teach in Abdul Masih's Kattrra.³¹⁴ French observed a simple lifestyle and was critical of lavish mission buildings. He believed a way of furthering the Gospel would be to use poetry and songs.³¹⁵

³¹³ M. Gibbs, *The Anglican Church in India 1600 – 1970* (Delhi:, ISPCK, 1972), p. 186.

³¹⁴ Ibid.

³¹⁵ Parsons, *Contextualising Christology for Islamic Culture*, p. 8.

Social works

The government gave the CMS funding for an orphanage in the form of a grant,³¹⁶ prior to the famines, and the orphanage had been operation since 1829.³¹⁷ The CMS missionaries were intent on converting the children from the very outset, as they wrote in a letter ‘these children should be received by the CMS and form the nucleus of a little Christian colony or community’.³¹⁸ Between 1836 and 1838, Agra was ravaged by famines;³¹⁹ the missionaries appear to have conducted some social work amongst the community. The first report of the Agra orphan institution was printed at end of 1840 – it described the events of the famine of 1837, and proudly boasts that the mission provided maintenance for over 500 orphans.³²⁰

By 1842, at Secundra, Hoernle was superintending the upbringing of one hundred and sixty orphan boys and one hundred and twelve girls. The effects of such a large responsibility burdened the Agra mission financially; therefore it became necessary to transfer seventy of the children to other stations at the beginning of 1843, which saddened Hoernle as he wrote in his journal ‘the parting with the children was hard. They were attached to us and we to them’.³²¹

A report mentioned that of those who remained at Secundra after the transfer, some were married, others were taken in by missionaries and one group was expelled

³¹⁶ Letter-book: 19 December 1857-25 January 1862, *CMS Archive*, CMS/B/OMS/CI1 L5, pp. 470 – 480, Cadbury Research Library.

³¹⁷ Ibid.

³¹⁸ Ibid.

³¹⁹ Weitbrecht, *Missionary sketches in north India with reference to recent events*, p. 265.

³²⁰ Letter-book: 19 December 1857-25 January 1862, *CMS Archive*, CMS/B/OMS/CI1 L5, pp. 470 – 480, Cadbury Research Library.

³²¹ C. Hoernle, *CMS Missionary register*, (London: Seeley, Burnside and Seeley, 1845), vol. 33, p. 58.

on the basis of ‘bad conduct’ and some had even ran away. Yet no specific reason or explanation was provided for this, though Penny Carson has identified that beatings took place at some missionary schools,³²² could this have been why the boys left the school? According to an entry in Hoernle’s journal dated 25 January 1843, he was deeply saddened by an incident in which the orphan boys refused to accept the clothes given to them. Hoernle describes how this worried him deeply but to his surprise the boys later asked for a pardon.³²³ There may have been issues of discipline at the school; furthermore the boys may not have been accepting the values that were preached to them.

The ages of the boys ranged from six to eighteen.³²⁴ As some of the boys were married to orphan girls, this meant the mission had extended, financially this became a burden, as there was a need for more houses, and therefore two bungalows were added to the existing Christian village. This was arguably an example of the incentives to convert.³²⁵ Another incentive was the prospect of jobs for converts.

The boys were taught various trades to help them seek employment³²⁶ including: printers, blacksmiths, carpenters, compositors, carpet makers, tailors, agriculturists and teachers. This removed the need to use mission funds to support the boys as they could provide for themselves.³²⁷ By 1846, carpet making was

³²² Carson, *Soldiers of Christ: Evangelicals and India 1784-1833*, p. 321.

³²³ Letter from T. Hoernle to CMS Secretary, June 1843, *CMS Archive*, CMS/B/OMS CII/O140/72, Cadbury Research Library.

³²⁴ *Ibid.*

³²⁵ Hoernle, *CMS Missionary register* (London: Seeley, Burnside and Seeley, 1845), vol. 33, p. 59.

³²⁶ *The Church Missionary Record*, (London: Seeley, Burnside and Seeley, 1846), vol. 17, p. 121.

³²⁷ *CMS Missionary register* (London: Seeley, Burnside and Seeley, 1845), vol. 33, p. 317.

discontinued as it was considered to be an area which was not making enough profit.³²⁸ Despite missionary efforts to ensure the boys had an opportunity to learn these trades, there arose difficulties, for example tailoring, carpentry and metal work had long been jobs associated with Hindu castes and other selected castes, and thus they held a monopoly in this area. This became problematic and therefore the Agra missionaries had to channel their efforts towards other areas of trade such as the printing press.³²⁹ The printing press was set up in a building given to the Missionaries. The building was a mausoleum forming part of Akbar's tomb,³³⁰ such insensitivity was further worsened by the fact that the government gave its printing contracts to the mission's printing press.³³¹ Such a contract was made possible by the 'kind operations' of Mr. Hamilton, who was commissioner of the division.³³²

Within ten years, the printing press became so successful that it paid for the funding of the orphan house as well as the other mission institutions at Agra.³³³ It managed to pay 5000 rupees to the Orphan institution fund by 1849 for houses and land bought in the city and added to the Kuttra Mission Compound.³³⁴ The stock and materials for the press were bought from the profit of the press, but a private letter reveals that the press was still in debt by 4,500 rupees in 1857.³³⁵ Yet in a report of

³²⁸ *The Church Missionary Record* (London: Seeley, Burnside and Seeley, 1846), vol. 17, p. 122.

³²⁹ M. Gibbs, *The Anglican Church in India 1600 – 1970* (Delhi: ISPCK, 1972), p. 129.

³³⁰ *Ibid.*

³³¹ *Ibid.*

³³² *Ibid.*

³³³ *Ibid.*, p. 186.

³³⁴ Letter-book: 19 December 1857-25 January 1862, *CMS Archive*, CMS/B/OMS/CI1 L5, pp. 470 – 480, Cadbury Research Library.

³³⁵ *Ibid.*

1830, the CMS states the press has been able to pay all its debts and has given some of its additional profits to the orphan institution.³³⁶

The profits of the press were to be treated as ‘an auxuillary source of income to the general operations of the CMS’.³³⁷ The profits of this press were managed with extreme efficiency – a part was expended on the society’s mission, a part in the support of the orphanage and a part in the ‘gradual increase and augmentation of the property’.³³⁸

Missionary wives also became involved in the mission, as Mrs. Hoernle was in charge of the infant school at Secundra.³³⁹ With regard to the orphaned girls taken in at Secundra, the story appeared to be more positive for the missionaries, as Kreiss reported they were ‘obedient, diligent and well behaved’.³⁴⁰ In January 1843, Schneider and his wife took over the female section of the orphanage, taking much of the strain that Hoernle was feeling off his shoulders.³⁴¹

The girls were also taught a range of trades albeit different to the boys. Their main areas of training were straw plaiting, producing hats and bonnets, knitting and sewing.³⁴² Pfander and his co-missionaries ensured that the girls’ spiritual needs were not neglected and instructed them in Hindi at school, to assist teaching them the

³³⁶ Ibid.

³³⁷ Ibid.

³³⁸ Ibid.

³³⁹ Barney, *A star in the east*, p. 171.

³⁴⁰ *CMS Missionary register* (London: Seeley, Burnside and Seeley, 1845), vol. 33, p. 317.

³⁴¹ Letter from T. Hoernle to CMS Secretary, *CMS Archive*, CMS B/OMS/O140/15, Cadbury Research Library.

³⁴² *CMS Missionary register* (London: Seeley, Burnside and Seeley, 1845), vol. 33, p. 317.

Bible.³⁴³ However, Raj Sharma has criticised the approach used by the Agra Missionaries, pointing out that mission schools were too westernised and by the time the girls came out of college, they were isolated from Indian society:

the change was evident in foreign standards of living, in foreign frocks instead of saris, in types of foreign games and entertainments, in foreign forms of worship, in foreign music and art, in more emphasis on foreign literature than on Indian.³⁴⁴

The boys were taught various languages including Hindi, Urdu and English and there appear to have been three classes conducted in 1845.³⁴⁵ Could this have shown how the missionaries were trying to reach out to Indians who spoke different languages? Nevertheless, the Agra missionaries were careful to ensure that time was devoted to religious instruction and that the boys' 'spiritual concerns were not neglected'.³⁴⁶ A typical school day consisted of; the children learnt catchetisms by heart before 9AM (this was done through a question and answer session), followed by Persian, and after mid-day they studied English.³⁴⁷

Yet there appears to have been a shortage of 'proper' teachers, according to Helen McKenzie who observed in 1857 that while the Protestant missions did have

³⁴³ Ibid.

³⁴⁴ Sharma, *Christian Missions in north India*, p. 195.

³⁴⁵ Hoernle, *CMS Missionary register* (London: Seeley, Burnside and Seeley, 1845), vol. 33, p. 59.

³⁴⁶ Ibid.

³⁴⁷ D. Corrie, *Memoirs of the Right Rev. Daniel Corrie, LL.D, first bishop of Madras* (London: Seeley, Burnside and Seeley, 1847), p. 265.

schools, Pfander wanted ‘proper teachers’.³⁴⁸ A report of Saint John’s College at Agra (1854) indicates that even as late as 1854 the mission was struggling to provide quality teachers, as the missionaries appealed for funds ‘an ill paid, inefficient, inferior order of teachers, must in every way tend to frustrate the great purpose we have in view and add to the other mental anxieties ... of those who are labouring’.³⁴⁹ Miss Goodenough joined the mission as a teacher – CMS sources do not refer to the quality of her teaching, but John Wright, a teacher at the mission school,³⁵⁰ appeared to be very fond of her character as he wrote to Henry Venn ‘she is to me such a genuine help, support and comforter’.³⁵¹

The orphans were baptised and under Christian instruction.³⁵² The Agra missionaries ensured they were kept well away from the influence of followers of other religions, Mildred Gibbs states:

care was taken to keep them from the knowledge of non-Christian religions, any non-Christian employed in the orphanage being instantly dismissed if he was discovered talking about his religion to the orphans.³⁵³

In doing so, the missionaries were protecting their new flock of followers, but how

³⁴⁸ McKenzie, *Six years in India*, p. 38.

³⁴⁹ Report of Saint John’s College, *CMS Archive*, CMS CII/0109/45, Cadbury Research Library, Birmingham University.

³⁵⁰ Letter from J. Wright to CMS secretary, *CMS Archive*, CMS CII/021/19A, Cadbury Research Library, Birmingham University.

³⁵¹ *Ibid.*

³⁵² Hoernle, *CMS Missionary register* (London: Seeley, Burnside and Seeley, 1845), vol. 33, p. 59.

³⁵³ Gibbs, *The Anglican Church in India 1600 – 1970*, p. 128.

would such moves be viewed by the Hindus and Muslims of Agra?

The Agra missionaries were careful to preserve the orphans from the influences of other religions because in the orphans they saw a group of native Christians who were free from the habits of adult converts (from their former religion) and virtually untouched by the caste system.³⁵⁴ Socially however this was detrimental to the social identity of the boys and girls, as this led to an isolation from mainstream society at Agra.

What is even more interesting, is the fact that eventually very few boys lived up to the Agra missionaries' dream of creating a native clergy, as very few were keen to take up roles as missionaries / catechists (answering questions on religious matters).³⁵⁵ Social isolation is a theme Raj Sharma has elaborated; he argues that 'the price of such a conflict was paid by the converts in terms of isolation, loneliness and uprootedness'.³⁵⁶

Caste was not like the class system, it was a barrier to conversion and on occasions an instrument for reconversion, perhaps this was why the Agra missionaries tried to prevent the orphan children from being influenced by caste, as missionaries saw it as a 'prison'.³⁵⁷ Likewise, similar methods were employed by the Serampore missionaries, who demanded that all converts should denounce their caste, as a convert named 'Futika' had done.³⁵⁸ Not everyone approved of such

³⁵⁴ Ibid.

³⁵⁵ Ibid., pp. 128-9.

³⁵⁶ Sharma, *Christian Missions in north India*, p. 196.

³⁵⁷ Forrester, *Caste and Christianity: Attitudes and policies on caste of Anglo Saxon Protestant Missionaries in India*, p. 32.

³⁵⁸ J. Ryland, *Brief memoirs of four Christian Hindoos lately deceased* (Serampore, 1816), p. 60.

hostile attacks on caste, for example Bishop Heber felt that the Indian social system should not be attacked.³⁵⁹

³⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 33.

Mission work

According to CMS records, it appears that another church built at Secundra in 1842; was large enough to accommodate 400 people.³⁶⁰ Hoernle was very excited about the symbolism of this building as he wrote on the 20 August 1842:

This Church here stands like the Ark of Covenant in the house of Dagon, and proclaims that neither Mohammedanism nor Hinduism can be for the mighty God of Israel...they must fall and decay, whilst the kingdom of Christ will stand and triumph over them.³⁶¹

The climate hindered the work of the missionaries, but during the hot and rainy seasons; missionaries could devote their time to translation work.³⁶² Yet, even as late as 1845, there was not a single Hindustani copy of the Prayer Book, as the Bishop of Calcutta was requested by CMS missionaries to help in the printing of a Hindi edition of the prayer book. The Bishop of Calcutta wrote ‘The converts and congregations at Benares, Chunar, Gorruckpore, Budar, Meerut and Agra, have no copies to use – absolutely none’.³⁶³

On other occasions, CMS and Presbyterian missionaries developed cooperative communities to publish versions of the Urdu bible.³⁶⁴ Yet this did have

³⁶⁰ Letter from T. Hoernle to CMS Secretary, *CMS Archive*, CMS/B/OMS C11/O140/15, Cadbury Research Library.

³⁶¹ Letter from T. Hoernle to CMS Secretary, June 1843, *CMS Archive*, CMS/B/OMS C11/O140/72, Cadbury Research Library.

³⁶² Hoernle, *CMS Missionary register* (London: Seeley, Burnside and Seeley, 1845), vol. 33, p. 59.

³⁶³ *CMS Missionary register* (London: Seeley, Burnside and Seeley, 1845), vol. 33, pp. 133 – 134.

³⁶⁴ Cox, *Imperial Fault Lines: Christianity and Colonial power, 1818 – 1940*, p. 58.

its complications too, as there were some disagreements on terms such as the Christian word for God, as Cox explains the name ‘Allah’ was not used by the missionaries, and various Hindi words (such as Bhagwan) had idolatrous associations’.³⁶⁵

As for the Christians in Agra, Pfander proposed that they nominate a jury of five people to govern the affairs of their community - a ‘punchayet’,³⁶⁶ this was also responsible for management of the Church fund, raising finances, and providing for the poorest members of the congregation.³⁶⁷ In 1845, a year of economic hardship, there was a reduction in ‘local’ funds for the number of orphans supported by the Agra Mission.³⁶⁸ Funding itself appears to have come from various sources, one example being subscriptions as ‘life members’ such as that of Lieutenant Colonel Nathaniel Jones of the Bengal Infantry in 1851 – he subscribed funds along with his wife and four children, to a total of £63, for the purpose of funding the mission college.³⁶⁹

Most of the converts to Christianity at Agra up until 1813 appear to have been from amongst the poorer inhabitants of Agra, in particular those who benefited materially from conversion, as Corrie explained in a letter:

The children who are instructed in the city are chiefly the children of poor starving people, who lived by begging, to prevent this necessity on

³⁶⁵ Ibid.

³⁶⁶ Stock, *An Heroic Bishop, The Life-story of French of Lahore*, p. 418.

³⁶⁷ Barney, *A star in the east*, pp. 170 – 171.

³⁶⁸ *CMS Missionary register* (London: Seeley, Burnside and Seeley, 1845), vol. 33, p. 169.

³⁶⁹ Letter from H. Smith to H. Venn, *CMS Archive*, CMS CII/021/13A, Cadbury Research Library, Birmingham University.

the part of the children, one Rupee a month is allowed to each for food.³⁷⁰

Until employment could be found for the new converts to Christianity, the missionaries viewed it as their duty to provide for the converts,³⁷¹ besides the prospect of material benefits attracted potential converts.

As mentioned earlier, during the life of the Agra Mission, Agra was ravaged by famines and the missionaries tried to distribute aid throughout the famines, but they used this as a medium to get their message across, such acts also had other motives, as for example Abdul visited homes but did not offer food, he invited people over to listen to his preaching and then distributed the food.³⁷² This approach seems to have been frequent as in another instance Abdul visited the bazaar to distribute 'charity' (rice in this case) but before he handed it out, he conducted his preaching session. It appears food was almost used as a means of obtaining hearers.³⁷³ Majumdar argues that during the famine the growing number of converts led Indian missionary critics to portray this as proof of the government's intention of large scale conversion.³⁷⁴

³⁷⁰ Letter from C. Hoernle to G. Udny, *CMS Archive*, CMS/B/OMS/ CIE/14, Cadbury Research Library.

³⁷¹ Letter from D. Corrie to G. Udny, *CMS Archive*, CMS/B/OMS/ CIE/14, Cadbury Research Library.

³⁷² Report by Daniel Corrie, *CMS Archive*, CMS CIE/12, Cadbury Research Library, Birmingham University.

³⁷³ *Ibid.*

³⁷⁴ K. Majumdar, *The History and culture of the Indian people* (Bombay, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1963), p. 421.

Zeal, attitude and approach

The Agra Missionaries were preaching in the city three or four times a week, whilst the catechists were going to preach in the city and villages.³⁷⁵ Other sources however state that Kreiss and Pfander were preaching in 1846 every day, sometimes even twice a day in the bazaars.³⁷⁶ Journeys were often made to neighbouring villages, as well as the main city of Agra, to attend melas. According to the *CMS Register*, almost four thousand copies or parts of the Bible and approximately 14000 tracts were distributed in several journeys to these melas by 1845.³⁷⁷

Such methods were deemed effective, as the author of an article in the *Missionary Register* commented: ‘The work of preaching the Gospel to the heathen has been zealously prosecuted’.³⁷⁸ The preaching was deemed to be beneficial, as the *Church Missionary Record* reports; ‘The good effect of this constant preaching... is... Men’s consciences are being stirred up from their slumber; their minds are being informed’.³⁷⁹ It was hoped that such preaching would have some long term impact on the Indian mind, if not conversion altogether.

Alongside bazaar preaching methods, a Christian Tract and Book Society was founded by Pfander in 1848, he was also its secretary and William Muir (secretary to the Board of Revenue in Agra) was the president of the society.³⁸⁰ The aims of the society were ‘to supply in various languages, religious tracts and books for sale and

³⁷⁵ *CMS Missionary register* (London: Seeley, Burnside and Seeley, 1845), vol. 33, p. 168.

³⁷⁶ *The Church Missionary Record* (London: Seeley, Burnside and Seeley, 1846), vol. 17, p. 18.

³⁷⁷ *CMS Missionary register* (London: Seeley, Burnside and Seeley, 1845), vol. 33, p. 169.

³⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 178.

³⁷⁹ *The Church Missionary Record* (London: Seeley, Burnside and Seeley, 1846), vol. 17, p. 18.

³⁸⁰ Sharma, *Christian Missions in north India*, p. 103.

distribution among Hindus, Muhammadans and Christians'.³⁸¹ Sharma argues that the society grew rapidly. Most of the writing was done by the missionaries themselves, although other authors contributed too. The books published by the society were written in Hindi, English and Urdu.³⁸²

³⁸¹ Ibid.

³⁸² Ibid.

Official attitudes

Charles Grant the director and proprietor of the East India Company was supportive of missionary activity,³⁸³ by 1660, the Company was interested in making converts in India and sent out Bibles in various languages and offered the financial inducement of two rupees for anyone who could memorise the catechisms by heart.³⁸⁴

Once the Company assumed a political role, its stance became less favourable to missionary activity as they had to adopt a policy of tolerance in order to prevent discontent in India.³⁸⁵ It was Charles Grant who believed that fair governing could only take place in India if it was offered alongside Christianity and Western learning and so he supported the Charter Act of 1793, encouraging the public to support the despatch of missionaries to India.³⁸⁶

Yet Eugene Stock has pointed out that in 1811 a Baptist Minister was sent to Agra, but then sent back by British officials.³⁸⁷ CMS missionaries saw official attitudes as ‘unhelpful’ to their activities. They criticised the failure of the government to carry out social reforms and the decision to end Bible teaching in government schools via Wood’s education despatch 1854.³⁸⁸ Nevertheless, missionaries were more than welcome to include Bible teaching in their mission schools.³⁸⁹ Furthermore, Majumdar has argued that despite being ‘government

³⁸³ A. Porter, ‘Trusteeship and humanitarianism’, Ed. A. Porter, *The nineteenth century* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 200.

³⁸⁴ Sharma, *Christian Missions in north India*, p. 23.

³⁸⁵ Carson, *Soldiers of Christ: Evangelicals and India 1784-1833*, p. 320.

³⁸⁶ Porter, ‘Trusteeship and humanitarianism’, p. 200.

³⁸⁷ Stock, *An Heroic Bishop: The life story of French of Lahore*, p. 4.

³⁸⁸ Cox, *Imperial Fault Lines Christianity and Colonial power, 1818-1940*, p. 32. For a detailed study of Wood Education despatch, see: R. Moore, ‘The composition of Wood’s education despatch’, *The English Historical Review*, 80:314 (1965).

³⁸⁹ Carson, *Soldiers of Christ: Evangelicals and India 1784-1833*, p. 322.

schools', some of these schools were headed by clergymen and pupils were taught as they would be in a mission school.³⁹⁰

It appears some of the officials at Agra supported the mission financially, for example, the Lieutenant-Governor at Agra subscribed 100 English pounds per annum, to preach Christianity to Christians, Hindus and Muslims in India, surprisingly enough also to 'superintend a school for the instruction of the natives, in which greater freedom of religious teaching should be conceded than a Government school could allow of'. If this was an example of officials going a step further than the government was willing to do, how would natives view such action, would this add fuel to their suspicions that the sahibs wanted to convert them?³⁹¹

What is also worth noting is that the printing press set up by the CMS at Secundra village received contract for printing from various government offices. The question arises how did the natives view this?³⁹² To escalate the situation, Hindus and Muslims were dismissed to create jobs for orphan boys.³⁹³ This clearly was a link in native eyes, if it was receiving government custom; the government was involved in the success of missionary work.³⁹⁴

³⁹⁰ Majumdar, *The History and culture of the Indian people*, p. 419.

³⁹¹ *The Colonial Church Chronicle and Missionary Journal, July 1847- December 1874* (London: W.H. Bartlett, 1869), p. 31.

³⁹² *Ibid.*, pp. 98-99.

³⁹³ *The Church Missionary Record* (London: Seeley, Burnside and Seeley, 1846), vol. 17, p. 121.

³⁹⁴ Gibbs, *The Anglican Church in India 1600-1970*, p. 129.

Challenges to conversion

It appears that there were not many high caste converts as a result of the Agra Mission, Helen McKenzie writes ‘Very few persons of high caste have become converts up the country, for here all the native prejudices remain in much greater vigour than in Calcutta’.³⁹⁵ Most of the converts came from ‘lower’ castes.³⁹⁶ Few Muslims were converted at the Agra Mission, but Pfander felt the field was ‘beginning to ripen for the harvest’.³⁹⁷ By 1840, of the almost 100 Indians converted, only thirty to forty remained near the Kattrra, though their children and grandchildren continued as Christians.³⁹⁸

Despite the efforts of the missionaries, it appears there was still a weak sense of community amongst the converts, as Corrie had instructed most of the Ashraf converts to go and preach elsewhere for training, this led many to reconvert to their former faith and ultimately a weak sense of community amongst the Christians at Agra.³⁹⁹ Hoernle commented in 1845, regarding his touring, preaching around Agra ‘We had ample opportunity to preach the Gospel to crowds of attentive hearers. The fear of losing caste is, with many, the invincible barrier which prevents them from making an open confession’.⁴⁰⁰

Hoernle commented regarding the character of the orphan boys in 1845:

³⁹⁵ McKenzie, *Six years in India*, p. 38.

³⁹⁶ *The Colonial Church Chronicle and Missionary Journal, July 1847- December 1874*, (London: W.H. Bartlett, 1869), p. 99.

³⁹⁷ McKenzie, *Six years in India*, p. 38.

³⁹⁸ Powell, ‘Creating Christian Community in early nineteenth century Agra’ in *India and the Indianess of Christianity*, p. 123.

³⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰⁰ Hoernle, *CMS Missionary register* (London: Seeley, Burnside and Seeley, 1845), vol. 33, p. 59.

At the beginning of the year I believed I had reason to entertain hopes of a new life having commenced in the hearts of some boys and grown up Christians; but most of these hopes have not only not been realised, but I have in some instances been sadly disappointed... Instead of a spiritual harvest, the enemy entered the field of labour, and spoiled some of the most hopeful plants.⁴⁰¹

In this case the enemy could have been a challenge from the Indian religious revivalists?

Mary Weitbrecht (CMS missionary)⁴⁰² commented:

Agra, however, is chiefly a Mussulman city, as Benares is a Hindu city, and this makes a vast difference in the apparent readiness of the people to give heed to the gospel, and renders Agra a much less cheering place of missionary labour than Benares, spite of its shrines and idols innumerable.⁴⁰³

She felt the Muslims were less inclined to convert than the Hindus.⁴⁰⁴ It is of little surprise, then that in 1845, there were only four or five adults baptised at the Agra Station.⁴⁰⁵

⁴⁰¹ *CMS Missionary register* (London: Seeley, Burnside and Seeley, 1845), vol. 33, p. 317.

⁴⁰² E. Chatterton, *A History of the Church of England in India* (London: SPCK, 1924), p. 101.

⁴⁰³ Weitbrecht, *Missionary sketches in north India with reference to recent events*, p. 434.

⁴⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰⁵ *CMS Missionary register* (London: Seeley, Burnside and Seeley, 1845), vol. 33, p. 169.

The missionaries had doubts about the converts at Agra, as they were reported to be

similar to that of most...native Christian congregations, viz. weakness of faith, backwardness in spirituality, with, at the same time, hopeful appearances and a few individual instances of true Christian piety and consistency.⁴⁰⁶

This quote from the *The Colonial Church Chronicle and Missionary Journal*, gives us an insight into the arrogant assumptions of some Christian missionaries. It also shows the pessimism across cultures that the converts were not really perceived as Christian.

⁴⁰⁶ *The Colonial Church Chronicle and Missionary journal, July 1847- December 1874* (London: W.H. Bartlett, 1869), p. 99.

Protecting converts

The CMS's *Missionary Register* published an extract from Pfander's diary of 1844, in which it stated that he had managed to convert a Muslim man who had enquired about Christianity on 14 August, the next day he had expressed a wish to convert, and by 20 October had been baptized. Pfander reports that the man was a 'moulvee' employed by the Company with an income of eight rupees (with extra income from soldiers).

The Molvi had given up his job, knowing the consequences, and Pfander told him they would do all they could to help and protect him.⁴⁰⁷ Pfander recorded:

The Mussalmans in the city, as well as those of his regiment, have heard of his intention, and are very angry with him: some threatened him, and others promised money...The Sepoys of his regiment have watched him closely, and he found it difficult to get away and come and see us.⁴⁰⁸

How true this is, is open to question, but Pfander's report gives us an idea of the kind of challenges to protecting converts.

Converts were alienated, for their family ties, castes and their divided loyalties acted as a barrier to conversion, as Corrie described in a letter:

There is also a young Rajah of very high family at present with us, who seems entirely convinced of the excellency of the Gospel, but is much

⁴⁰⁷ *CMS Missionary register* (London: Seeley, Burnside and Seeley, 1845), vol. 33, p. 318.

⁴⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 319.

exercised with the natural struggle between duty and love of family
name.⁴⁰⁹

⁴⁰⁹ Letter from D. Corrie to G. Udny, *CMS Archive*, CMS CIE/14, Cadbury Research Library, Birmingham University.

Early opposition

The two types of missionaries operating in Agra were the CMS missions and the other Company chaplains like Corrie and catechists like Abdul Masih. Did the natives differentiate between these two types of missionaries? At Agra, Corrie preached in the streets of Agra. Abdul wore his native costume – this created familiarity with the natives, and was done so in order that he would convey the ‘Indian’ side of the Gospel. Abdul’s activities were not limited to Agra alone, in 1818 he made a visit to Delhi and the Mughal king requested a copy of the Gospel in Arabic.⁴¹⁰

References to opposition can be found as early as 1813, as for example in the case of Abdul Masih’s search for accommodation, as Daniel Corries wrote in a report in 1813:

On enquiring in Agra for a House for Abdul, one was found every way desirable, the rent agreed on ... but Abdul’s character in the meantime being made known, the owner, a Mahomedan drew back and would not accept him for a tenant.⁴¹¹

Abdul eventually did secure a house, but within a month sought to leave this residence and move closer to the Mission station because Muslims were visiting frequently, in Corrie’s view in order ‘to interrupt his proper studies’.⁴¹²

⁴¹⁰ E. Chatterton, *A History of the Church of England in India* (London: SPCK, 1924), p. 12.

⁴¹¹ Report by Daniel Corrie, *CMS Archive*, CMS CIE/12, Cadbury Research Library, Birmingham University.

⁴¹² *Ibid.*

Corrie reported that a kazi (Muslim judge) tried to prevent children from visiting the school and Abdul, the kazi ‘causes the British servants of the Company much trouble by his litigiousness and was expected to oppose’.⁴¹³ This episode indicates that there was some opposition to the missionaries at Agra from the beginnings of the mission.

As early as 1813, one Hindu citizen of Agra expressed his fears relating to missionary activity to Abdul Masih:

if our children hear the Gospel they will forsake our religion, for as it is whenever they go among the Sahibs, they come home, wishing to be like them: one says ‘buy me a buggy’ – another says ‘let me wear English clothes’ – and we are sure if they read your books as they grow up, they will laugh at their father’s customs.⁴¹⁴

This is an important incident, since it raises explicitly, fears about the Europeanisation of India, and how this process would lead to conversion.

In the months leading up to July 1845, the missionaries preached at the entrance of the Kattrra, where they hoped to attract Muslims, as a masjid and bazaar were located nearby.⁴¹⁵ Pfander himself was keen on preaching in the bazaar and street.⁴¹⁶ Such methods drew the attention of Muslim religious leaders to the

⁴¹³ Ibid.

⁴¹⁴ Report by Daniel Corrie, *CMS Archive*, CMS CIE/12, Cadbury Research Library, Birmingham University.

⁴¹⁵ *CMS Missionary register* (London: Seeley, Burnside and Seeley, 1845), vol. 33, p. 318.

⁴¹⁶ Ibid., p. 333.

missionary presence. The missionaries at Agra were also immersing themselves in Muslim literature in order to replicate the kind of media that were being used by Molvis to spread knowledge about Islam. In August 1843, Hoernle was busy studying for this purpose *The Way of Salvation*, a book published by Muslims at Lucknow.⁴¹⁷

The Jesuits Mission had been established in Agra since 1601.⁴¹⁸ Helen McKenzie commented: ‘The priests are chiefly Italians; they do not interfere with the Protestant missionaries, though they always laugh and sneer when they meet any of them preaching’.⁴¹⁹ According to McKenzie, Hindus in Agra had not been convinced by Jesuit efforts, as they felt that Roman Catholicism was similar to their existing system, they believed ‘if they are to have idols, they may as well keep their own...The Muhammadans utterly abhor what they consider to be the open idolatry of the Romanists’.⁴²⁰ It is important to consider whether this view is biased, as McKenzie was a Protestant.

However, according to the *Missionary Register*, the CMS fared better in terms of listeners, as F.E. Schneider wrote in 1846 ‘In some places the people have much encouraged me, not only by their attentive listening’. The Agra missionaries measured their success in terms of the reduction in numbers of people who attended the Indian religious melas (religious fares / celebrations usually held at religious

⁴¹⁷ Letter from T. Hoernle to CMS Secretary, June 1843, *CMS Archive*, CMS/B/OMS CII/0/O140, Cadbury Research Library.

⁴¹⁸ Sharma, *Christian Missions in north India*, p. 57.

⁴¹⁹ McKenzie, *Six years in India*, p. 38.

⁴²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 54.

sites), in a particular year – if there had been a reduction from previous years; this was perceived to be a fruit of their labour.⁴²¹

⁴²¹ *The Church Missionary Record* (London: Seeley, Burnside and Seeley, 1846), vol. 17, p. 122.

Hindu reformers

There were native concerns about the influence of missionary activity in India. From a Hindu perspective, perhaps the most famous was Ram Mohan Roy, who criticised the British missionaries for their interference in religion.⁴²² Roy, on the other hand, developed a 'monotheistic' Hindu Church and in 1830, founded the 'Brahmo Samaj' which was a Hindu reform movement, built on Brahmin ideas.⁴²³ This 'Church' had actually converted a Baptist Missionary.⁴²⁴ He also pushed for widow remarriage, which by 1856 was a legal act.⁴²⁵

Since the eighteenth century, Sati, a Hindu tradition, had troubled the British, but it was the missionaries who launched active campaigns against it.⁴²⁶ Sati was carried out when a husband died. His wife was tied to the corpse and then the body was cremated along with the woman.⁴²⁷ William Ewer (the superintendent of police for the Western Provinces) described a scene of sati:

A widow who would turn with natural instinctive horror from the first hint of sharing her husband's pile will be at length gradually brought to pronounce a reluctant consent...to resist...the people will not be disappointed of their show and the entire population of a village will turn

⁴²² T. Raychauduri, 'Europe in India's Xenology: The Nineteenth-Century Record', *Past and Present*, 137:1 (1992), p. 8.

⁴²³ Tangri, 'Intellectuals and Society in Nineteenth-Century India', p. 375.

⁴²⁴ Ibid.

⁴²⁵ Ibid.

⁴²⁶ N. Cassels, 'Bentick: Humanitarian and Imperialist – The Abolition of Suttee', *The Journal of British Studies*, 5:1 (1965), pp. 85-6.

⁴²⁷ Woodruff, *The Men Who Ruled India: Part 1*, p. 254.

out to assist in dragging her to the bank of the river and in keeping her on the pile.⁴²⁸

The death of the widow was believed to benefit her deceased husband, family and community.⁴²⁹

Abolitionist campaigners such as Ewer appealed to women in England, urging them to oppose Sati and push for legislation to ban it.⁴³⁰ Yet, the surprising fact was that despite Sati regulation being introduced in 1813, there was an increase in the number of Satis after the introduction of the legislation.⁴³¹ In some instances, if sati was banned in one locality, the woman was taken to another locality for the sati to be performed.⁴³² The response to the abolitionist campaigners was impressive: by 1820, the matter had reached Parliament. Women actively organised themselves to raise money for the campaign and William Wilberforce spoke about ‘family fireside evils’.⁴³³

Wilberforce proposed setting up a college at Calcutta, to equip missionaries to go out and propagate Christianity to Hindus. Parliamentary papers reveal that he thought ‘indeed, by proper attention to certain essential points, he had no doubt that the conversion of these people might be effected’.⁴³⁴ The campaign against Sati

⁴²⁸ Cassels, ‘Bentick: Humanitarian and Imperialist – The Abolition of Suttee’, pp. 82-3.

⁴²⁹ Woodruff, *The Men Who Ruled India: Part 1*, p. 255.

⁴³⁰ Midgely, ‘British Women and the Evangelical Campaign Against Sati in India 1813 – 1830’, pp. 74-5.

⁴³¹ Ibid.

⁴³² Parliamentary debates, *Burning of Hindoo widows*, vol. 5, 20 June 1821, cols. 1217 – 22.

⁴³³ Midgely, ‘British Women and the Evangelical Campaign Against Sati in India 1813 – 1830’, p. 76.

⁴³⁴ Parliamentary debates, *Burning of Hindoo widows*, vol. 5, 20 June 1821, cols. 1217 – 22.

received support from some Indian reformers, too such as Ram Mohan Roy; by 1829, Bentinck banned Sati in the Bengal.⁴³⁵

One of the important effects of the campaign against Sati upon Indians was that it was the first step of many that would come in the future. The success of the missionary campaign against sati also signalled the shift to a government policy which would interfere in Indian cultural life known as the 'Age of Reform' during William Bentinck's governorship'.⁴³⁶

Ram Mohan Roy rejected Christianity and criticised the fact that the British were interfering with Indian religions and allowing the missionaries to attack the Islamic belief of miracles⁴³⁷ – a theme that would be brought up in Delhi too. Though Roy criticised caste, he did not see it as a 'major evil'.⁴³⁸ The whole affair became problematic, the missionaries accused him of 'cowardice' and claimed that it was caste that stopped him from converting, whereas he believed that the missionary rejection of caste kept converts isolated and also reduced the number of converts to Christianity.⁴³⁹ Caste was not like the class system, it was a barrier to conversion and on occasions an instrument for reconversion. Thus missionaries concluded that caste was a 'prison'.⁴⁴⁰ What was important was that, though many Hindu reformers wished to reform Indian society, very few wished to abandon their traditions and heritage.⁴⁴¹

⁴³⁵ Cassels, 'Bentinck: Humanitarian and Imperialist – The Abolition of Suttee', p. 77.

⁴³⁶ Ibid., p. 85.

⁴³⁷ Raychaudhuri, 'Europe in India's Xenology: The Nineteenth – Century Record', p. 169.

⁴³⁸ Forrester, *Caste and Christianity: Attitudes and policies on caste of Anglo Saxon Protestant Missionaries in India*, p. 156.

⁴³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 32.

⁴⁴¹ Brown, *Modern India: The Origins of an Asian Democracy*, p. 159.

Nevertheless, conversions in India remained small in number, and many missionaries themselves admitted that their attempts to convert on evangelical tours produced ‘nothing that we know of, or next to nothing’.⁴⁴² Andrew Ward adds, ‘But it was always nice to get away. They travelled in buggies and held meetings in mango groves and rest stations’.⁴⁴³ Though this may be questionable, as the missionaries did win over some converts in India, it is likely that the prospect of an outing in the hot Indian climate was exciting and appealed to the missionaries.

Many of the converts were of ‘low caste’ and they often found it more beneficial to convert to Christianity.⁴⁴⁴ In this section of the study, the implications for caste are studied. Some Indians were angered by the fact that missionaries converted poor Indians with the promise of material rewards.⁴⁴⁵ When many of their promises did not materialise, converts reverted in the hundreds.⁴⁴⁶ But the renouncing of caste by converts to Christianity caused other problems; they were excluded from society in various ways.⁴⁴⁷ Converts often found that they lost homes, jobs and livelihoods, as the laws of Hinduism and Islam did not allow them to inherit anything, after conversion.⁴⁴⁸

What the missionaries did not appreciate was that caste provided material support in Indian and identity.⁴⁴⁹ Arguably because they overlooked this, converts

⁴⁴² Ward, *Our bones are scattered: The Cawnpore Massacres and the Indian Mutiny of 1857*, p. 439.

⁴⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 92.

⁴⁴⁵ Raychaudhuri, ‘Europe in India’s Xenology: The Nineteenth – Century Record’, p. 169.

⁴⁴⁶ Carson, *Soldiers of Christ: Evangelicals and India 1784-1833*, p. 355.

⁴⁴⁷ Tangri, ‘Intellectuals and Society in Nineteenth-Century India’, p. 379.

⁴⁴⁸ Carson, *Soldiers of Christ: Evangelicals and India 1784-1833*, p. 105.

⁴⁴⁹ Forrester, *Caste and Christianity: Attitudes and policies on caste of Anglo Saxon Protestant Missionaries in India*, p. 26.

often found themselves socially excluded.⁴⁵⁰ The social exclusion of converts did not just have material implications – they were also subject to violence. In one instance in the Bengal, a convert’s daughter was kidnapped, in another, two converts were murdered. These are examples of the difficulties that some converts to Christianity had to face.⁴⁵¹ In other cases, a report by the LMS (London Missionary Society) concluded that in some villages, Christian converts were persecuted to the extent that in one case ‘their houses were destroyed, their gardens pillaged, their granaries plundered and even the rice cut down’.⁴⁵²

Missionaries pressurised the government to introduce legislation to protect Indian converts.⁴⁵³ The pressure of missionaries led to the East India Company moving away from supporting Indian religions, and by 1846 Anglicisation became more entrenched.⁴⁵⁴ This Anglicisation was achieved because of the men in charge of the East India Company, the new officials were less tolerant as their predecessors.⁴⁵⁵ This is discussed in detail in the chapter concerning developments at Delhi.

In fact, some missionaries were so concerned with the propagation of Christianity that Edmond, a missionary in the Bengal⁴⁵⁶ pushed for the institution of

⁴⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁵¹ Carson, *Soldiers of Christ: Evangelicals and India 1784-1833*, pp. 104-5.

⁴⁵² Ibid., p. 326.

⁴⁵³ Tangri, ‘Intellectuals and Society in Nineteenth-Century India’, p. 378.

⁴⁵⁴ D. Washbrook, ‘1818-1860: The Two Faces of Colonialism’, *The Nineteenth Century*, Volume 3, ed. A. Porter (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 397.

⁴⁵⁵ Pernau, *The Delhi College, Traditional Elites, the Colonial State and Education before 1857*, p.11.

⁴⁵⁶ For reference to Edmond’s earlier career, see: E. Elbourne, *Blood ground: colonialism, missions and the contest for Christianity in the Cape Colony and Britain, 1799 – 1853* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2003).

the requirement that government servants should adopt Christianity.⁴⁵⁷ Yet, some officials such as Minto admitted their fears that the actions of the British government would be linked with the activity of British missionaries in native eyes.⁴⁵⁸

Suspicion increased, as in the eyes of the Indians missionary activity and legislation was linked; a missionary himself commented, ‘Hindoos and Mohammedans could not imagine a ruling power without a religion, or without zeal for diffusion of its own faith’.⁴⁵⁹ He felt that Indians saw the government’s recent legislation on religious matters as ‘the most determined action against their castes and their faiths’.⁴⁶⁰ Clearly the government’s interference in religious affairs was troubling some of its subjects. This would eventually lead to discontent and some of those involved in the rebellion of 1857 would use this as a rallying point.⁴⁶¹

At some mission schools, Indians were asked who their God was, and they were expected to answer according to Christian beliefs.⁴⁶² Unsurprisingly, rumours circulated that the ‘schools were a Sahib’s trick to force youth to lose caste’.⁴⁶³ As a result, once Indians realised that they were being converted to Christianity, they began to oppose the missionaries.

Muslim scholars did attempt to appeal to the Hindu caste sensitivities and highlighted the effects of British rule, to rally them to their cause, as a Molvi made a

⁴⁵⁷ Pernau, *The Delhi College, Traditional Elites, the Colonial State and Education before 1857*, p. 65.

⁴⁵⁸ Carson, *Soldiers of Christ: Evangelicals and India 1784-1833*, p. 162.

⁴⁵⁹ W. Butler, *Land of the Vedas* (Alcester: Read Books, 2010), p. 189.

⁴⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁶¹ Chaudhuri, *Civil Rebellion in the Indian Mutinies, 1857-9*, pp. 25-26.

⁴⁶² Sharma, *Christian Missions in North India*, p. 102.

⁴⁶³ E. Potts, *British Baptist Missionaries in India 1793-1837* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), p. 117.

speech in 1857: ‘O brothers of the Hindu race! The purity of your caste is threatened, and the religious distinctions so much prized by you invaded by the proselytizing and annexing firangi’.⁴⁶⁴ There appears not to have been an encounter on the scale of the 1854 Munazara between Hindu reformers and Pfander.

The very nature of missionary activity had upset the Brahmins and Molvis, in various ways, whether it was through missionary activity itself or the abolition of free land for religious purposes (to build churches or use for mission stations).⁴⁶⁵

The relationship between them had been shaken and again, over the years, the rise of national feeling in Turkey and Egypt, the invasion of Afghanistan, and the bombardment of Alexandria by the British excited the compassion of Indian Mohammedans over the fate of their co-religionists in these regions.⁴⁶⁶

They had a shared language (Arabic), a shared Holy book, and thus saw themselves as part of the wider Islamic world.⁴⁶⁷ Coinciding with all this, in this period, the role of the Muslim Molvis was challenged as they lost their positions in law courts and they began to feel uneasy about the presence of the missionaries.⁴⁶⁸

There were differing attitudes to missionary activity in India, dependent upon

⁴⁶⁴ Chaudhuri, *Civil Rebellion in the Indian Mutinies, 1857-9*, pp. 25-26.

⁴⁶⁵ P. Spear, *The Oxford History of Modern India: 1740-1975* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), p. 286.

⁴⁶⁶ Tangri, ‘Intellectuals and Society in Nineteenth-Century India’, p. 383.

⁴⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁸ Spear, *The Oxford History of Modern India: 1740-1975*, p. 221.

the location, date and the officials concerned.⁴⁶⁹ Dalhousie was influenced by such Evangelical pressure – unsurprisingly, he allowed more criticism of Indian religions, and after 1857 many people felt that his attacks on Indian culture had led to the Mutiny.⁴⁷⁰ The opinion of many employees of the Company was that more protection needed to be provided for the converts to prevent them facing what Grant called ‘a dreadful excommunication of civil life’.⁴⁷¹

As a result, many laws were passed to support the Indian converts. The missionaries’ campaigns secured Act XXI of 1850 which stated that an individual’s rights should not be dependent upon his religion.⁴⁷² The Indian Muslims and Hindus regarded this piece of legislation as an attack on their respective religions; as prior to British rule, conversion meant that an individual lost his / her inheritance rights.⁴⁷³ The law itself did not make any explicit references to Christianity, but its purpose was obvious; to prevent the loss of property inheritance for Christian converts. This was a very important piece of legislation as it removed one of the strongest barriers to conversion.⁴⁷⁴

The Historian Surendra Nath Sen wrote ‘The law was therefore regarded as a blow against both communities... to the Muslim, it appeared as an incentive to apostasy, for his community was not immune from missionary peril’.⁴⁷⁵ On the other hand for the missionaries and their supporters the passing of this law was a major

⁴⁶⁹ Carson, *Soldiers of Christ: Evangelicals and India 1784-1833*, p. 108.

⁴⁷⁰ Washbrook, ‘1818-1860: The Two Faces of Colonialism’, *The Nineteenth Century*, p. 420.

⁴⁷¹ Ibid.

⁴⁷² Majumdar, *The History and culture of the Indian people*, p. 422.

⁴⁷³ Sharma, *Christian Missions in north India*, p. 43.

⁴⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 44.

breakthrough, as Bishop Milman (also a historian) recorded the event in his diary ‘as memorable a day as December 4, 1829 when William Bentick abolished the rite of sati’.⁴⁷⁶

Nevertheless further protection was sought; another piece of legislation was passed in 1856, in relation to Christian marriages. The act stated that converts did not legally have any obligations to existing Hindu wives. Christian marriage also acquired legal status.⁴⁷⁷ The widow remarriage act was also passed in the same year; in reality it did not affect many widows, but it led many Hindus to rally against the British under the call ‘Hinduism was in danger’.⁴⁷⁸

There were claims that missionaries were converting young children by giving them incentives, so legislation was passed which set the age for conversion at sixteen.⁴⁷⁹ According to a letter from Corrie he had baptised a fifteen year old boy who had broken off his Brahman’s cord in 1813.⁴⁸⁰ Laws were passed to prevent such conversions, where children were under the age of sixteen, however there was a weakness of such legislation, as each individual case was subject to the discretion of judges. Sharma points out quite convincingly that this law was to the benefit of the missionaries as very few parents could afford legal fees.⁴⁸¹

The charter of 1813 had made provision for the propagation of Christianity through educational institutions.⁴⁸² Sharma argues these institutions supported

⁴⁷⁶ Chatterton, *A History of the Church of England in India*, p. 100.

⁴⁷⁷ Sharma, *Christian Missions in north India*, p. 92.

⁴⁷⁸ Majumdar, *The History and culture of the Indian people*, p. 423.

⁴⁷⁹ Sharma, *Christian Missions in north India*, p. 45.

⁴⁸⁰ Letter from D. Corrie to G. Udny, *CMS Archive*, CMS CIE/14, Cadbury Research Library, Birmingham University.

⁴⁸¹ Sharma, *Christian Missions in north India*, p. 45.

⁴⁸² *Ibid.*

missionaries in various ways, by providing them with assistance on their arrival, throughout their residence in India and in executing their Evangelical activities.⁴⁸³

One such institution was the mission college at Agra. The role of this college is discussed in the next chapter.

⁴⁸³ Ibid.

Chapter 4. Agra: ‘The attack is yet to come’ ⁴⁸⁴

Growing concern – The rise of a new trend of reformism.

A number of Muslim religious reformers were active in India in the decades before the Indian mutiny. One of the most important was Shah Wali Allah of Delhi, the inspirer of some of the anti-British revivalist schools of the nineteenth century. ⁴⁸⁵

Born in 1703, Shah Wali Allah had seen the decline of the Mughal Empire at first hand as Aurangzeb died in 1707, and was aware of the decaying political situation. ⁴⁸⁶

The Mughal collapse had caused a void, the decline of the empire was affecting the Muslim community in India in various ways such as loss of stability and security. Therefore some individuals, such as Shah Wali Allah felt that they had to reform Indian Muslim society to prevent a total collapse. ⁴⁸⁷ He was a Naqshbandi Sufi ⁴⁸⁸ and in 1719, he began to lecture at the Madrassah-i- Rahimiya ⁴⁸⁹ which was founded by his father Shah Abd Al Rahim. ⁴⁹⁰ Shah Wali Allah believed that the disintegration of the Muslim community had to be halted. Mushir-ul-Haq writes that he was:

Clear about the scope of his reform movement. The work of the Prophet, he maintained was to be continued by two sections of people: the rulers

⁴⁸⁴ *Calcutta Review* (Calcutta: Sanders and Cones, 1845), vol. 4, p. 450.

⁴⁸⁵ K. Ashraf, ‘Muslim revivalists and the revolt of 1857’ *Rebellion 1857: A Symposium*, Ed. P. Joshi, (Bombay: Peoples Publishing House, 1957), p. 73.

⁴⁸⁶ Jalal, *Partisans of Allah, Jihad in South Asia*, p. 42.

⁴⁸⁷ S. Haq, *The Great Revolution of 1857* (Karachi:Pakistan Historical Society, 1962), p. 37.

⁴⁸⁸ Robinson, *The Ulama of Farangi Mahall and Islamic culture in South Asia*, p. 184.

⁴⁸⁹ Haq, *The Great Revolution of 1857*, p. 39.

⁴⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

and statesmen had to administer the State in accordance with the Law, while the shaykhs and Ulema were to provide spiritual and intellectual guidance to the Muslims.⁴⁹¹

There were other Muslim reformers in India, such as Mirza Mazhar Jan Janan; but it was the followers of Shah Wali Allah of Delhi who took the lead in reform at Agra, particularly Shah Abdul Aziz.⁴⁹² Shah Abdul Aziz was the eldest of the four sons of Shah Wali Allah.⁴⁹³ Born in 1746, he had seen significant changes in India, such as the takeover by the Company.⁴⁹⁴ Shah Wali Allah died in 1762; his eldest son Shah Abdul Aziz was influential in Delhi in the religious sphere by the time the British had established control. In 1803 Shah Abdul Aziz declared India as a 'Dar al harb' (abode of war).⁴⁹⁵ Mushirul Haq, who is connected with the 'Jamia Millia Islamia' has argued that this was 'an important mile-stone on the long road of the struggle for freedom which culminated in the Revolution of 1857'.⁴⁹⁶

According to a Marxist historian, Kunwar Ashraf, Shah Abdul Aziz urged Muslims to wage a jihad on British rule or to migrate elsewhere.⁴⁹⁷ However, Mushirul Haq argues although Shah Abdul Aziz did declare the country as Dar al

⁴⁹¹ Ibid., p. 39.

⁴⁹² Cantwell Smith, 'The Ulama in Indian Politics', *Politics and Society in India*, p. 47.

⁴⁹³ Robinson, *The Ulama of Farangi Mahall and Islamic culture in South Asia*, p. 184.

⁴⁹⁴ Haq, *The Great Revolution of 1857*, pp. 40-43.

⁴⁹⁵ Cantwell Smith, 'The Ulama in Indian Politics', *Politics and Society in India*, p. 46.

⁴⁹⁶ Haq, *The Great Revolution of 1857*, Karachi, Pakistan Historical Society, 1962, p. 42.

⁴⁹⁷ Ashraf, 'Muslim revivalists and the revolt of 1857' *Rebellion 1857: A Symposium*, p. 76.

harb, he allowed Muslims to co-operate with the British, as long as Islamic beliefs were not violated.⁴⁹⁸ Haq challenges the view that Shah Abdul Aziz thought badly of the British, he comments:

He went so far as to declare it lawful to eat with the British, to learn their language and even to dress like them ... this is what we may call a positive attitude... but strangely enough we very often hear people today saying that Shah Abdul Aziz was bitterly opposed to the British.⁴⁹⁹

Ayesha Jalal has argued that the fatwa issued by Shah Abdul Aziz was political rather than religious and that it appealed to both Muslims and Hindus.⁵⁰⁰ More is discussed about Shah Abdul Aziz's approach to the missionaries in the subsequent chapters concerning Delhi.

In 1820, the Mughal king Bahadur Zafar Shah had asked the Muslim scholars not to debate with the missionaries of the USPG,⁵⁰¹ but in 1821, Muhammad Ismail visited Calcutta, whereupon he gave a sermon to a group of Europeans, likewise in 1833 and he allowed Joseph Wolff (missionary) to speak at a gathering of Ulema in Delhi.⁵⁰² Yet in 1857 the Ulema were preparing their 'revival'.

⁴⁹⁸ M. Haq, *Indian Muslims attitude to the British in the early nineteenth century: a case study of Shah Abdul Aziz* (Unpublished M.A thesis, Montreal: McGill University, 1964), p.61.

⁴⁹⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰⁰ Jalal, *Partisans of Allah: Jihad in South Asia*, p. 67.

⁵⁰¹ F. Pascoe, *Two Hundred Years of the S. P. G., 1701–1900: An Historical Account of the Society for the Propagation of Bible in Foreign Parts* (London: 1901), p. 613.

⁵⁰² Nizami, *Madrasahs, Scholars and Saints: Muslim Response to the British Presence in Delhi and the Upper Doab*, p. 197.

Another wave of reform was that of the Mujahideen movement which became prominent in the period 1827-30.⁵⁰³ The leader of this movement was Syed Ahmed of Rae Bareilly (1786-1831), he was elected as the Imam and ‘amir al muslimin’ or the commander of the Muslims, in the wars that the Mujahideen movement fought between 1826-31 on the frontier.⁵⁰⁴

Syed Ahmed of Rae Bareilly believed that his movement had to regain India from British hands and establish Islamic law; he believed India ‘had fallen underneath the rule of Christians and he was going to set the land free and establish the supremacy of the holy law over it’.⁵⁰⁵ Hunter drew links between the origins of the Mujahideen movement and the Arabian ‘Wahabis’, but this was far from the truth as Fusfeld maintains:

The intellectual current from which the nineteenth century Indian reform movements drew their inspiration, however similar in pattern and program was from a distinct and separate origin.⁵⁰⁶

Their aim was to return to what they regarded as ‘pure Islam’ – one which was free of what they saw as ‘Hindu and pagan customs’.⁵⁰⁷ Sajjad Qureshi argues that it was believed by the British after the Mutiny that a ‘conspiracy’ was formed to

⁵⁰³ Chaudhuri, *Civil Rebellion in the Indian Mutinies*, p. 50.

⁵⁰⁴ Ashraf, ‘Muslim revivalists and the revolt of 1857’ *Rebellion 1857: A Symposium*, p. 77.

⁵⁰⁵ Robinson, *The Ulama of Farangi Mahall and Islamic culture in South Asia*, p. 187.

⁵⁰⁶ Fusfeld, *The shaping of Sufi leadership in Delhi: The Naqshbandiyya Mujaddidiyya 1750 to 1920*, p. 200.

⁵⁰⁷ Tangri, ‘Intellectuals and Society in Nineteenth-Century India’, p. 382.

overthrow the British. Syed Ahmed Rai of Bareilly's movement should not be confused with the distinct movement of Allamah Fazlul Haqq Khayrabadi, there was a split between these two movements.

During the years 1827-30, the 'Mujahideen movement' gained successes in the Punjab, due to a number of reasons, as the Muslim community had grievances, such as the domination of the upper classes,⁵⁰⁸ and so it was a mass movement and drew its funds and recruited its men from the masses.⁵⁰⁹ The movement offered a different social system and therefore their main support base in the Punjab in the 1820s was the peasantry.⁵¹⁰

The 'Mujahideen movement' gave disaffected Muslims a sense of belonging, it worked to fill the void of power that was being created as India was falling to the British: 'The discontent of the Muhammadans originating from many sources of affliction were given a particular direction by the rise of the formidable Wahabis'.⁵¹¹ The 'Mujahideen movement' was the only movement during the 1820s to not only hold an anti-British ideology but also to be supported by a number of organised networks.⁵¹²

The movement gave the Muslim cause in India a stronger moral and political identity.⁵¹³ It was instrumental in creating a broad unity between all the religious revivalist movements in India (Muslim and Hindu), at various levels in society. Due to the pioneering efforts of the leaders of the Mujahideen Movement, a basis of unity

⁵⁰⁸ Chaudhuri, *Civil Rebellion in the Indian Mutinies, 1857-9*, p. 50.

⁵⁰⁹ Cantwell Smith, 'The Ulama in Indian Politics', *Politics and Society in India*, p. 48.

⁵¹⁰ Chaudhuri, *Civil Rebellion in the Indian Mutinies, 1857-9*, p. 50.

⁵¹¹ Ibid.

⁵¹² Ashraf, 'Muslim revivalists and the revolt of 1857' *Rebellion 1857: A Symposium*, p. 71.

⁵¹³ Chaudhuri, *Civil Rebellion in the Indian Mutinies, 1857-9*, p. 50.

against the British was created. The movement united those who had lost their status such as the aristocrats with the unemployed handicraftsman and disaffected soldiers. It also united Muslims and Hindus.⁵¹⁴

Yet some historians, especially South Asian historians, have offered a more compelling view; that there was no such thing as the 'Wahabi uprising', rather it was the 'Mujahideen movement' who sought to return India to her former Muslim rulers. They argue that Hunter promoted the idea of a 'Wahabi uprising', in *The Indian Mussalmans: are they bound in conscience to rebel against the Queen?* (1871) in which he identified the Muslims in India as 'a single backward community' requiring assistance from the British.⁵¹⁵

There are flaws in Hunter's interpretation as there were various Muslim groupings, for example Francis Robinson argued that Syed Ahmed of Rae Bareilly, leader of the 'Wahabi' movement in India was a 'reformed Sufi', however 'Wahabism' and 'Sufism' are distinct in their own ways. David Lelyveld has also commented 'Hunter is not at all clear who he is talking about'.⁵¹⁶ Hunter refers to the Muslims as a 'class' and a 'race'.⁵¹⁷ The picture was more complex than Hunter had portrayed. 'Wahabism' is different to 'Sufism', yet people like Syed Ahmed were authorised by Shah Abdul Aziz to practice 'bay'ah' (allegiance).⁵¹⁸ Furthermore

⁵¹⁴ Ashraf, 'Muslim revivalists and the revolt of 1857' *Rebellion 1857: A Symposium*, p. 78.

⁵¹⁵ Fusfeld, *The shaping of Sufi leadership in Delhi: The Naqshbandiyya Mujaddidiyya 1750 to 1920*, p. 2.

⁵¹⁶ D. Lelyveld, M. Hasan, *Aligarh's first generation: Muslim solidarity in British India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p.10.

⁵¹⁷ Ibid.

⁵¹⁸ Haq, *Indian Muslims attitude to the British in the early nineteenth century: a case study of Shah Abdul Aziz*, p. 97.

Sayed Ahmed was supported by prominent people from Sufi orders, such as Shan Abu Said from the Naqshbandi order.⁵¹⁹

Syed Nesar Ahmed has argued that Francis Robinson also agreed with Hunter's view. He argues that labelling the 'Mujahideen movement' as 'Wahabism' is inaccurate.⁵²⁰ Arguably this shows there were many currents of reform and Ayesha Jalal has pointed out that during the 1800s various groupings and movements were labelled as 'Wahabi', not because of their religious beliefs but rather because of their 'acts of sedition, actual or anticipated'.⁵²¹ Earlier works such as William Cantwell Smith's argued that the 'Wahabi' movement was what the 'enemies' of the movement labelled it.⁵²² According to Fusfeld, the movement was the 'Mujahideen movement' and was based on the teachings of Shah Wali Allah, which had the Naqshbandi teachings as their source and therefore the idea of it having 'Wahabi' foundations is a weak argument, as Naqshbandi teachings are Sufi teachings.⁵²³

Sayyid Ahmad had been selected as the first leader of the 'Mujahideen movement' (1786-1831) alongside Muhammad Ismail (Shah Abdul Aziz's grandson). Interestingly the movement had created a small government based on Muslim law. This is where as mentioned earlier their appeal to the peasantry began because they openly would challenge local officials regarding matters based upon their demands. They mobilised the masses in the respect that they encouraged people

⁵¹⁹ Ibid.

⁵²⁰ S. Ahmed, *Origins of Muslim consciousness in India: a world-system perspective* (Oxford: Greenwood publishing, 1991), p. 63.

⁵²¹ Jalal, *Partisans of Allah, Jihad in South Asia*, p. 137.

⁵²² Cantwell Smith, 'The Ulama in Indian Politics', *Politics and Society in India*, p. 46.

⁵²³ Fusfeld, *The shaping of Sufi leadership in Delhi: The Naqshbandiyya Mujaddidiyya 1750 to 1920*, p. 200.

to oppose the existing government ‘if obedience to its laws amounted to a breach of God’s commandments’.⁵²⁴

This movement caused a social shift, in that it did away with economic distinctions, as well as bonding together various segments of society, in this case the intellectuals and the common masses of Delhi sought to push for change.⁵²⁵ This would include, Muslims as well as Hindus. Hunter identified the ‘Wahabi’ model as the roots of this movement, has arguing that their existence was ‘essentially adapted to the hopes and fears of a restless populace’. Yet, unlike the followers of Abdul Wahab in Arabia, the ‘Mujahideen movement’ labelled as ‘Wahabis’ by Hunter, did not reject ‘the mystical tradition’ in Islam’.⁵²⁶

Interestingly enough the ‘Mujahideen movement’ was mobilising the masses not only to oppose and rebel against the foreign British rule but also the existing social order –be that oppressive rulers who were Muslim.⁵²⁷ W. Hunter has argued in his book *The Indian Mussalmans: are they bound in conscience to rebel against the Queen?* (1871) that Sayyid Ahmed did not openly declare jihad until he came back from hajj, as a ‘fanatical disciple’ of Abdul Wahab in 1820. Many Muslim writers have rejected this.⁵²⁸

⁵²⁴ Ashraf, ‘Muslim revivalists and the revolt of 1857’ *Rebellion 1857: A Symposium*, p. 77.

⁵²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 78.

⁵²⁶ Jalal, *Partisans of Allah, Jihad in South Asia*, p. 71.

⁵²⁷ Ashraf, ‘Muslim revivalists and the revolt of 1857’ *Rebellion 1857: A Symposium*, p. 78.

⁵²⁸ Jalal, *Partisans of Allah, Jihad in South Asia*, p. 70.

Publications and activity before the Munazara

The Ulema supervised educational institutions, state charity and the rule of Shariah.⁵²⁹ They therefore exercised a considerable influence in Mughal India, but the

British influence in India had generated fear amongst the Ulema, and several fatwa were issued indicating that India, under the British was no longer a 'Dar-al-Islam', but a 'Dar-al-Harb'. Yet, even during such periods of tension, the Ulema were not opposed to sending Muslim children to British run schools.⁵³⁰

Arguably, this was because, up until then the missionaries did not pose a serious threat in India. What changed afterwards, was an increase in preaching – zeal and publications in the late 1830s. Initially, missionary contact with the Muslim scholars was 'one of intellectual enquiry, but as missionary activity intensified Muslim scholars concluded that missionaries were threatening their religious beliefs and way of life'.⁵³¹

A number of Indian scholars have identified the role of missionaries and missionary military men as important in shaping the response of Indian society to the British. Chaudhuri has argued 'The Christian missionaries and their proselyting activities and the crusading attitude of some missionary colonels sowed seeds of

⁵²⁹ Ashraf, 'Muslim revivalists and the revolt of 1857' *Rebellion 1857: A Symposium*, p. 72.

⁵³⁰ A. Siddiqui, *Christian Muslim dialogue in the twentieth century* (Basingstoke: Palgrave McMillan, 1997), p. 6.

⁵³¹ Nizami, *Madrasahs, Scholars and Saints: Muslim Response to the British Presence in Delhi and the Upper Doab*, p. 195.

distrusting British faith'.⁵³² Siddiqui agrees and argues this caused the Ulema to redefine their positions in relation to British rule.⁵³³

Prior to this the missionaries' main target had been Hindus, but now their target had shifted to predominantly Muslim areas of India. The methods used by the missionaries further alarmed the Ulema.⁵³⁴ Could this have been due to the fact that they preached in nearby masjids, as in the case of Agra? As British territory in India increased, so did the activity of the missionaries, eventually adopting aggressive methods and attitudes towards Islam and Hinduism. The changing attitudes of the missionaries were a challenge to religious leaders of the Hindus and Muslims and the Ulema took up this challenge.⁵³⁵

During the 1840s there were six presses in Agra which aimed to impart religious knowledge to the masses.⁵³⁶ This was due to the fact that Pfander's works: *Miftah al asrar*, *Mizan al Haq* and *Tariq al hayat* were directed to a Muslim audience and were written in Urdu and Persian following formats that had traditionally been used for Muslim religious texts. Pfander also included quotations from the Qur'an and Hadith.⁵³⁷ This alarmed the Ulema, and they responded to Pfander via letters from various parts of India, but by this point a united effort had not been achieved.⁵³⁸

⁵³² Chaudhuri, *Civil Rebellion in the Indian Mutinies, 1857-9*, p. xxii.

⁵³³ Siddiqui, *Christian Muslim dialogue in the twentieth century*, p. 7.

⁵³⁴ Ibid.

⁵³⁵ Haq, *The Great Revolution of 1857*, p. 42.

⁵³⁶ Nizami, *Madrasahs, Scholars and Saints: Muslim Response to the British Presence in Delhi and the Upper Doab*, p. 189.

⁵³⁷ Ibid., p. 200.

⁵³⁸ Ibid.

Native Indian newspapers were also focusing on the threat to Muslim life.⁵³⁹ According a Delhi newspaper, the Molvis at Agra had begun producing pamphlets, urging Muslims to wage religious war against the English rulers of India, the ‘dangers’ of missionary preaching and the ‘breakdown’ of purdah.⁵⁴⁰ The Ulema had created a greater sense of unity and identity amongst the Muslim community, as Nizami comments ‘The Ulema managed not only to perform the negative function of protecting Muslims from extraneous ‘corrupting influences’ but, in the process, also managed to create a greater religious awareness’.⁵⁴¹ For example, Ahmadullah Shah (Molvi of Faizabad) had arranged an Ulema Majlis (gathering of Ulema) at Agra, to discuss the effects of British, in 1846.⁵⁴²

Amongst these ‘defenders of Islam’⁵⁴³ was Molana Rahmat Allah Kairnawi. He was born in 1817, in Kayranah. However, he had not always been an opponent of British rule. Initially he agreed that there were benefits to British rule, but opposed British rule when he saw the effects of the religious preaching that British rule had brought with it to India.⁵⁴⁴ The British attitude was no longer neutral and this caused an awakening amongst the Ulema and the elite circles of Agra. Molana Rahmat Allah Kairnawi was a scholar and was keen to counter the missionary literature which he classed as aggressive towards Muslim beliefs. In his attempt to do this, he published ‘Izalat al Awham’ or ‘Removing the doubts’ (1852),⁵⁴⁵ which also

⁵³⁹ Ibid., p. 189.

⁵⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 212.

⁵⁴¹ Nizami, *Madrasahs, Scholars and Saints: Muslim Response to the British Presence in Delhi and the Upper Doab*, p. 191.

⁵⁴² Ibid., p. 213.

⁵⁴³ Powell, *Muslim Missionaries in pre – Mutiny India*, p. 47.

⁵⁴⁴ Siddiqui, *Christian Muslim dialogue in the twentieth century*, p. 7.

⁵⁴⁵ Neil, *A History of Christianity in India: 1707-1858*, p. 343.

included in it Molvi Ali Hassan's book the 'Istifsar' which is discussed in further detail at a later stage of this chapter.⁵⁴⁶

Subsequent works included 'Asah al – ahadith fi ibtal Tathlith'.⁵⁴⁷ Could these works have been the books Pfander was referring to when he reported to the *CMS Intelligencer* that five Molvis – three of Agra and two of Lucknow came with a written controversy, several pamphlets and two large books produced against missionary activity?⁵⁴⁸

Lucknow was the centre of such disputations and efforts against missionary activity in the 1840s but, the focus soon moved to Agra.⁵⁴⁹ The position of the Ulema was that missionaries would be 'tolerated as long as they did not indulge in attacking Islam and the Prophet Muhammad (ṣall Allāhu 'alay-hi wa-sallam); the moment they did so, they were to be combated'.⁵⁵⁰ The confrontation eventually took place at Agra where a group of qualified professionals took up the challenge.⁵⁵¹ These Ulema were initially reluctant to have open disputations with the missionaries because this would have negative impacts for them, as the rulers of India were Christian.⁵⁵² In 1841, when Pfander pressed the Ulema for religious debate, the Ulema at first tried to avoid such an encounter.⁵⁵³ It was only when Pfander began arguing in 'the terrain of the Ulema' that they became concerned by his activities.⁵⁵⁴

⁵⁴⁶ Haq, *The Great Revolution of 1857*, p. 45.

⁵⁴⁷ Nizami, *Madrasahs, Scholars and Saints: Muslim Response to the British Presence in Delhi and the Upper Doab*, p. 203.

⁵⁴⁸ *CMS Intelligencer*, (London,; Seeleys, vol 3, 1852), p. 141

⁵⁴⁹ Nizami, *Madrasahs, Scholars and Saints: Muslim Response to the British Presence in Delhi and the Upper Doab*, p. 200.

⁵⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 198.

⁵⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 200.

⁵⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 199.

⁵⁵³ *Ibid.*

The Missionary College at Agra

The traditional higher schools or madrassahs of Agra taught subjects such as rhetoric, language, logic, jurisprudence, maths and theology.⁵⁵⁵ Alongside these were two other institutions in Agra, the Agra Government College and the Agra Missionary College. This chapter assesses the Missionary College in more detail. The principal of the Agra Missionary College was Reverend Thomas Valpy French, speaking of his religious character Weitbrecht remarked he is ‘a diligent preacher when opportunity permits’.⁵⁵⁶ He was assisted by a Mr. Leighton.⁵⁵⁷

The Mission College, which was constructed in 1850, was intended to provide an education infused with Christian principles.⁵⁵⁸ Amongst the subjects taught were divinity, ‘moral philosophy, history and general literature’.⁵⁵⁹ The funding for the Mission college was raised through local donations.⁵⁶⁰ However, according to the late Victorian missionary historian Eugene Stock, unlike at the Government College, the Bible was taught at the mission college.⁵⁶¹

French and Stuart also set up an upper school. This meant that once the college was completed in 1852, there were already students ready to attend the college. The college had eight classrooms and the missionaries ensured that the study of the Bible formed a major part of the curriculum, as well as English language,

⁵⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 200.

⁵⁵⁵ E. Wherry, *Islam and Christianity in India and the Far East* (Charleston: Biblio Bazaar, 2008), p. 102.

⁵⁵⁶ Weitbrecht, *Missionary sketches in north India with reference to recent events*, p. 441.

⁵⁵⁷ Barney, *A star in the east*, p. 172.

⁵⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁵⁹ Report from T. French, *CMS Archive*, CMS CII/0109/45, Cadbury Research Library, Birmingham University.

⁵⁶⁰ Barney, *A star in the east*, p. 172.

⁵⁶¹ Stock, *An Heroic Bishop, The Life – story of French of Lahore*, p. 3.

science and literature.⁵⁶² Letters reveal that French hoped to develop the college in five main areas, he hoped to set up a museum housing botanical, geological, mineralogical, zoological and chemical items.

French also hoped to set up a college library which would store theological, philosophical and historical books, as he was concerned that ‘at present the works of English infidels are greedily sought after by the Hindoo Vedants’.⁵⁶³ Thirdly he wanted the facility to offer scholarships at the college to fund young men who could be useful to the mission. Alongside this French also hoped to set up an endowment fund to ensure stability for the college.⁵⁶⁴ Ann Barney comments regarding the college, ‘it was a great work, and gave great promise for good, when the Mutiny broke out’.⁵⁶⁵ The pupils numbered 330 before the Mutiny.⁵⁶⁶

Weitbrecht records that the Agra College taught about three hundred students:

but it has not yet, like its sister institution in Benares, been long enough in operation to manifest those results which may be confidently anticipated from the piety, zeal and profound learning of the Principal and his able assistants.⁵⁶⁷

She further wrote:

⁵⁶² Barney, *A star in the east*, p. 172.

⁵⁶³ Report from T. French, *CMS Archive*, CMS CI1/0109/45, Cadbury Research Library, Birmingham University.

⁵⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶⁵ Barney, *A star in the east*, p. 172.

⁵⁶⁶ Weitbrecht, *Missionary sketches in north India with reference to recent events*, p. 453.

⁵⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 440.

three interesting youths received courage one year to take the decisive step; while four others, whose whole trust was in Christ, and whose practice was in accordance with the purity of their hope, shrunk from it, and remained undecided.⁵⁶⁸

If what Weitbrecht recorded was true, it is possible the Agra Ulema feared that missionary education would lead to conversion. The Ulema were not the only group who believed this, some Company servants also held the same view, for example Thomas Macaulay (historian and administrator in India) wrote in a letter pre-1857 'If our plans of education are followed up, there will not be a single idolator among the respectable classes in Bengal thirty years hence'.⁵⁶⁹

⁵⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁶⁹ J. Malik, 'Letters, prison sketches and autobiographical literature: The case of Fazl-E-Haqq Khairabadi in the Andaman penal colony', *Indian Economic & Social History Review*, 43:1 (2006), p. 25.

The Munazara of 1854

Muhammad Kazim Ali and Syed Rahmat Ali invited Pfander in September 1842, for a Munazara.⁵⁷⁰ Pfander had previously challenged Nurul Hassan, (the professor of Arabic at Agra College) to a debate, but he declined. Nurul Hassan was a student of Allamah Fazlul Haqq Khayrabadi – one of the revivalists who is mentioned in more detail in the next chapter regarding Delhi.⁵⁷¹

Muslim leadership was with the Ulema as Ataullah Siddiqui has argued ‘It is important to note that as far as the opposition to Christian Mission was concerned, the Indian Ulema supplied a great deal of ammunition to co – religionists in other parts of the world’.⁵⁷² There was some sort of consensus between the Muslims taught under Western education and the Ulema when it came to combating missionary activity.⁵⁷³ In fact so much so that at times it was those educated under Western principles who teamed up with the Ulema for debate with the missionaries, as for example in the Agra Munazara, Molana Rahmat Allah Kairnawi was assisted by Dr. Wazir Khan, who Siddiqui argues collected material regarding the Bible in London and sent it to the Molana.⁵⁷⁴

The first phase of communication between Wazir Khan and the missionaries had been visiting a missionary, correspondence with the missionaries and then an organised debate.⁵⁷⁵ However, it was Molvi Syed Ali Hassan, who took up the

⁵⁷⁰ Nizami, *Madrasahs, Scholars and Saints: Muslim Response to the British Presence in Delhi and the Upper Doab*, p. 200.

⁵⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 201.

⁵⁷² Siddiqui, *Christian Muslim dialogue in the twentieth century*, p. 6.

⁵⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷⁵ Powell, *Muslims and Missionaries in pre – Mutiny India*, p. 80.

challenge; he invited Pfander for a public discussion. Ali Hassan had received his education at Lucknow⁵⁷⁶ and had been an officer at the court in Agra. In 1845, he published his work *Kitab – I – Istfsar (The book of questions)* the missionaries thought this was in response to Pfander's *Mizan Al Haq*.⁵⁷⁷ He was 'a man of very superior abilities'⁵⁷⁸ and used the method of logical deduction to challenge Pfander.⁵⁷⁹

Pfander reported in 1854, that:

in January last, the Molvi came to Agra to consult with his friends here about the publication of those books. During that time he called several times on Mr. French...and expressed his regret at not having found me here.⁵⁸⁰

Soon after a proposal was sent to Pfander for a public discussion.⁵⁸¹ Eventually, the Munazara took place on the 10 – 11 April 1854.⁵⁸² Stock describes the scene of the Munazara:

The scene was a striking one. The meeting took place in the CMS School, which was crowded with Mohammedans sitting cross – legged

⁵⁷⁶ *Calcutta Review*, vol. 4, p. 449.

⁵⁷⁷ *CMS Intelligencer* (London: Seeley, Jackson and Halliday, vol. 5, 1854), p. 253.

⁵⁷⁸ *Calcutta Review*, vol. 4, p. 449.

⁵⁷⁹ Nizami, *Madrasahs, Scholars and Saints: Muslim Response to the British Presence in Delhi and the Upper Doab*, p. 204.

⁵⁸⁰ *CMS Intelligencer*, (London: Seeley, Jackson and Halliday, vol. 5, 1854), p. 254.

⁵⁸¹ *Ibid*,

⁵⁸² Weitbrecht, *Missionary sketches in north India with reference to recent events*, p. 450.

on the floor. On one side sat the Muslim champions, and behind them a band of assistant students; opposite were Pfander and French and their brethren.⁵⁸³

Government officials also formed part of the audience.⁵⁸⁴ The agenda topics for the Munazara were: the ‘abrogation’ of the scriptures, ‘corruption’ of the Bible, the idea of the ‘trinity’ and Muhammad’s (ṣall Allāhu ‘alay-hi wa-sallam) prophethood and the Qur’an.⁵⁸⁵

According to Pfander, the debate lasted for two hours each day, for a period of two days. Reverend Thomas Valpy French of the Church Mission College was also present.⁵⁸⁶ Molana Rahmat Allah Kairnawi was assisted by Wazir Khan, a Sunni Muslim of Afghan lineage and surgeon at the Agra Medical College.⁵⁸⁷ Khan had travelled to England for his studies in 1832,⁵⁸⁸ during this time he equipped himself with knowledge of Christianity and Greek.⁵⁸⁹ On his return to Agra, he found a job at the medical college. Nizami argued that Wazir Khan took some books concerning Christianity back with him to India.⁵⁹⁰ Powell however has maintained that Wazir

⁵⁸³ Stock, *An Heroic Bishop, The Life – story of French of Lahore*, p. 3.

⁵⁸⁴ Nizami, *Madrasahs, Scholars and Saints: Muslim Response to the British Presence in Delhi and the Upper Doab*, p. 205.

⁵⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁸⁶ *CMS Intelligencer* (London: Seeley, Jackson and Halliday, vol. 5, 1854), p. 254.

⁵⁸⁷ A. Powell, ‘Muslim-Christian confrontation: Dr. Wazir Khan in nineteenth-century Agra’, *Religious Controversy in British India*, ed. K. Jones (New York: Suny Press, 1992), p. 77.

⁵⁸⁸ Nizami, *Madrasahs, Scholars and Saints: Muslim Response to the British Presence in Delhi and the Upper Doab*, p. 203.

⁵⁸⁹ Haq, *The Great Revolution of 1857*, p. 45.

⁵⁹⁰ Nizami, *Madrasahs, Scholars and Saints: Muslim Response to the British Presence in Delhi and the Upper Doab*, p. 203.

Khan carried out most of his readings after arriving in Agra, as she argues that nearly all of the works he quoted at the Munazara were available in the Anglo – Oriental colleges of Agra and Delhi.⁵⁹¹

During the debate, the missionaries were unaware that Wazir Khan could understand English and therefore could understand the missionaries' private conversations during the Munazara.⁵⁹² Yet it was Molana Rahmat Allah Kairnawi who took the lead in the Munazara, as Powell comments 'Wazir Khan always remembered his place as the assistant, or 'second' to his alim (Islamic scholar) friend, it was his timely interventions at certain key stages that resulted in the advantage passing to the Muslims'.⁵⁹³

One of Wazir Khan's criticisms of the missionaries was the idea that they were motivated by economic benefits.⁵⁹⁴ Also Pfander was accused by some Indians of having material motives for leaving Lutheranism for Anglicanism, such as marrying a second wife.⁵⁹⁵ During the course of the debate, both sides criticised the linguistic errors of the other. Wazir Khan and Pfander criticised one another's fluency in Arabic in the case of the former and English in the case of the latter.⁵⁹⁶ Powell argues that 'accusations of this kind were designed to raise the accuser and, correspondingly, lower the accused in the eyes of the target audience'.⁵⁹⁷

⁵⁹¹ Powell, 'Muslim-Christian confrontation: Dr. Wazir Khan in nineteenth-century Agra', p. 82.

⁵⁹² Ibid., p. 78.

⁵⁹³ Ibid., p. 79.

⁵⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 80.

⁵⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 88.

⁵⁹⁶ See C. Schirrmacher, *Mit den Waffen des Gegners*, (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz Publishers, 1992).

⁵⁹⁷ Powell, 'Muslim-Christian confrontation: Dr. Wazir Khan in nineteenth-century Agra', p. 81.

Weitbrecht believed a Catholic bishop had supplied the Muslims with their arguments⁵⁹⁸ and Pfander shared the same view as he commented:

It is the active assistance which the late Romish bishop, or his party under his direction have been leading our opponents here... for the Mohammedans generally show a much greater regard for Protestants than for the image-worshipping Romanists.⁵⁹⁹

It is true that the Ulema knew of the differences between Protestants and Catholics but they were rather unclear about the reverence shown for pictures by Catholics.⁶⁰⁰

Raj Sharma offers a more compelling perspective on the Munazara, as he states:

The Muslim scholars forcefully challenged the Christian catechists by holding disputations. Through their profound reasoning they inflicted such crushing defeats on the missionaries that the latter could never succeed in their plans.⁶⁰¹

Sharma points to the nature of arguments put forward by the Ulema as the reason for their success. The main scholars he refers to are Molana Rahmat Allah Kairnawi,

⁵⁹⁸ Weitbrecht, *Missionary sketches in north India with reference to recent events*, p. 451.

⁵⁹⁹ *The Colonial Church Chronicle and Missionary Journal* (London: Rivingtons, July 1855 – June 1856, vol. 9), p. 38.

⁶⁰⁰ Nizami, *Madrasahs, Scholars and Saints: Muslim Response to the British Presence in Delhi and the Upper Doab*, p. 197.

⁶⁰¹ Sharma, *Christian Missions in north India*, p. 224.

Molana Mansoor Delhvi and Dr. Wazir Khan, Sharma quite confidently remarks that the three put such cogent arguments forward that ‘Pfander was so much awed that he had to leave India altogether’.⁶⁰²

The Muslims had argued regarding the textual nature of the Bible, arguing that it had been corrupted over centuries.⁶⁰³ There were two main weapons that the Muslims had in the debate, they were: David Strauss’ (author of *The Life of Jesus*) works⁶⁰⁴ and Church critic Thomas Paine’s works.⁶⁰⁵ Stephen Neill has argued ‘he (the Molvi) brought forward arguments which Pfander was not well qualified to meet’.⁶⁰⁶ Reverend Thomas Grieve Clark a missionary of the Free Church of Scotland at Agra, commented regarding the Munazara:

But these Mahomedan doctors, having got a hint of some awfully damaging matter... This was the heel of the Achilles, that had failed to get dipped in the Styx, and these archers longed to draw their bow upon it.⁶⁰⁷

By the second day of the Munazara, Pfander refused to continue the debate and thus this was seen as a ‘great victory for Islam’.⁶⁰⁸ Yet on the Christian side,

⁶⁰² Ibid.

⁶⁰³ Cox, *Imperial Fault Lines: Christianity and Colonial power, 1818 – 1940*, p. 59.

⁶⁰⁴ S. Neil, *A History of Christianity in India: 1707-1858*, p. 343. For a detailed study see: D. Strauss, *The life of Jesus or, a critical examination of his history* (London: Hetherington fleet, 1844).

⁶⁰⁵ T. Paine, *The Age of Reason: being an investigation of true and fabulous theology* (Boston: J.P Mendum, 1852), p.62.

⁶⁰⁶ Neil, *A History of Christianity in India: 1707-1858*, p. 344.

⁶⁰⁷ *CMS Intelligencer* (London: Seeley, Jackson and Halliday, vol. 5, 1854), p. 254.

⁶⁰⁸ Nizami, *Madrasahs, Scholars and Saints: Muslim Response to the British Presence in Delhi and the Upper Doab*, p. 205.

Pfander was seen to have been victorious, as the *English Review* commented he was a ‘champion of Christianity’ in the debate, although it did admit Pfander’s methods hindered his success:

the visible result of his argument has been angry retort on the part of the Mohammedan Mauluees: and perhaps Mr. Pfander would have succeeded better if he had made a less direct attack on Mohammedanism.⁶⁰⁹

It is relevant to note that even the *English Review* made mention of Pfander’s aggressive tactics, in the form of direct attacks. The longstanding effects of the Munazara were that Pfander’s writings would be seen as ‘good specimens’ for future missionary work.⁶¹⁰ The missionaries did not report intensively on the Munazara in their literature,⁶¹¹ though occasional references can be found in the *CMS Intelligencer* but on the whole the controversy received limited coverage in the missionary press.⁶¹²

The Muslim scholars used European sources to prove their argument concerning textual corruption, by arguing that many scholars had admitted the charge.⁶¹³ Pfander agreed that clerical errors had occurred but argued that that textual

⁶⁰⁹ *The English Review* (London: Francis and John Rivington, vol. 7, 1847), p.250

⁶¹⁰ *Report of the Punjab Missionary Conference held at Lahore* (Lodiana: American Presbyterian Mission, 1863), p. 1.

⁶¹¹ Nizami, *Madrasahs, Scholars and Saints: Muslim Response to the British Presence in Delhi and the Upper Doab*, p. 206.

⁶¹² Powell, ‘Muslim-Christian confrontation: Dr. Wazir Khan in nineteenth-century Agra’, p. 91.

⁶¹³ Neil, *A History of Christianity in India: 1707-1858*, p. 344.

corruption had not occurred. Wazir Khan challenged this. Another area for debate was the subject of ‘inspiration’ regarding the Bible. Wazir Khan argued that whole books of the Bible were not divine in revelation as he believed the ‘Bible’ which Jesus had received was the *Injil* (Bible), but what had not been recorded had been lost.⁶¹⁴

The Ulema however seized the opportunity and published the debate intensively, as Nizami comments:

Religious debates were greatly publicised, people were invited to witness the event, and the ‘defeat’ of the missionaries became the talk of the town, and spread to other parts both by word of mouth and by printed pamphlets.⁶¹⁵

A commentary of the Munazara was printed in book titled ‘*Al Bahath Al Sharif fi Ithbat Al Naskh Wa al Tahrif*’.⁶¹⁶

More is mentioned about the Prince of Delhi’s involvement in the publication of this book in subsequent chapters relating to missionary activity in Delhi. The Munazara of 1854 would have far reaching consequences for future polemics to come, as after the Munazara, Muslim scholars agreed with Wazir Khan, in asserting that the rules set for the debate should ban the use of any references from the Bible, because it was a ‘corrupt text’.⁶¹⁷

⁶¹⁴ Powell, ‘Muslim-Christian confrontation: Dr. Wazir Khan in nineteenth-century Agra’, p. 85.

⁶¹⁵ Nizami, *Madrasahs, Scholars and Saints: Muslim Response to the British Presence in Delhi and the Upper Doab*, p. 202.

⁶¹⁶ Haq, *The Great Revolution of 1857*, p. 45.

⁶¹⁷ A. Powell, ‘Muslim-Christian confrontation: Dr. Wazir Khan in nineteenth-century Agra’, p. 84.

After the Munazara, Wazir Khan was invited by Reverend Pfander to translate some books in Urdu, amongst which was Aloys Sprenger's '*Life of Muhammad*' (1851).⁶¹⁸ However, correspondence between Pfander and Ali Hassan did continue after the Munazara. There were some guidelines that Ali Hassan tried to set regarding disputations after the Munazara, such as for example, having a time limit and the way in which participants were to refer to the Prophet Muhammad (ṣall Allāhu 'alay-hi wa-sallam).⁶¹⁹ But Pfander called off the debate⁶²⁰ and would not agree to these conditions and others set by Ali Hassan thus further debates on the scale of 1854 did not take place.⁶²¹

Ali Hassan had been appointed as Munsif (judge) at Fatehpur and continued to write his works, Nizami identifies that this came at the expense of a promotion, as he was never promoted.⁶²² Letters between Ali Hassan and Pfander were printed in the 'khair kha hind' or *News of India* newspaper.⁶²³ Ali Hassan had written a book of 806 pages, and 'he was highly respected for his ability and piety; even his opponents had a great regard for him'.⁶²⁴

⁶¹⁸ Ibid., p. 86.

⁶¹⁹ Nizami, *Madrasahs, Scholars and Saints: Muslim Response to the British Presence in Delhi and the Upper Doab*, p. 202.

⁶²⁰ Neil, *A History of Christianity in India: 1707-1858*, p. 344.

⁶²¹ Nizami, *Madrasahs, Scholars and Saints: Muslim Response to the British Presence in Delhi and the Upper Doab*, p. 202.

⁶²² Ibid.

⁶²³ *Calcutta Review* (Calcutta: Sanders and Cones, 1845, vol. 4), p. 449.

⁶²⁴ Haq, *The Great Revolution of 1857*, p. 44.

Chapter 5. Delhi: The seat of an empire

Delhi society

The city of Delhi had been an appealing field for missionaries not least because of its architectural beauty. After 1857, a missionary who had lived there reminisced:

Our quiet walks home, late on Sunday night, from Daryaganj to our own house...along a road often bathed in the glorious Indian moonlight, and running between the Old Mogul fort of Delhi on our right hand and the solemn and beautiful Musjid on the left.⁶²⁵

Prior to missionary involvement in Delhi, there were some important changes in Delhi's religious life; even before Pfander set foot in Delhi, Delhi was unique in that it was ruled according to Islamic law, the city was ruled in the king's name, but actual control lay with the British administrators.⁶²⁶

Essentially, the Ulema had been very active in society before the coming of Pfander who was described as 'a loose cannon',⁶²⁷ Syed Haq argues that Shah Wali Allah had seen that there were many threats to Mughal rule in India, and so he urged all the Muslim chiefs to unite, and that the victory in the third battle of Pannipat (1761), was the fruit of his efforts.⁶²⁸ He had delegated his work to a number of pupils as he passed away in 1762. The next current of reform would be carried out

⁶²⁵ Cox, *Imperial Fault Lines: Christianity and Colonial power, 1818 – 1940*, p. 34.

⁶²⁶ Fufeld, *The shaping of Sufi leadership in Delhi: The Naqshbandiyya Mujaddidiyya 1750 to 1920*, p. 21.

⁶²⁷ Cox, *Imperial Fault Lines: Christianity and Colonial power, 1818 – 1940*, p. 59.

⁶²⁸ Haq, *The Great revolution of 1857*, p. 38.

by his eldest son, Shah Abdul Aziz..

The first undercurrents of discontent had been stirred prior to Pfander's setting foot on Delhi soil, as Ashraf points out that the Delhi Ulema were already considering their position, with the entry of Lake into Delhi in 1803 as part of the war against the Mahrattas. With this development, the Delhi Ulema had to define the position of Muslims in terms of relations with the Company including issues affecting daily life such as Company employment.⁶²⁹ Pfander was not the single decisive factor at Delhi, and his role appears to be less evident than at Agra anyway, as the Ulema had begun to define their positions prior to his zealous activities. Shah Abdul Aziz had already declared the land from Delhi to Calcutta as 'Dar ul Harb' (abode of war)⁶³⁰ as it had fallen into the hands of the 'Nasranis' (Christians).⁶³¹

According to Ashraf, this gave Muslim Delhiwallahs two options; one being to migrate or the other being to take part in a Jihad against the British, if they chose to remain under British rule, they could not be in friendship with the British.⁶³² However, Mushirul Haq has argued the term 'jihad' was not used in the physical sense, rather Shah Abdul Aziz expressed a preference for a verbal jihad against the British in India.⁶³³

It appears initially there was an atmosphere of religious enquiry as Shah Muhammad Ishaq (grandson of Shah Wali Allah) allowed Joseph Wolff (missionary)

⁶²⁹ Ashraf, 'Muslim revivalists and the revolt of 1857' *Rebellion 1857: A Symposium*, p. 76.

⁶³⁰ Jalal, *Partisans of Allah, Jihad in South Asia*, p. 15.

⁶³¹ Ashraf, 'Muslim revivalists and the revolt of 1857' *Rebellion 1857: A Symposium*, p. 76.

⁶³² Ibid.

⁶³³ Haq, *Indian Muslims attitude to the British in the early nineteenth century: a case study of Shah Abdul Aziz*, p.106.

to address a gathering of Ulema at Delhi and other meetings in 1833.⁶³⁴ But eventually Shah Muhammad Ishaq migrated to Makkah in 1841 with his brother, could this have been related to the intensity of missionary activity associated with British rule in India?⁶³⁵ M. A Bari argues members of Shah Muhammad Ishaq's movement who remained in India were persecuted and some even faced state trials.⁶³⁶

⁶³⁴ Nizami, *Madrasahs, Scholars and Saints: Muslim Response to the British Presence in Delhi and the Upper Doab*, p. 197.

⁶³⁵ Robinson, *The Ulama of Farangi Mahall and Islamic culture in South Asia*, p. 189.

⁶³⁶ M. Bari, "A nineteenth century Muslim reform movement", Ed. H. Gibb, *Arabic and Islamic studies in Honour of Hamilton A.R. Gibb* (Boston: Brill Archive, 1965), p. 101.

Missions in Delhi

Before Pfander's visit to Delhi, a BMS mission had already been stationed there. A Baptist missionary, by the name of Mr Thompson or Padre Thompson, arrived in 1818. He spent years at Delhi but managed to win no converts.⁶³⁷ Thompson worked in Delhi for thirty years, with great efforts, and like the Baptist missionaries he was well versed in native languages as well as Arabic, and distributed pamphlets in these languages.⁶³⁸ Thompson had been preaching by the roads, distributing various pamphlets and spoke in Urdu and Arabic to natives.⁶³⁹

According to the *CMS Register* Thompson did visit Muslim religious gatherings as well as Hindu melas.⁶⁴⁰ He did not cause a great stir in Delhi,⁶⁴¹ Could this have been because he concentrated mainly on Hindu population preaching at Hindu fairs and places of pilgrimage. Mushirul Haq points out that up until 1830, there was no clash between Muslims and Christians in Delhi based on religious grounds.⁶⁴² However Thompson's focus could not have been exclusively Hindus, as he preached in Arabic and therefore he must have been targeting Muslims as well.

Powell argues this was 'partly a case of familiarity breeding quiet contempt in some quarters, and even, some reports would suggest, a degree of amicable

⁶³⁷ C. Crawfoot, 'A Sketch of the S.P.G Mission at Delhi', *Mission Life*, vol. 3, 1872, pp. 206-11.

⁶³⁸ Nizami, *Madrasahs, Scholars and Saints: Muslim Response to the British Presence in Delhi and the Upper Doab*, p. 193.

⁶³⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁴⁰ *CMS Missionary register* (London: Seeley, Burnside and Seeley, 1845, vol. 33), p. 102.

⁶⁴¹ Powell, *Muslim Missionaries in pre – Mutiny India*, p. 204.

⁶⁴² Haq, *Indian Muslims attitude to the British in the early nineteenth century: a case study of Shah Abdul Aziz*, p.14.

acceptance in others'.⁶⁴³ Thompson was not a European, he was a Eurasian born in Calcutta.⁶⁴⁴ He continued his missionary work up until 1850, he had assembled a small Church, which had eleven followers in 1826, and interestingly two of these were Indian.⁶⁴⁵ But after his death in 1850, the Delhi mission field was left clear as no Evangelical missionary had arrived to continue with zeal the mission in Delhi.⁶⁴⁶

Thompson's low profile activity has been identified by some scholars as the factor explaining the lack of missionary institutions in Delhi compared to other large cities in northern India, which had missionary colleges, hospitals, presses or orphanages.⁶⁴⁷ There is some debate regarding the success of the BMS mission at Delhi, however the *CMS Missionary Register* reported 'two heathens have been baptized'.⁶⁴⁸

The first face of the CMS in Delhi was that of Anund Masih, who was converted by a Baptist missionary in the North Western Provinces. In 1816, he visited Delhi and his work was overseen by Mrs. Sherwood (a well-known children's writer and wife of Captain Henry Sherwood).⁶⁴⁹ Extracts from a letter addressed to Thomason reveal that Anund Masih had taken leave of his work at the Meerut school, to pay a visit to Delhi, during his visit he stated that a report was in circulation, that a number of villagers had assembled nearby the city and were

⁶⁴³ Powell, *Muslim Missionaries in pre – Mutiny India*, p. 204.

⁶⁴⁴ Cox, *Imperial Fault Lines: Christianity and Colonial power, 1818 – 1940*, p. 28.

⁶⁴⁵ Cox, *Imperial Fault Lines: Christianity and Colonial power, 1818 – 1940*, p. 28.

⁶⁴⁶ Pascoe, *Two Hundred Years of the S. P. G., 1701–1900: An Historical Account of the Society for the Propagation of Bible in Foreign Parts*, p. 612.

⁶⁴⁷ Powell, *Muslim Missionaries in pre – Mutiny India*, p. 205.

⁶⁴⁸ *CMS Missionary register* (London: Seeley, Burnside and Seeley, 1845, vol. 33), p. 102.

⁶⁴⁹ Cox, *Imperial Fault Lines: Christianity and Colonial power, 1818 – 1940*, p. 29.

discussing some books which had caused them to leave their castes.⁶⁵⁰

Anund visited these villagers, of which he put the number at 500 men, women and children. He discovered they were Brahmin yet they referred to themselves as ‘poor and lowly, and we read and love this book’.⁶⁵¹ This could be interpreted in two ways, firstly it maybe that they were poor Brahmins or secondly despite their high social status in Hindu society, they still felt they were poor, in that the true wealth was Christian knowledge.

Anund added that the numbers were increasing on a daily basis, however this is in conflict with the view of many modern day historians who maintain that the missionaries did not make their mark in terms of converts, therefore these numbers must be treated with caution, as sources may be biased, or written for a Western readership to attract more support for missionary ventures abroad.⁶⁵²

When asked about how they had come to obtain a copy of the Bible, they responded ‘An angel from heaven gave it us at Hurdwar fair – yes, to us he was God’s Angel: but he was a man, a learned pundit’. The Reverend Henry Fisher believed this ‘angel’ was a missionary named Mr. John Chamberlain,⁶⁵³ who had circulated these books four or five years ago.⁶⁵⁴ It is interesting that Fisher touches

⁶⁵⁰ Letter from H. Fisher to Thomason, 6 May 1817, *CMS Archive*, CMS/B/OMS/CI1E1/106A, Cadbury Research Library.

⁶⁵¹ Letter from A. Masih to H. Fisher, 12 May 1817, *CMS Archive*, CMS/B/OMS/CI1E1/106B, Cadbury Research Library.

⁶⁵² Letter from A. Masih to H. Fisher, 12 May 1817, *CMS Archive*, CMS/B/OMS/CI1E1/106B, Cadbury Research Library.

⁶⁵³ See J. Chamberlain, W. Yates, *Memoirs of Mr John Chamberlain, late missionary in India* (Calcutta: Baptist Mission Press, 1826).

⁶⁵⁴ Letter from A. Masih to H. Fisher, 12 May 1817, *CMS Archive*, CMS/B/OMS/CI1E1/106B, Cadbury Research Library.

on the native perception of the missionary as an ‘angel’. This shows the missionaries were almost unaware or completely ignoring the discontent their activity was causing in India.

The missionaries believed technology impressed the Indians: ‘the ignorance and simplicity of many are very striking, never having heard of a printed book before; and its very appearance was to them miraculous’. The natives were surprised by the technology the sahibs had brought with them, perhaps the nature of a printed book in itself made some Indians believe that the missionaries really were delivering a book from heaven, because they had never seen a printed book before.⁶⁵⁵ Anund Masih did not hesitate to invite these villagers to be baptised, it is interesting that he invited them to Meerut instead of Delhi.⁶⁵⁶ The more logical location for baptism would have been Delhi as it was in closer vicinity. Perhaps this was because Anund feared potential backlash in Delhi. The converts agreed to visit Meerut the next year.⁶⁵⁷

In light of a complete account of Anund’s visit to Delhi it becomes questionable as to what his intention of visiting Delhi was, did he sow some of the seeds for later activity? Was he forging links between Christianity in Delhi and Christianity at Meerut? The letter itself makes no mention of Anund being sent on such an assignment rather he was on a visit to his wife,⁶⁵⁸ however a large portion of it deals with Anund’s conversation with the converts, and this begs the question as to

⁶⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁵⁷ Letter from A. Masih to H. Fisher, 12 May 1817, *CMS Archive*, CMS/B/OMS/CI1E1/106B, Cadbury Research Library.

⁶⁵⁸ Ibid.

his real purpose in Delhi.

Furthermore, upon examining Anund's original letter to Henry Fisher which is an account of the visit, the evidence indicates he was on an assignment of some sort to Delhi, as he states 'I arrived among those people to whom your commands sent me ... I preached to them the word of the blessed Christ'.⁶⁵⁹ There is further evidence in the letter to suggest Anund had been accelerating the influence of Christianity in Delhi as he states 'and they told me, that after the rains, in the cold weather, they intended again to assemble at Delhi'.⁶⁶⁰

As elsewhere, the potential converts at Delhi were reluctant to take on all the principles of Christianity, as they rejected the belief that they could eat cow meat⁶⁶¹; 'To all the other customs of Christians we are willing to conform, but not to the Sacrament, because the Europeans eat cow's flesh and this will never do for us'.⁶⁶² This begs the question whether this meeting of Christianity and Hinduism was creating a 'new' religion in itself, one which combined the elements of Christianity and Hinduism, as they still maintained principles of their former religion.

What is of interest is that primary material reveals that some Indians supported the missionaries because they simply did not like the old regime, the king and his system. This encouraged them to join forces with the missionaries, as a letter from Anund Masih in Delhi reveals:

The surdar said: 'so it appears that you are our brother; take us out of the

⁶⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶⁶² Ibid.

hands of this mussulman king, and let the company have our village. This will be a good thing, for then we shall be at ease’.

To this Captain MacDonald responded that he ‘was sure to have justice done to him’.⁶⁶³

Pfander hoped to be the next CMS representative at Delhi, because of its significance as a Muslim city, and was surprised when he was posted to Agra instead.⁶⁶⁴ Pfander visited Delhi in 1844 and reported:

The people behaved with much more propriety than I expected. The Musalmans sometimes showed their surprise or expressed their displeasure at what we said against the Koran and Muhammad, but they never showed such anger as they often have done at Agra, neither did ever a Mussalman or Hindu hoot or hiss when we left, as is often the case there.⁶⁶⁵

Pfander’s visit of 1844 included a visit to the Jami Masjid (the central masjid in Delhi) in which he engaged in conversation with a group of Ulema in front of a crowd of about two hundred Muslims and he visited the Madrassa Rahimiyya (a key location in Delhi, as this was where Shah Wali Allah had taught). Whilst there, he also distributed his books. The significance of this visit cannot be over emphasised,

⁶⁶³ Letter from A. Masih to H. Fisher, 12 May 1817, *CMS Archive*, CMS/B/OMS/CI1E1/106B, Cadbury Research Library.

⁶⁶⁴ Powell, *Muslim Missionaries in pre – Mutiny India*, p. 204.

⁶⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 205.

as Powell argues. Although there was no impact at the time, Pfander had visited the institutions where tension would rise in the coming years, preparing the basis for what was to come.⁶⁶⁶ Was this visit then of significance in terms of the 1857 Mutiny?

The question stands, why had Delhi up until 1854 remained unmoved by Pfander's presence? The Munazara of 1854 had drawn Ulema from Delhi, but the centre of such debates had remained Lucknow and Agra.⁶⁶⁷ Powell argues this was because of the style of government in Delhi, as the British residents had sought the superficial collaboration of the Ashraf in Delhi. In Delhi the Company rejected missionary activity in the first thirty years of rule, Delhi remained:

a favoured enclave, sheltered from the new 'regulations' imposed in the Bengal Presidency, where its poets, artists and men of religious learning, were able to continue their traditional pursuits, aided in some cases, by the interest or financial patronage of particular British officers.⁶⁶⁸

Yet, by 1853, the tide had turned and Pfander's record on his visit that year was markedly different:

The Muhammedans are in a considerable agitation and that especially so at Delhi. I intend to go there, as soon as I can, to make myself personally acquainted with the movement there. One in the south of India has

⁶⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁶⁷ See C. Schirmacher, *Mit den Waffen des Gegners* (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz Publishers, 1992).

⁶⁶⁸ Powell, *Muslim Missionaries in pre – Mutiny India*, p. 192.

written against my books, and others, I am told, are doing so in these parts, so I shall probably be obliged to take up again the controversy.⁶⁶⁹

By this point, some of the Sunni Ulema had begun to talk of ‘Jihad-I-Lafzi’, meaning ‘verbal warfare’, to counter the activity of Christian missionaries in India.⁶⁷⁰ Much of this activity, which led to a reinforcement of Muslim identity in Delhi, has been attributed to the family of Shah Wali Allah.⁶⁷¹ It is important also to note that Molana Khairabadi resigned from his Company post and did not recommend fellow Muslims to take up Company service.⁶⁷²

The son of Molana Fazl-I-Imam, Allamah Fazlul Haqq Khayrabadi, was to play a key role in the events of 1857, as is discussed later in the chapter. What is of

interest is that Allamah Fazlul Haqq Khayrabadi kept in close contact with Shah Abdul Aziz.⁶⁷³ At the same time, in Northern India, there was a revival of the Sunni Sufi movement.

The Sufi shrines in Delhi maintained their importance despite all the political upheaval in India before the Mutiny.⁶⁷⁴

Nizami has argued that the Indian Muslim community had developed a

⁶⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 219.

⁶⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 68.

⁶⁷¹ Nizami, *Madrasahs, Scholars and Saints: Muslim Response to the British Presence in Delhi and the Upper Doab*, p. 167.

⁶⁷² Ibid., p. 198.

⁶⁷³ Ibid., p. 67.

⁶⁷⁴ Ibid.

phobia of missionary activity which therefore did not result in a sympathetic attitude to British policies.⁶⁷⁵ They had tried to consolidate their identity, in 1853, the *Matba-I Mustafai*, a printing press had been established in Delhi, and it published various books relating to religious matters for Muslims.⁶⁷⁶

Newspapers owned by Muslims also sought to publish religious material.⁶⁷⁷ The impact of the press was not limited as Aloys Sprenger (Principal of the Delhi College) later commented that the press was ‘enlarging the narrow circle of learning, and, what is more important, that it extends the education to all classes and even to ladies’.⁶⁷⁸ Other than highlighting Sprenger’s view of Indian learning, this shows the missionaries found it difficult to overcome the barrier of purdha, but the press was reaching out to Indian women.

Newspapers of the time were also pointing out the threats from British rule to Islamic beliefs and also the general effects of British rule to daily life. A good example was in the *Dihli Akbar*, 9 June, 1837: ‘(They) want to take two percent on the agricultural produce of the land on the excuse that they want to repair bad roads. How strange it is that they do not heal broken hearts, but they think of repairing roads’.⁶⁷⁹

The evidence suggests that encounter between the Ulema and the missionaries has a significant history in Delhi predating that of the USPG mission in 1854. Up until 1850, many of the Muslim scholars in Delhi, including Shah Abdul

⁶⁷⁵ Nizami, *Madrasahs, Scholars and Saints: Muslim Response to the British Presence in Delhi and the Upper Doab*, p. 207.

⁶⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 188.

⁶⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 189.

Aziz, believed that it was possible for Muslims to co-operate with the British, as long as Islamic values were not attacked.⁶⁸⁰ And Western education was permitted on the same condition.⁶⁸¹ Yet at the same time, Evangelicals were not the only factor in the increased activity of the Molvis, as there was also a realisation that the old Mughal Empire was disintegrating, and thus the ‘revivalism’ was a response to this; as Kenneth Jones suggests, ‘The Muslim reaction was markedly more intense and bitter than that of the Hindus for a variety of reasons, and it manifested itself principally through a number of purificatory reform movements’.⁶⁸²

These reform movements would later have a tough encounter with the Evangelical missionaries; as Shanti Tangri states, ‘Evangelistic Christianity had a longer and bloodier history of conflict with evangelistic Islam than with passive Hinduism. This perhaps created some mutual antagonisms’.⁶⁸³ The effect of increased Ulema activity led to more conversions to Islam and Bishop Heber even commented ‘Mohammedan prayers and formula of devotion are ... growing into frequent use’.⁶⁸⁴

One of the major confrontations would occur in the educational field; ‘Muslim concern in the city about evangelical activity was ultimately to have its starting point in its classrooms’ (The Anglo-Oriental College in Delhi).⁶⁸⁵

⁶⁸⁰ Powell, *Muslim Missionaries in pre – Mutiny India*, p. 75.

⁶⁸¹ Nizami, *Madrasahs, Scholars and Saints: Muslim Response to the British Presence in Delhi and the Upper Doab*, p. 197.

⁶⁸² K. Jones, *Religious controversy in British India* (New York: New York Press, 1992), p. 54.

⁶⁸³ Tangri, ‘Intellectuals and Society in Nineteenth-Century India’, p. 383.

⁶⁸⁴ Nizami, *Madrasahs, Scholars and Saints: Muslim Response to the British Presence in Delhi and the Upper Doab*, p. 191.

⁶⁸⁵ Powell, *Muslim Missionaries in pre – Mutiny India*, p. 195.

According to William Sleeman (British soldier and administrator in India) the education of Muslims in Delhi was advanced as he wrote:

He (Muslim officer) holds an office worth twenty rupees a month commonly gives his sons an education equal to that of a prime minister. They learn through the medium of Arabic and Persian languages, what young men in our colleges learn through those of Greek and Latin – that is grammar, rhetoric and logic.⁶⁸⁶

The English Review was in agreement, when it reported, ‘The knowledge of the English language, literature, and science acquired by the senior pupils being highly credible, many of them being able to speak English with fluency and correctness’.⁶⁸⁷

Others held a different view, as Miss A.M Barney commented in 1860, after the Mutiny:

The few Sanskrit schools are confined almost entirely to the Brahmins, the Arabic to Mussulmans. There are also some Persian and Hindi schools, but the vast bulk even of the Rajputs, the most extensive landholders in Delhi and Mirut districts at least, are destitute of any education whatever.⁶⁸⁸

⁶⁸⁶ Nizami, *Madrasahs, Scholars and Saints: Muslim Response to the British Presence in Delhi and the Upper Doab*, p. 34.

⁶⁸⁷ *The English Review* (London: Francis and John Rivington, vol. 7, 1847), p. 241.

⁶⁸⁸ Barney, *A star in the east*, pp. 172-3.

As for the foundations of Delhi College set up in 1825, it was based on a government grant of 600 rupees a month for the education of Delhi's Muslim population, two years after this Delhi College had moved into the building of the Madrassah Ghaziu'Din. To counter such a move, the Nawab of Awadh – Nawab Fazl' Ali Khan E'timadu'd Daula proposed an Oriental College at Delhi, which he would fund via a grant of 170,000 rupees invested in the funds of the East India Company.⁶⁸⁹

When arrangements were decided upon, the nawab agreed and paid the agreed amount of money. The government decided to deduct money from the funding allocated to the Oriental College, to invest it for 'the formation of a separate institution on a large scale, devoted to affording tuition in the English language, sciences and literature'. Therefore the funding for Oriental subjects such as Arabic and Persian was cut even more than they had been initially.⁶⁹⁰ The Delhi College was at first more of a madrassah than a Western University.⁶⁹¹

By the 1830s, the Delhi College offered two separate curricula, 'Oriental' and 'English'.⁶⁹² By the 1840s the emphasis shifted to teaching Western science and the number of pupils studying Arabic declined.⁶⁹³ Muslims were alarmed when reforms such as the Education Resolution of 1835 took place, and the demand for tuition fees affected the departments of Oriental learning more than those of English learning.⁶⁹⁴

⁶⁸⁹ Pernau, *The Delhi College, Traditional Elites, the Colonial State and Education before 1857*, p. 12.

⁶⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

⁶⁹¹ Dalrymple, 'Believers and Infidels', p. 1.

⁶⁹² Powell, *Muslim Missionaries in pre – Mutiny India*, p. 195.

⁶⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 196.

Later ideas for reform were put forward which encompassed the reform of the Oriental syllabus to remove the religious content and create an increased emphasis on what the Company founders saw as the ‘useful sciences’.⁶⁹⁵

By 1852 tension was growing as the Company withdrew from its previous responsibilities, ‘In the city at large the Company appeared to be abandoning its earlier role, ‘primarily of protectors of Muslim rights’ as evidenced, for example, by rulings in the 1850s against the slaughter of animals at the Eid festival’.⁶⁹⁶

Nevertheless, Delhi College continued to be, up until 1857 a flourishing Anglo-Oriental college, whereas in Agra by now the English Department flourished at the expense of the Oriental Department.⁶⁹⁷ The reason for its survival as such was partly because of the teaching of science from the 1840s onwards – this was made available to the Oriental department as well as the English department, as it was presented to students via translation in vernacular languages.⁶⁹⁸

Muslim students made up 44% of the enrolments between 1833-36, by 1855-6, this had declined to 34%.⁶⁹⁹ Few of them were drawn from the Ashraf class, as Muslim aristocracy tended to opt for private tuition for their sons and the sons of Ulema were given private tuition.⁷⁰⁰ Only two years prior to Jennings’ arrival in Delhi, controversy had occurred surrounding the Delhi College, which made the Ulema take serious notice of missionary activity nearby.⁷⁰¹

⁶⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 197.

⁶⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹⁹ Powell, *Muslim Missionaries in pre – Mutiny India*, p. 200.

⁷⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 201.

⁷⁰¹ Ibid., p. 206.

The ‘natural philosophy’ proposed by Ram Chandra (science lecturer at Delhi College) was causing a stir in the circles of Delhi. The Copernican system of astronomy was not accepted in India, but by early nineteenth century some works on the Copernican system had been translated into Persian.⁷⁰² Ram Chandra had come to translate some works and this was taught in Delhi College science classes – this drew the attention of the Ulema as to what was being taught at the college.⁷⁰³ The first challenge to this rose in 1848, Sayed Ahmad Khan who wrote a work to refute the Copernicus system.⁷⁰⁴ He would change his stance on this in later years but at the time he stood firm by his work.

Furthermore Chandra had written a letter to a Molvi in Delhi – Molana Ulfat Hussain – in which Chandra had rejected the evidence for the Prophet Muhammad’s (ṣall Allāhu ‘alay-hi wa-sallam) splitting of the moon.⁷⁰⁵ When Ram Chandra’s conversion followed the Ulema were further convinced that there was a conspiracy to convert.⁷⁰⁶ The debate was published in a paper and circulated. This was not the first time that missionaries disrespected the Prophet Muhammad (ṣall Allāhu ‘alay-hi wa-sallam), and the Ulema had made it clear that they were willing to tolerate the missionaries only as long as they did not disrespect the Prophet Muhammad (ṣall Allāhu ‘alay-hi wa-sallam).⁷⁰⁷

To further add to the existing suspicions, CMS missionaries in Agra and

⁷⁰² Ibid., p. 208.

⁷⁰³ Ibid., pp. 208-9.

⁷⁰⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 212.

⁷⁰⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁰⁷ Nizami, *Madrasahs, Scholars and Saints: Muslim Response to the British Presence in Delhi and the Upper Doab*, p. 194.

William Muir decided to edit and publish the letters exchanged between Chandra and the Molvi. Muir was secretary to the government at this point.⁷⁰⁸ This was not the first time Muir had undertaken such inflammatory activity, he had also encouraged Pfander to publish his inflammatory pamphlet about the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ).⁷⁰⁹ Muir had also published an article *The Muhammadan Controversy* in the *Calcutta Review*.⁷¹⁰ A link could now be seen between the activities of the Agra and Delhi missionaries, as far as the Ulema were concerned.⁷¹¹

What is surprising is that Ram Chandra had initially resisted efforts by J. T. Thompson (the earlier missionary in Delhi) to persuade him to read Christian literature.⁷¹² Powell argues that Chandra had put off his conversion till late due to a property inheritance issue, when the law had been passed to protect and create inheritance rights for converts, Chandra was more than happy to convert.⁷¹³ Chandra had taken into account the financial implications of conversion prior to being baptized, as he himself admitted. The British authorities feared a backlash in Delhi after the conversion of Ram Chandra and Chimmun Lal (Assistant Surgeon at the hospital in Delhi).⁷¹⁴ It appears the British authorities anticipated discontent amongst Delhi's Hindu population and so they ensured Muslim police were present at the conversion, rather than Hindu policemen.⁷¹⁵

⁷⁰⁸ Powell, *Muslim Missionaries in pre – Mutiny India*, p. 212.

⁷⁰⁹ A. Guenther, *The Hadith in Christian-Muslim discourse in British India, 1857-1888* (Unpublished MA thesis, Montreal: McGill University, 1997), p. 17.

⁷¹⁰ Powell, *Muslim Missionaries in pre – Mutiny India*, p. 212.

⁷¹¹ Ibid.

⁷¹² Ibid., p. 210.

⁷¹³ Ibid., pp. 210-11.

⁷¹⁴ Ibid., p. 211.

⁷¹⁵ Ibid.

Thomas Metcalfe (the commissioner) and A. Roberts (magistrate) were both present, this clearly created the link in native eyes, between Christian missionaries and the government. Initially, the British administrators saw themselves as ‘protectors’ of Delhi, their initial position being one in which they upheld ‘those aspects of control and sovereignty which were explicitly connected with the character of Delhi as a Muslim city’. Warren Fustfeld maintains that they often used their position as administrators of Muslim Law in Delhi as a claim to their legitimacy.⁷¹⁶ However, loyalties were now shifting, official stances were changing.

Although it seemed as though the Muslims were not affected by these conversions, in reality there were some strong undercurrents developing as Ram Chandra’s activity had already alarmed the Ulema.⁷¹⁷ Importantly there were two types of styles of education proposed – one was an emphasis towards religious thinking and the other towards secular thinking – some Calcutta colleges pushed towards ‘irreligion’. But Delhi did the opposite, even though Aloys Sprenger (the principal between 1845-51) did not promote Christian Evangelicalism.

Sprenger refused to employ a lecturer who intended on converting to Christianity. Powell writes ‘The founders of the SPG mission and college in Delhi also stressed the positive ‘exclusion’ of religion from Delhi College in justification of their own missionary venture in the 1850s’. Not according to John Stuart Jackson (one of Jennings’ assistants), he was worried that religion was not preached and nothing was preached in place of it.⁷¹⁸ Jackson’s view was that religious teaching

⁷¹⁶ Fustfeld, *The shaping of Sufi leadership in Delhi: The Naqshbandiyya Mujaddidiyya 1750 to 1920*, p. 2.

⁷¹⁷ Powell, *Muslim Missionaries in pre – Mutiny India*, p. 212.

⁷¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 203.

should be combined with education:

The seed of these erroneous systems has been education and advancement without Christian teaching. Western knowledge has alienated the mind from idolatry: but there has been nothing but Deism, or the Pantheism of the Veda, to fill up the blank.⁷¹⁹

Jackson was arguing there was a void being created which needed to be filled; religion had to be taught alongside Western learning.

The Anglo-Oriental College in Delhi is of paramount importance in understanding the impact of missionaries in Delhi. Avril Powell argues that ‘Muslim concern in the city about evangelical activity was ultimately to have its starting point in its classrooms’. Powell argues that the Company tried to interfere in the Oriental Department of the College, proposing that only the ‘useful sciences’ should be taught.⁷²⁰

The Company was, as the Muslims of Delhi saw it, no longer protecting Muslim interests in Delhi. For example Dr Aloys Sprenger had produced, like the Serampore missionaries, an offensive ‘biography’ of the Prophet Muhammad (ṣall Allāhu ‘alay-hi wa-sallam) titled *Life Of Muhammad*.⁷²¹ This had caused offence to the Ulema and the Muslim population of Delhi (although he left the College before

⁷¹⁹ *The Colonial Church Chronicle and Missionary Journal, July 1847- December 1874* (London: W.H. Bartlett, 1869), p. 291.

⁷²⁰ S. Liddle, ‘Azurda scholar, poet and judge’, ed. M. Pernau, *The Delhi College - Traditional Elites, the Colonial State, And Education Before 1857* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 130.

⁷²¹ Powell, *Muslim Missionaries in pre – Mutiny India*, p. 212.

publishing the ‘biography’, so he maintained good relations with the Delhi Ulema at the time that he was there).⁷²²

The friendship had somewhat reduced suspicions surrounding the College’s motives amongst the Ulema, yet once Sprenger left, the tide changed dramatically, and many Ulema were convinced that they should not have trusted him or compromised themselves in order to please the British.⁷²³ Significantly, Sprenger was no fan of missionaries either; on the contrary, it appears he shifted more towards secular education, which gave Jennings the chance to argue that religion was not being taught in the Delhi College.⁷²⁴ But Avril Powell argues that this was not the motive of the Delhi College; rather she maintains that the education provided at the College encouraged students to question their religions and presented Western science which portrayed Christianity in a more favourable light.

Mufti Sadruddin Azurda was an examiner of Arabic at the Anglo-Oriental College; furthermore he was also a Murid (disciple) of both the Madrassahs Khairabadi and the Madrassah Rahimiyyah.⁷²⁵ When reforms were proposed to eliminate religious elements of education from the College, and Oriental elements,⁷²⁶ this was obviously a threat to all three the college, madrassahs and Mufti Sadruddin Azurda.

Essentially, not all scholars of the ‘Ashraf’ elite approved of the Delhi College as an educational institution; many chose not to teach or allow their sons to

⁷²² Ibid.

⁷²³ Dalrymple, *The Last Mughal*, p. 68.

⁷²⁴ Powell, *Muslims and Missionaries in pre – Mutiny India*, p. 123.

⁷²⁵ Liddle, ‘Azurda scholar, poet and judge’, p. 127.

⁷²⁶ Ibid., p. 130.

get an education there.⁷²⁷ The Ulema had felt that missionary schools were now taking the place of madrassahs, furthermore the schools were supported through funding by some senior figures such as the Prince of Wales,⁷²⁸ whereas the Sahibs were now attacking the teaching of the Islamic sciences in the former madrassah now turned College.⁷²⁹ As Avril Powell states:

the transmission at this time of certain Western scientific principles obviously raised the prospect of a clash with traditional Islamic and Hindu assumptions. Eventually... an unprecedented degree of tension between the College and the Ulema of Delhi would be initiated by just such a clash.⁷³⁰

Perhaps the Ulema were further angered by the rise of a new missionary school headed by the Baptist missionaries in Delhi in the autumn of 1856.⁷³¹ Perhaps they had felt that the threat was more real now, as in the past the Baptist mission had not been very active in Delhi, as we have seen earlier.

The reason for the relevance of College activity in assessing the missionary impact on Delhi is that many of the teachers at the College were 'religious men'.⁷³² Examples of this are individuals such as Ram Chandra who brought enquirers and

⁷²⁷ Powell, *Muslims and Missionaries in pre – Mutiny India*, p. 200.

⁷²⁸ Letter Rev. A. R. Hubbard to Mr. Bullock, 18 November, 1854, USPG CLR 14, p. 41, Bodleian Library.

⁷²⁹ Malik, 'Letters, prison sketches and autobiographical literature: The case of Fazl-E-Haqq Khairabadi in the Andaman penal colony', p. 29.

⁷³⁰ Powell, *Muslims and Missionaries in pre – Mutiny India*, p. 197.

⁷³¹ Letter Rev. A. R. Hubbard to Mr. Hawkins, 26 June 1857, USPG E2, p. 117, Bodleian Library.

⁷³² Powell, *Muslims and Missionaries in pre – Mutiny India*, p. 202.

influenced students, including Muslims, through pamphlets, as has been mentioned in the previous chapter; many such as Azurda were aware of this and discouraged pupils from reading such pamphlets.⁷³³

Furthermore, Jennings, along with his missionaries Alfred Roots Hubbard and Jackson, had arranged secret Bible classes at the former madrassah but now 'secular' college.⁷³⁴ Hubbard was aware of the impact that the College would have on the Delhi population and how it was capable of increasing the number of enquirers to the Church.⁷³⁵ To further heighten the tension, Mr. Steward, a teacher at the Delhi College also assembled native Christians at St. James' Church on Sundays⁷³⁶

It appears that one of the first major disputes between the Ulema and the College was that regarding the Copernican astronomical system and many people from the Muslim elite such as Sir Sayed Ahmed Khan chose to defend the traditional Islamic astronomical observations – at least initially.⁷³⁷ J. H. Taylor took over as Principal of Delhi College in 1850; Powell argues that he pushed for Evangelicalism even though not in a direct manner.⁷³⁸ To further fortify the link between the missionary activity in Delhi and the mission at Agra, after his conversion in 1852, Chandra had become a channel of communication for the Agra missionaries too, as

⁷³³ Liddle, 'Azurda scholar, poet and judge', p. 130.

⁷³⁴ Dalrymple, *The Last Mughal*, p. 74.

⁷³⁵ Letter Rev. A. R. Hubbard to Mr. Hawkins, Easter Monday, 1856, USPG CLR 14, p. 104, Bodleian Library.

⁷³⁶ Gibbs, *The Anglican Church in India 1600 – 1970*, p. 190.

⁷³⁷ Liddle, 'Azurda scholar, poet and judge', p. 130.

⁷³⁸ Powell, *Muslims and Missionaries in pre – Mutiny India*, p. 203.

Powell has pointed out, he sent to Pfander copies of the Ulema's replies, he also circulated books by missionaries.⁷³⁹ He reported:

I have distributed copies of the pamphlet to learned Muhamedans, young and old. The majority of them appear frightened with these publications and other circumstances, which have produced a spirit of enquiry in the minds of some of their young, yet learned, brethren.⁷⁴⁰

Powell argues the opening of the SPG mission in 1854, was 'the final irritant'.⁷⁴¹ Though there had been a temporary drop in numbers of the Delhi College roll after Chandra's conversion, the number of enrolments rose again in 1853.⁷⁴² Chandra himself admitted his conversion caused more of a stir in Muslim circles than Hindu circles. However after Chandra's conversion, the conversion of a Muslim followed in 1853.⁷⁴³ Yet this Muslim candidate was sent to Calcutta for Baptism, why was he not baptised in Delhi, was there fear of backlash?

It is of significance to note that the proportion of Muslim students in the 1850s was lower than in the 1840s.⁷⁴⁴ This may be an indicator that missionary activity in Delhi was affecting Muslims in Delhi more than other religious communities in Delhi.⁷⁴⁵ Yet of Delhi College, Jennings made no further converts of

⁷³⁹ Ibid., p. 214.

⁷⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 215.

⁷⁴¹ Ibid.

⁷⁴² Ibid.

⁷⁴³ Ibid.

⁷⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁴⁵ Ibid.

the students nor the teachers,⁷⁴⁶ although some students would later become Christians after 1857.⁷⁴⁷ Prior to 1857, the Delhi Ulema were careful not to bring their criticisms out into the open.

⁷⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 216.

Chapter 6. Delhi: ‘A strong attack must be made somewhere’⁷⁴⁸

Mission work

This chapter assesses the role of the missionaries in Delhi and the counter-response from the Muslim and Hindu religious leaders. British attitudes and the threat of forced conversion had combined to form a reason for mutiny:

It was British class and racial arrogance carried to the point of strategic imbecility, as much if not more than Evangelical Christianity, which lay at the root of the Mutiny, making it in retrospect an accident which was waiting to happen.⁷⁴⁹

This point is subject to study as part of this thesis.

The reason for studying the USPG mission at Delhi is important, as in recent years, the role of Chaplain Midgley John Jennings at Delhi has become a subject of controversy which is explored in detail in William Dalrymple’s *The Last Mughal* in which he refers to Jennings’ mission as ‘overtly Islamophobic’.⁷⁵⁰ Delhi was the heart of India – its capital, thus it would be useful to see how the USPG’s missionaries operated here and compare this with the ‘Baptist approach’. Were there really two different approaches? Dalrymple has argued that Jennings was different to other missionaries who had visited Delhi, as he was more blatant and did not hide his views, as he openly spoke of his desire to take over Delhi’s Masjids and

⁷⁴⁸ (From a letter: Jennings to Hawkins, in which Jennings comments ‘A strong attack must be made somewhere, and I hope we shall see it made here’) W. Dalrymple, *The Last Mughal*, p. 63.

⁷⁴⁹ M. Farooqui, ‘A million mutinies, - the Ghadar in Delhi, gleaned from the Mutiny Papers’, *History Biblio*, 7:3 (2007), p. 14.

⁷⁵⁰ Dalrymple, *The Last Mughal*, p. 68.

temples.⁷⁵¹ However Dalrymple does not take into account the fact an earlier missionary named

Padre Thompson visited Muslim religious gatherings as well as Hindu melas in Delhi.⁷⁵² What was the difference between Jennings and Thompson?

When Jennings arrived in India in 1832, Sati had been legally banned for several years, and converts now had rights to ancestral property due to the laws made in 1832.⁷⁵³ Although army chaplains were not supposed to engage in evangelical activities amongst the Indian population, Jennings did.⁷⁵⁴ He was a High Churchman,⁷⁵⁵ who had been advised to go to a warmer climate for his wife's health. His first appointment was to Cawnpore. He was known to be very religious and observant⁷⁵⁶ but was very intolerant of Indian religions, as related in a memoir by his daughter, he shot a sacred peacock near a temple, which even she admits was 'an act which might have brought on him serious consequences'.⁷⁵⁷ He also shot a huge crocodile by the banks of the Ganges, which caused uproar amongst villagers.⁷⁵⁸ Thus we can begin to build a picture of a character as insensitive and intolerant towards Indians' religious beliefs.

His being a chaplain may not strictly speaking constitute missionary activity, yet he was arguably the backbone of the mission, which he himself later funded – so

⁷⁵¹ Ibid.

⁷⁵² *CMS Missionary register* (London: Seeley, Burnside and Seeley, 1845), vol. 33, p. 102.

⁷⁵³ Ibid., pp. 68-9.

⁷⁵⁴ Dalrymple, 'In defence of faith: religious rhetoric in the Delhi uprising of 1857', p. 9.

⁷⁵⁵ Hughes, *The Mutiny Chaplains*, p. 27.

⁷⁵⁶ M. Jennings, *Memoir of my father the Revd M. J. Jennings*, Jennings Papers, Bodleian library, USPG X1284.

⁷⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁵⁸ Ibid.

that it became almost a ‘Jennings mission’ rather than a USPG mission. Jennings was not unique, since East India Company chaplains have been described as missionaries in disguise.⁷⁵⁹ Some of these missionaries preached to Indian soldiers, in the hope that the soldiers would become the ‘Christian warriors’ who would then become missionaries themselves; an example of such a ‘warrior’ was Henry Havelock who preached Baptist teachings.⁷⁶⁰ Some officers read Bibles to Sepoys, and preached in bazaars.⁷⁶¹

Missionary letters reveal that an application for a mission to Delhi was first made to the CMS (Church Missionary Society) by British residents at Delhi. However the CMS responded that it could not undertake the task, after which the British residents opened communication with the USPG (United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel).⁷⁶² Although the mission was not set up until 1854, communication regarding the setting up of the mission actually dates back to 1848.⁷⁶³ The delay in setting up the mission could be partly attributed to concern regarding its viability, as there was some degree of concern regarding Delhi, as a letter in 1850 reveals that Delhi was listed in a chapter titled ‘Abandoned Stations’ in the Reverend Long’s *Handbook of Bengal Missions*. Street states in his letter ‘it is to be regretted

⁷⁵⁹ Nizami, *Madrasahs, Scholars and Saints: Muslim Response to the British Presence in Delhi and the Upper Doab*, p. 192.

⁷⁶⁰ Potts, *British Baptist Missionaries in India 1793-1837*, p. 40.

⁷⁶¹ Dalrymple, *The Last Mughal*, p. 62.

⁷⁶² Letter from Revd Boyle to Hawkins, 12 June 1849, *USPG Archive*, USPG C. IND. I (1) 55C, Bodleian Library.

⁷⁶³ Letter R. Boyle to E. Hawkins, *Jennings Papers*, USPG C IND I (I) 55 C, Bodleian

that the book does not give the particulars of their rise and fall...I may be overcautious but believe I am not'.⁷⁶⁴

The British residents in Delhi including Jennings, some civilians and officers such as Captain C.R.G Douglas (of the 37th Bengal light infantry) and a few women, had decided that they needed to take some action in Delhi after 'seeing the people on all sides wholly given up, either to idolatry or to the corrupting influences of Islam'.⁷⁶⁵ They were not in a position to carry out direct mission work but collected money to fund assistance to any native who came as an enquirer.

The residents at Delhi decided to save some money before starting a mission, so that they would be able to fund two missionaries from England.⁷⁶⁶ Already by 1849, they had raised enough money to set up a mission. The Reverend William Boyle believed it was a mission that would not have financial difficulties, as he remarked in a letter to Street, 'Such are my resources, if the mission be established, and is well worked, I have no fears but that ample funds are forthcoming'.⁷⁶⁷

In 1850, the mission was proposed in *The Missionary* and by late 1853, Jennings and his supporters had collected enough funds to fund two missionaries from England. The mission was thus founded officially in 1854, though conversions had already taken place in the preparatory phases.⁷⁶⁸ Jennings had contacted the USPG for support, as it was a venture that if successful would carry prestige due to the importance of Delhi, as Jennings commented in a letter to the Reverend Bowdler: 'Should the society succeed there, seeing Delhi is a very important city, there is no

⁷⁶⁴ Letter A. Street to Mr. Boyle, *Jennings Papers*, USPG C IND I (I) 55 B, Bodleian Library.

⁷⁶⁵ C. Crawfoot, 'A Sketch of the S.P.G Mission at Delhi', *Mission Life*, pp. 206-11.

⁷⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶⁷ Letter Mr. Boyle to A. Street, *Jennings Papers*, USPG C IND I (I) 55 A, Bodleian Library.

⁷⁶⁸ Crawfoot, 'A Sketch of the S.P.G Mission at Delhi', pp. 206-11.

telling what might be the result in touching other places in these parts of India'.⁷⁶⁹

The aim of the mission was:

to propagate the Gospel among the native inhabitants of Delhi and to afford the youth especially those who are engaged in acquiring secular education at the Government schools an opportunity to obtain knowledge of Christianity.⁷⁷⁰

Jennings remarked on 23 September 1852, in a letter to the Reverend Ernest Hawkins (a secretary of the USPG)⁷⁷¹, 'I am happy to tell you that our prospects are daily lightening'.⁷⁷² Jennings was referring to funding for the mission – he was hoping to make 22,000 rupees before Christmas: assistance was coming from places far apart such as Cheshire and Mrs Gubbins (wife of Mr J Gubbins, magistrate at Lodhiana) seems to have been active in the fundraising wing of the mission (she is often mentioned in Jennings' letters and mission reports).⁷⁷³ It appears that Jennings placed much emphasis on the funding of the mission – he believed that if the funding was strong, then the mission would prosper.

⁷⁶⁹ Letter M. Jennings to Mr. Bowdler, *Jennings Papers*, USPG CLR 13 – 14, Bodleian Library.

⁷⁷⁰ Pascoe, *Two Hundred Years of the S. P. G., 1701–1900: An Historical Account of the Society for the Propagation of Bible in Foreign Parts*, p. 613.

⁷⁷¹ H. Carey, *Religion and colonialism in the British World c. 1801 – 1908* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 86.

⁷⁷² Letter M. Jennings to Mr Hawkins, *Jennings Papers*, USPG CLR 13 – 410, Bodleian Library. See also 'Proposed Mission at Delhi', C. Indi I (I) 55 F.

⁷⁷³ *Ibid.*

Jennings told Hawkins ‘Only go to work with fitting instruments and we may hope for everything to follow’.⁷⁷⁴ Children’s dress sales and book sales were also another method of fundraising.⁷⁷⁵ According to Jennings’ correspondence, chaplains were raising money for the mission in Delhi from places as far as Umballa, Cawnpore, and Delhi.⁷⁷⁶ Needlework was also sent out by Prince of Wales to be sold on behalf of mission.⁷⁷⁷

Due to Jennings’ role in the mission, it is possible to argue that he was the driving force. However there is evidence to suggest that he was cautious in the sense that he took some degree of instruction from the USPG, as is evident in a letter to Hawkins, in April 1853: ‘I wrote to you a letter by the last mail, but I wish to say a few words on a point very near my heart, but in which I do not know how to act from not being fully acquainted with the Society’s instructions’.⁷⁷⁸ He was referring to his desire to see more Eurasians and natives being accepted at the College in Delhi – he felt this would ‘render it popular and ... promote a good feeling towards the Society generally’.⁷⁷⁹ This shows that Jennings did have some concern regarding the perception of the mission by Eurasians at least, if not natives. Could Jennings’ preoccupation with the Eurasians have alienated Europeans in Delhi?

Jennings desired to establish a school which could act as a feeder to the college. He hoped to obtain funding for this from the Company, and to obtain school

⁷⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁷⁵ M. Jennings, *Memoir of my father the Revd M. J. Jennings*, Jennings Papers, Bodleian library, USPG X1284, p. 17.

⁷⁷⁶ Letter M. Jennings to Mr Hawkins, *Jennings Papers*, USPG CLR 13 – 420, Bodleian Library.

⁷⁷⁷ Letter A. Hubbard to Mr Bullock, *Jennings Papers*, USPG CLR 14 – 42, Bodleian Library.

⁷⁷⁸ Letter M. Jennings to Mr Hawkins, *Jennings Papers*, USPG CLR 13 – 452, Bodleian Library.

⁷⁷⁹ Ibid.

masters from the Society so in essence, both company and missionaries would work together to provide the result. The question is whether Indians began to make the link that Company activity and missionary activity went hand in hand.⁷⁸⁰

The USPG helped fund the mission with some of its Jubilee fund, but thereafter, Jennings would fund the rest of the mission without any further assistance from the USPG.⁷⁸¹ He urged the USPG to associate itself with the mission and send out two missionaries, and used the threat of Baptists, Presbyterians and independents taking over the field.⁷⁸² The conversion of Indian souls had led to denominational rivalry.

Initially in India, mainly at Delhi 24, 656.8.9 rupees were collected and 8000 legal pounds given by the SPG in England in government securities, so that the interest could be used to fund the expenses of the mission as an ‘experiment’.⁷⁸³ In 1854, a further 1000 legal pounds were granted to the Delhi mission.⁷⁸⁴

Jennings moved into lodgings at the Lahore Gate upon his appointment to Delhi in 1852.⁷⁸⁵ The missionaries were advised to focus on preaching to the Indians rather than Europeans.⁷⁸⁶ The object was to establish a Christian Church which could be led by a native ministry. It did look rather optimistic one Sunday (11 July 1852) when Ram Chandra (the Professor of Mathematics at the Government College) and

⁷⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁷⁸¹ Pascoe, *Two Hundred Years of the S. P. G., 1701–1900: An Historical Account of the Society for the Propagation of Bible in Foreign Parts*, p. 612.

⁷⁸² Letter M. Jennings to Mr Hawkins, *Jennings Papers*, USPG CLR 13 – 420, Bodleian Library.

⁷⁸³ *The Colonial Church Chronicle and Missionary Journal, July 1847- December 1874* (London: W.H. Bartlett, 1869), p. 30.

⁷⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 74.

⁷⁸⁵ Dalrymple, *The Last Mughal*, p. xxi.

⁷⁸⁶ Pascoe, *Two Hundred Years of the S. P. G., 1701–1900: An Historical Account of the Society for the Propagation of Bible in Foreign Parts*, p. 613.

Chimmun Lal (Assistant Surgeon at the hospital in Delhi), both of high caste, visited Jennings at his church service at St. James Church.⁷⁸⁷ Thirty three year old Ram Chandra was renamed 'Eesu Doss' and Chimmun Lal also converted.⁷⁸⁸ What was distinctive about these conversions was that much earlier missionary activity had been directed at the poorer classes.⁷⁸⁹ In contrast to this, the converts belonged to Delhi's elite circle and higher caste strata of society.

The Bishop of Madras wrote:

The Delhi Mission is one of the most hopeful and promising of our Indian Mission fields. The intelligent and well-informed converts ... the superior nature of the school, with its 120 boys, among the best I have visited in India, and the first rate character for attainments and devotedness of the missionaries and schoolmasters are making an impression which is moving the whole of that City of Kings.⁷⁹⁰

Jennings wrote to the *Colonial Church Chronicle* that to carry out his designs, he would require more missionaries and funding. He hoped to obtain a schoolmaster who was well taught in music, and able to teach it to the boys of the mission school, once it would be set up.⁷⁹¹ Jennings also promoted female education:

⁷⁸⁷ L. Henderson, *The Cambridge Mission to Delhi: A brief History* (London: 1931), p. 1.

⁷⁸⁸ *CMS Intelligencer*, (London: Seeleys, vol. 3, 1852), pp. 257-58.

⁷⁸⁹ J. Beaglehole, 'The Indian Christians – A study of a minority', *Modern South Asia*, 1:1 (1967), p. 60.

⁷⁹⁰ Henderson, *The Cambridge Mission to Delhi: A brief History*, p. 2.

⁷⁹¹ *The Colonial Church Chronicle and Missionary Journal, July 1847- December 1874* (London: W.H. Bartlett, 1869), p. 31.

I mean immediately to open a fund for the purpose of bringing out the lady who we think can be induced to take charge of a female orphan school in Delhi. Such a person we must not lose, and notwithstanding the Society's refusal to listen to any such proposal for the present, we are resolved to try for ourselves what we can do.⁷⁹²

The USPG sent out two missionaries to assist Jennings, they were the Reverend John Stuart Jackson, Fellow of Caius College, Cambridge, and the Reverend Alfred Hubbard also of Caius College.⁷⁹³ When Jackson and Hubbard arrived in Delhi in 1854, there was already an auxiliary committee set up by the Lieutenant Governor.⁷⁹⁴ Six months after his arrival Jackson was convinced that more needed to be done as he commented in October 1854 'My general impression with regard to the advance of Christianity in Northern India is, that it has made very little as yet'.⁷⁹⁵

According to the historian Mildred Gibbs there were already twenty Indian Christians at Delhi upon Jackson's arrival.⁷⁹⁶ He spent the first part of his arrival learning the native languages. He felt he could not preach until he was well versed in the native languages.⁷⁹⁷ Jackson commented in a letter printed in the *Colonial Church Chronicle* in October 1854, 'I have not as yet begun to preach even to the

⁷⁹² Ibid.

⁷⁹³ Ibid., p. 30.

⁷⁹⁴ Pascoe, *Two Hundred Years of the S. P. G., 1701–1900: An Historical Account of the Society for the Propagation of Bible in Foreign Parts*, p. 613.

⁷⁹⁵ *The Colonial Church Chronicle and Missionary Journal, July 1847- December 1874*, p. 29.

⁷⁹⁶ Gibbs, *The Anglican Church in India 1600 – 1970*, p. 190.

⁷⁹⁷ *The Colonial Church Chronicle and Missionary Journal, July 1847- December 1874*, p. 290.

native Christians, as I am afraid of throwing discredit upon Christian services by adding the mistakes of language to the imperfection of thought incidental to us all, and not least to me'.⁷⁹⁸

The aims of the Delhi mission were similar to those Hoernle had identified at Agra, as the *Indian Mission Fund* reported:

Their proposed modes of operation are, 1. by preaching in the city; 2. by pastoral charge of the congregations; 3. by superintending the City School, which already contains 100 boys, the most forward of whom are under Christian instruction; and 4. by translating and preparing books of Christian doctrine and exposition.⁷⁹⁹

Jackson devoted his attention to Delhi's Muslims whereas Hubbard focussed on Delhi's Hindus, this operational technique was adopted at the request of the USPG, so that missionary activity would be more effective.⁸⁰⁰

The missionaries were prepared to use:

whatever methods most likely to be efficacious for the desired end. Whether preaching to the heathen, delivering of lectures on the Christian religion, establishment of schools for children, or classes for the instruction of elder students, the missionaries will bear in mind that their

⁷⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹⁹ *The Indian Mission Fund*, USPG 2524 6A, Vol. 1, p. 63 Bodleian Library.

⁸⁰⁰ Letter A. Hubbard to Mr Bullock, *Jennings Papers*, USPG CLR 14 – 41, Bodleian Library.

great work is to be the conversion of souls, and the establishment of a Christian Church which may eventually be carried forward by the agency of a native ministry.⁸⁰¹

There were charges that missionaries were preaching in jails in Delhi,⁸⁰² and natives were worried about the activities taking place in jails, as the old Hindu custom of allowing a prisoner to prepare his own food was abolished, leading to some castes being offended, Muslim prisoners were ordered to shave off their beards (which some of them wore for religious reasons). The situation was intensifying in hospitals too; Indians found that the new rulers of India favoured the sharing of wards, regardless of caste, gender and purdah issues. This created suspicion regarding British motives in the Indian mind.⁸⁰³

Dalrymple has claimed Jennings was personally responsible for leading Delhi's inhabitants to believe the Company aimed to convert them 'by force if necessary'.⁸⁰⁴ Even the *Delhi Gazette* felt Jennings was not as discreet as he should have been, as for example when he went to the Hindu Kumbh Mela, in a bid to convert the pilgrims, and criticised their customs as 'satanic paganism'.⁸⁰⁵ It is rather ironic then that Jennings himself commented in 1855: 'It is an arduous post, more so than that of ordinary missionaries. They have a work to do which cannot possibly be

⁸⁰¹ Pascoe, *Two Hundred Years of the S. P. G., 1701–1900: An Historical Account of the Society for the Propagation of Bible in Foreign Parts*, p. 613.

⁸⁰² Dalrymple, *The Last Mughal*, pp. 68-9.

⁸⁰³ David, *The Indian Mutiny: 1857*, p. 53.

⁸⁰⁴ Dalrymple, *The Last Mughal*, p. xxi.

⁸⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 60.

showy, and without making a show they will be sure to call forth remarks, and perhaps more'.⁸⁰⁶

Jennings was prepared to use a wide range of methods, including force, to attack the religions of India.⁸⁰⁷ William Dalrymple argues that he was 'worst of all' and he produced 'explicitly anti-Hindu and Islamophobic' material such as pamphlets.⁸⁰⁸ However the Serampore Trio also produced such pamphlets. What made Jennings so different? This is assessed in subsequent chapters.

It was already evident that Jennings was not going to win any support from the Muslim Ulema and Hindu Pundits. Furthermore they would have found most displeasing his desire to take over the 261 Masjids and 200 temples in Delhi.⁸⁰⁹ Despite all the evidence of Jennings' intolerance, it is interesting that in a letter to Bowdler in 1851 he comments that he wanted missionaries whose 'zeal does not outrun discretion'.

Jennings felt that the teaching of the English language to natives would help promote his cause. As he commented to Hawkins in 1852, 'English ... makes them more acceptable than they otherwise would be to the sound of the Gospel'.⁸¹⁰ He felt that the existing college in Delhi did not provide adequate religious instruction, which he believed was dangerous;

There they learn all that we teach in colleges at home, with only this one sad exception – they are taught no religion of any kind whatever. It is

⁸⁰⁶ *The Colonial Church Chronicle and Missionary Journal*, July 1847- December 1874, p. 119.

⁸⁰⁷ Dalrymple, 'In defence of faith: religious rhetoric in the Delhi uprising of 1857', p. 9.

⁸⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 68.

⁸¹⁰ Letter M. Jennings to Mr Hawkins, *Jennings Papers*, USPG CLR 13 – 452, Bodleian Library.

impossible to teach them to be Hindoos or Mahommedans, and the government has not tried to teach them to be Christians. The end has been this: a large number of the native gentry have grown up to manhood with no fear of any God at all before them.⁸¹¹

Jennings' view is interesting, as, unlike the Serampore missionaries who believed that education would lead the Indians to denounce their religions,⁸¹² he believed education was beneficial however Christian instruction was essential. Otherwise education alone would lead to a class of Indians who would no longer believe in God. His daughter wrote:

They could not any longer believe in their idols. They could not bow down before their hideous shapes, before the boy god Ganesha, with his elephant head, or the snake-haired Kali, devouring a baby; we had made them too knowing to believe in such folly; but as the Gospel was kept away from them, they ended in general, by being downright infidels. Nothing could be worse than this.⁸¹³

This provides evidence of Jennings' zeal and intolerance of Indian religion, despite

⁸¹¹ M. Jennings, *Memoir of my father the Revd M. J. Jennings*, Jennings Papers, Bodleian library, USPG X1284, p. 53.

⁸¹² Midgely, 'British Women and the Evangelical Campaign Against Sati in India 1813 – 1830', p. 78.

⁸¹³ M. Jennings, *Memoir of my father the Revd M. J. Jennings*, Jennings Papers, Bodleian library, USPG X1284, p. 53.

this, Hubbard maintained that Jennings was ‘an excellent chaplain’.⁸¹⁴

During the first three years, the missionaries spent time studying Hinduism and Islam,⁸¹⁵ and Hubbard began to establish schools in 1854.⁸¹⁶ After all, Jennings had claimed in April 1853 that ‘people are crying out for places of education for their children ... a Church school of the kind is terribly wanted, and for the want of one our church children are made over to Catholics and American dissenters for their education’.⁸¹⁷ Interestingly, both missions – at Delhi and at Serampore – set to work in the educational sphere early in the missions’ lives and worked to familiarise themselves with Indian religions.

Also the issue of Catholic missionaries and American Dissenters seems to have been a source of worry for Jennings – whether he stated this to encourage the society to fund the mission or whether he was genuinely concerned about the growing strength of other Christian groups in Delhi is not clear. He commented: ‘Some of the most respectable church children of Delhi are at this moment being educated at Agra by these two classes of the Church of England’s opponents, and I can object to nothing under the circumstances in which we stand’.⁸¹⁸

It appears that in 1857, the Baptists opened a school in Delhi too, as Hubbard reported to Hawkins: ‘During the autumn of last year our city school fell off in number considerably partly owing to another school having been opened in the

⁸¹⁴ Letter Rev. A. R. Hubbard to Mr. Hawkins, 1857, USPG CLS 9, p. 257, Bodleian Library.

⁸¹⁵ Pascoe, *Two Hundred Years of the S. P. G., 1701–1900: An Historical Account of the Society for the Propagation of Bible in Foreign Parts*, p. 614.

⁸¹⁶ Crawfoot, ‘A Sketch of the S.P.G Mission at Delhi’, pp. 206-11.

⁸¹⁷ Letter M. Jennings to Mr Hawkins, *Jennings Papers*, USPG CLR 13 – 453, Bodleian Library.

⁸¹⁸ Letter M. Jennings to Mr Hawkins, *Jennings Papers*, USPG CLR 13 – 420, Bodleian Library.

neighbourhood by a Baptist Missionary'.⁸¹⁹ It appears that a BMS mission was still active in Delhi prior to 1857; it had not ended with Reverend Thompson's death as earlier correspondence had suggested.

The matter of education had long been a concern for Jennings but now he felt that the existence of the college would make it possible; a school would be a 'feeder' to the college.⁸²⁰ Furthermore, Jennings was not hoping for just one school; he hoped to establish one for Eurasian children and one further in the hills for the natives.⁸²¹ He was optimistic about the idea and believed that both schools would pay for themselves, with no cost to the USPG.⁸²²

Education itself was now becoming more and more intermingled with missionary motives. In the past, Indians had been willing to send their sons to mission schools for an education, but now it appeared the teachers of such institutions were taking on the role of preaching, as the *Indian Mission Fund* reported: 'They also propose to occupy their own district with Missionary Posts, from which Christian teachers will itinerate, establish schools, preach the word and reason with objectors'.⁸²³

However, already prior to the arrival of Hubbard and Jackson, Molana Rahmat Allah Kairnawi in Delhi published a book, *The Remover of Doubts*, which was 'counteractive' to early Evangelical efforts in Delhi.⁸²⁴ The book was clearly

⁸¹⁹ Letter Rev. A. Hubbard to Mr. Hawkins, 26 June 1857, USPG E2-118, p. 115, Bodleian Library.

⁸²⁰ Letter M. Jennings to Mr Hawkins, *Jennings Papers*, USPG CLR 13 – 452, Bodleian Library.

⁸²¹ Letter M. Jennings to Mr Hawkins, *Jennings Papers*, USPG CLR 13 – 453, Bodleian Library.

⁸²² Ibid.

⁸²³ *The Indian Mission Fund*, USPG 2524 6A, Vol. 1, P. 63 Bodleian Library.

⁸²⁴ Pascoe, *Two Hundred Years of the S. P. G., 1701–1900: An Historical Account of the Society for the Propagation of Bible in Foreign Parts*, p. 613.

written to counter the effects of missionary activity, as the Molana himself indicated:

For a time the ordinary Muslims shrank from listening to the preaching [of the missionaries] and from studying their books and pamphlets, therefore none of the Indian Ulema paid any attention to the refutation of these pamphlets. But after some time had passed there began to be a weakening in some of the people, and some of the illiterate [Muslims] were in danger of stumbling. Therefore some of us scholars of Islam turned their attention to their refutation.⁸²⁵

This may have been an early sign for the missionaries – indicating that the storm was still to come.

From 1856, Corrie Sandys and Louis Koch (graduates of Bishop's College, Calcutta) joined the missionaries at Delhi; but the missionary Stuart Jackson left for England, due to ill health.⁸²⁶ It is important to note that the mission was not confined to the city of Delhi, as Jennings operated around Delhi, for example in Hansi, Hissa and Sirsa as a chaplain.⁸²⁷ Likewise Hubbard preached at Meerut on behalf of the Delhi mission.⁸²⁸

⁸²⁵ Dalrymple, *The Last Mughal*, p. 70.

⁸²⁶ Pascoe, *Two Hundred Years of the S. P. G., 1701–1900: An Historical Account of the Society for the Propagation of Bible in Foreign Parts*, p. 614.

⁸²⁷ M. Jennings, *Memoir of my father the Revd M. J. Jennings*, Jennings Papers, Bodleian library, USPG X1284, p. 53.

⁸²⁸ Letter Rev. A. Hubbard to Mr. Hawkins, 26 June 1857, USPG E2-118, p. 115, Bodleian Library.

Ram Chandra, or 'Esoo Das', as he was now called,⁸²⁹ brought along many enquirers.⁸³⁰ He influenced others via his position at the government school and more baptisms took place.⁸³¹ It is unsurprising then, that 'revivalists' were given cause for concern, as this strengthened a fear that their religions were under attack. Military officers such as Captain Douglas, who resided at Delhi, provided further support and advice to the mission, at a time when suspicions of missionary activity and its links with the officers were already brewing in revivalist circles.⁸³²

By 1857, Jennings had carried his work into Roorkee (near Delhi), and began to establish schools there in order to attract the poorer classes and undermine the influence of the dissenters in these areas. This shows there was inter-Christian rivalry between the various missionaries.⁸³³ He was hoping now to have a fourth missionary and had employed a European schoolmaster, a native schoolmaster and two schoolmistresses for European children and had managed to attract 120 children to one school; yet his funds were exceeding 100,000 rupees.⁸³⁴ However, the mission at Roorkee would not secure a missionary for itself until 1861.⁸³⁵

As at the Serampore mission, at Delhi the missionaries faced the barrier of Purdah. Jackson had access to three females from Chimun Lal's household; at first they were too shy to be taught in the same room as Jackson, and he therefore

⁸²⁹ Letter M. Jennings to Mr Hawkins, *Jennings Papers*, USPG CLR 13 – 407, Bodleian Library.

⁸³⁰ Crawfoot, 'A Sketch of the S.P.G Mission at Delhi', pp. 206- 211.

⁸³¹ Ibid.

⁸³² J. Jackson, *The Colonial Church Chronicle and Missionary Journal* (London: Rivingtons, 1857), p. 847.

⁸³³ M. Jennings, *Memoir of my father the Revd M. J. Jennings*, Jennings Papers, Bodleian library, USPG X1284, p. 27.

⁸³⁴ Ibid.

⁸³⁵ Sharma, *Christian Missions in North India*, p. 88.

preached to them from the rooftop, and the women sat behind in a room separated by a curtain listening to him.⁸³⁶ Eventually these women did convert to Christianity in a public baptism, including Shalome, Chimmun Lal's daughter who was the first convert of the mission to pass away – she died in 1857, due to ill health.⁸³⁷ Nonetheless, Jennings admitted this was a trial for the women and was not easy, saying, 'The publicity of their baptism was peculiarly trying to them, owing to the close Purdah, which obtains in their caste'.⁸³⁸ The natives may have viewed such missionary activity amongst women as an 'intrusion' into their *zenana* (female) quarters.⁸³⁹

These were not to be the last native members of the mission Church. Hubbard told Ernest Hawkins, in June 1857, that on one Monday morning, forty people had been confirmed to the Church and the next morning a further twelve natives had also been confirmed at the Church.⁸⁴⁰ If this was true, it seems that the mission was gaining strength in Delhi until 1857.

Jennings' commitment to his mission had become such that, in 1856, he ceased to take the regular service at the Cantonment Church.⁸⁴¹ Jennings argued that he had to give services at the City Church and could not do both in one morning due to the distance and heat.⁸⁴² Though evidence does not exist to show how Jennings

⁸³⁶ Pascoe, *Two Hundred Years of the S. P. G., 1701–1900: An Historical Account of the Society for the Propagation of Bible in Foreign Parts*, p. 614.

⁸³⁷ Letter Rev. A. Hubbard to Mr. Hawkins, 26 June 1857, USPG E2, p. 115, Bodleian Library.

⁸³⁸ M. Jennings, *Memoir of my father the Revd M. J. Jennings*, Jennings Papers, Bodleian library, USPG X1284, p. 30

⁸³⁹ Majumdar, *The History and culture of the Indian People*, p. 418.

⁸⁴⁰ Letter Rev. A. Hubbard to Mr. Hawkins, 26 June 1857, USPG E2, p. 115, Bodleian Library.

⁸⁴¹ Hughes, *The Mutiny Chaplains*, p. 27.

⁸⁴² *Ibid.*

resolved this matter, arguably, this shows his commitment to the mission and preaching to native Christians. The importance of preaching at the native Church was not appreciated by the officials but Jennings understood it. He claimed that some Indians were now attending church purely to observe the Christians in worship and he saw this as a promising sign.⁸⁴³ If this was true, this was arguably an effect of Jennings' work on the inhabitants of Delhi – he had aroused in them an interest in Christianity. A key object of missionaries was to establish a Christian Church which could be led by a native ministry.⁸⁴⁴ To achieve this object 'the Missionaries were further directed to abstain as much as possible from ministering to European Christians'.⁸⁴⁵

The missionaries' zeal was not confined to the pulpit alone; he and his fellow missionaries were more than happy to search for other methods of spreading the Gospel. Mr Jackson had been offering his services to the school, as a brief mission report of 1855 suggests: 'Mr Jackson has attempted to supply this deficiency to the best of his ability, by instructing the first class in the doctrines of Christianity, for an hour every day'.⁸⁴⁶ Jackson delivered his lesson in Urdu as the boys were reportedly not yet equipped to understand the Gospel in English,⁸⁴⁷ thus to an extent this is a similarity that the Delhi mission shared with the Serampore mission: the use of native languages to evangelise.

It is to be noted that until 1855, the teachers of the school (which the Delhi

⁸⁴³ Letter M. Jennings to Mr Hawkins, *Jennings Papers*, USPG CLR 13 – 407, Bodleian Library.

⁸⁴⁴ Pascoe, *Two Hundred Years of the S. P. G., 1701–1900: An Historical Account of the Society for the Propagation of Bible in Foreign Parts*, p. 613.

⁸⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. cv – cvi.

⁸⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

missionaries had taken over), were still ‘heathen’,⁸⁴⁸ yet by 1856 the school seems to have openly offered Christian instruction to its pupils. Sayed Ahmed Khan claimed that in some missionary schools, questions were asked, such as ‘Who is your God?’ or ‘Who is your redeemer?’ to which the answers expected were those in accordance with Christian beliefs.⁸⁴⁹ Was this providing the Muslim revivalists with more reasons to oppose the missionaries in the mutiny of 1857?

The evidence suggests that there were other similarities between the Serampore mission and Jennings’ Delhi mission – both missions had focused on education, but Jennings believed religion had to be preached alongside education; otherwise the results could be what he saw as disastrous. In contrast to the Baptist mission at Serampore, the Delhi mission was evidently well funded, which was crucial to its success. Arguably, both missions had one similar factor in relation to personalities; as the Serampore mission has been associated with the ‘Trio’ – Marshman, Carey and Ward – likewise the Delhi mission is often associated with Jennings. As the Trio were the driving force at Serampore, Jennings was the force that put together the Delhi mission so zealously. However his aggressive denunciation of Indian religions was to come at a price – opposition was already formed to the mission before it had even begun, and revivalism had been stirred in Delhi well before 1850; this revivalism would have a role to play in the course of 1857.

⁸⁴⁸ ‘Brief description of work at the Delhi Mission’, *SPG Journal*, 1855, p. cv, 25245A (vol. 1) USPG archive, Bodleian library.

⁸⁴⁹ Sharma, *Christian Missions in North India*, p. 46.

Jennings and his missionaries had planned for the Delhi mission to grow and for native ministers to preach to the Indians and ‘reason with objectors’.⁸⁵⁰ Prior to 1855, the Molvis had been actively debating with the missionaries in and around Delhi, such as the debates involving Pfander, examined in a previous chapter, but the atmosphere in the madrassahs was changing and more violent solutions were being sought, as shall be examined in the next chapter.

By 1855, the missionaries had met with opposition in Delhi; as a brief mission report of 1855 suggests,

The excited state of the Mahometan mind in Delhi at the present time, and the vigour with which the learned Molvis are prosecuting the controversy against Christianity, sufficiently evince the importance of occupying this field of labour.⁸⁵¹

It appears the opposition only strengthened the motivation of the missionaries and convinced them of the importance and need of a mission in the Mughal capital. There were limits to missionary activity as for example, an appeal for land for the mission city school was submitted by 1856, but it was rejected on the grounds that it would be ‘too near the King’s palace’.⁸⁵²

The missionaries had already rented a school house in Chandni Chowk which was an important street in the city. But the missionaries wanted it to be near to the mission premises.⁸⁵³ They were hoping to be able to take over a house in the city

⁸⁵⁰ ‘Brief report from the Delhi Mission’, March 1856, p. 64, 25245A (vol. 1) USPG archive, Bodleian library.

⁸⁵¹ Ibid.

⁸⁵² Letter A. Hubbard to Mr Hawkins, *Jennings Papers*, USPG CLR 14 – 104, Bodleian Library.

⁸⁵³ Ibid.

which had belonged to Mr Dyce Sombre (heir of the Begum Soomro)⁸⁵⁴, as it had land and large buildings and was conveniently located.⁸⁵⁵ However, a counter attack was being planned, an attack which would end all Jennings' hard work. In the next chapter, the focus shifts to the Madrassahs.

⁸⁵⁴ M. Fisher, *The inordinately strange life of Dyce Sombre: Victorian Anglo-Indian MP and 'chancery lunatic'* (Columbia: Columbia University Press, 2010), p. 131.

⁸⁵⁵ Letter A. Hubbard to Mr Hawkins, *Jennings Papers*, USPG CLR 14 – 105, Bodleian Library.

Revival pre-Mutiny

The Muslim printing press ‘Matba-i-Hashmi’ transferred from Meerut to Delhi.⁸⁵⁶

One must question what the reasons for this were, was it a response to the increasing number of missionary pamphlets produced prior to 1857? Up until 1857, many of the religious works published by Muslim scholars in India were in Persian and Molana Rahmat Allah Kairnawi was one of the first to use Urdu as a medium for his works. Persian was understood as the language of government but Urdu was understood by the common people.⁸⁵⁷

Powell points out ‘the introduction of European science, which had seemed to be proceeding so harmoniously through the medium of Urdu, had suddenly become the focus of controversy’.⁸⁵⁸ To make matters more suspect Ram Chandra then moved his attention to helping the Agra mission.⁸⁵⁹ Dalrymple has argued that this led to a change of attitude in some Muslim circles and ‘just as militant Christians were a growing force among the British in the early 1850s, so among Delhi’s Muslims there was a parallel rise in rigid fundamentalism’.⁸⁶⁰

Roland Miller has argued that though the reaction to Pfander’s activity had begun even before the Munzara, it was the debate which accelerated the reaction.⁸⁶¹ The Delhi Ulema studied the Bible in order to react to the challenge set by Pfander.

⁸⁵⁶ Sharma, *Christian Missions in North India*, p. 179.

⁸⁵⁷ Powell, *Muslims and Missionaries in pre – Mutiny India*, p. 224.

⁸⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 225.

⁸⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁶⁰ Dalrymple, ‘Believers and Infidels’, p. 5.

⁸⁶¹ R. Miller, *Muslims and the Gospel : bridging the gap : a reflection on Christian sharing* (Minneapolis: Kirk House Publishers, 2005), p. 373.

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan began his own counter attack against Pfander, arguing that 'religious truths must correspond to natural law'.⁸⁶² Though Pfander had not set up a mission in Delhi, his missionary activity had mobilised the Molvis in Delhi to react as Pfander reported to the *Colonial Church Chronicle and Missionary Journal*:

the discussion with the Mohammedans has been revived by themselves, and been taken up very warmly by some of their learned men, here and at Delhi. It is a remarkable fact, that one of their champions expressed himself in his letters to me...against the Missionaries' street preaching.⁸⁶³

The religious fundamentalism was attributed to certain segments of society especially the rich Punjabi Muslim traders who financed the Madrassahs of Delhi, and those who called for jihad against the 'kafirs' in order to create a society free from what they believed were 'non-Islamic' traditions.⁸⁶⁴ By September 1852, British authorities in Delhi were suspicious of the mujahedin network that was undergoing a growth again and they carried out a raid on various premises and concluded there was a 'conspiracy'.⁸⁶⁵ The person accused of heading the 'conspiracy' was Shaikh Husain Bakhsh, who was associated with the Madrassah Rahimiya.⁸⁶⁶

⁸⁶² Ibid.

⁸⁶³ *The Colonial Church Chronicle and Missionary Journal*, July 1847- December 1874, p. 38.

⁸⁶⁴ Dalrymple, 'Believers and Infidels', p. 9.

⁸⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 10.

⁸⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 11.

Many Muslim scholars became more active in Delhi by 1853, by preaching verbal Jihad against the British.⁸⁶⁷ This was not a violent form of physical opposition; it was verbal opposition to British rule. The reason for this was in part due to the fact that the Ulema were left anxious by the heightened levels of missionary activity in India – not only were they now hostile to missionaries but also to the Company.⁸⁶⁸ This is hardly surprising, considering the likes of Jennings who was a Company chaplain (with his salary and travel costs paid for by the Company)⁸⁶⁹ and a secretary for the USPG mission at the same time – clearly to native eyes this was evidence of the marriage between the missionaries and the Company.

Christianity had never been accepted in Delhi as it had been in other cities such as Agra, and Powell argues neither had most of the officials had a particularly missionary outlook, even though to the Ulema it may have seemed so.⁸⁷⁰ Besides, the Baptist missionary Padre Thompson had not been as tactless as Jennings and neither had he caused much unrest by his activities, and, as at Serampore had concentrated mainly on Hindus. The first converts of the mission had been Hindu, but Jennings also claimed that he had managed to convert a Muslim in Delhi, too, by 1853, though he was sent to Agra for baptism, arguably because it was realised that this would cause a stir in Delhi.⁸⁷¹

⁸⁶⁷ K. Majumdar, *British Paramountcy and Indian Renaissance* (Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1963), p. 890.

⁸⁶⁸ Nizami, *Madrasahs, Scholars and Saints: Muslim Response to the British Presence in Delhi and the Upper Doab*, p. 192.

⁸⁶⁹ Dalrymple, *The Last Mughal*, p. 60.

⁸⁷⁰ Powell, *Muslims and Missionaries in pre – Mutiny India*, p. 200.

⁸⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 215.

Besides, some Molvis and Pundits were already visiting the mission station by 1854, and voicing their objection. Hubbard commented in a letter in 1854:

The purpose for which we have come to reside among them, is I believe by this time pretty generally known by the Molvi and Pundits of this city; occasionally we have visits from some of them, who, as might perhaps be expected, are more ready to converse upon the merits of their own respective religions ... or else to bring forward some objection which they have heard against Christianity.⁸⁷²

This provides evidence that already by 1854, there was confrontational opposition and debate between the missionaries and the Ulema.

The Ulema reacted in different ways: some responded verbally; others mobilised the population via various means such as by discussing prophecies that British rule was doomed; and still others published books to counteract the effects of missionary activity.⁸⁷³ In 1853 Rahmat Allah Kairanawi invited Pfander for another Munazara, this time to defeat Pfander. By the second day, Pfander refused to continue with the Munazara – this was seen by some Muslims and the Ulema as a great victory for Islam and it was publicised widely so as to counter the effects of missionary activity.⁸⁷⁴

⁸⁷² Letter Rev. A. R. Hubbard to Mr. Bullock, November, 18, 1854, USPG CLR 14, p. 41, Bodleian Library.

⁸⁷³ Nizami, *Madrasahs, Scholars and Saints: Muslim Response to the British Presence in Delhi and the Upper Doab*, p. 199.

⁸⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 205.

The 'Jihadi Fatwa' was signed by a number of Ulema in 1857, including Azurda, and Allamah Fazlul Haqq Khayrabadi.⁸⁷⁵ Some Ulema who had close links with the British found that they were in danger as their homes were raided.⁸⁷⁶ The Delhi population was also mobilised and many Muslims rallied under their Imams and spiritual leaders.⁸⁷⁷ Yet not all the leaders of the Mutiny united; some of them had their own groups and own methods of doing things.⁸⁷⁸ Nevertheless, despite their differing methods and approaches, one thing that united the Ulema, even including pro-British groups of Ulema, was the suspicion of the Company by 1853.⁸⁷⁹

By 1856, it appears that Jennings himself knew that the atmosphere in Delhi was changing; attending a ceremony on a Sunday afternoon in the winter of 1856, John Sherer noticed the change:

As he passed the pew, I noticed a rather dogged expression on his face, as of one who should say, 'I know this is a little burdensome but I think you must bear it'. Afterwards when the pulpit was reached, it was growing dark, and soon a candle had to be sent for ... the sermon ... dwelt as far as I remember on the vicissitudes of life, and urged how unwise was the postponement of repentance in the face of the absolute

⁸⁷⁵ Liddle, 'Azurda scholar, poet and judge', p.136.

⁸⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 137.

⁸⁷⁷ Malik, 'Letters, prison sketches and autobiographical literature: The case of Fazl-E-Haqq Khairabadi in the Andaman penal colony', p. 31.

⁸⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 32.

⁸⁷⁹ Dalrymple, *The Last Mughal*, p. 75.

uncertainty of the future. I felt at the time a most unaccountable sinking of spirits.⁸⁸⁰

But, Jennings' fellow missionaries may not have been as aware of the climate as a letter from Hubbard to Hawkins (received in May 1857) stated that the Bishop of Madras had visited the mission Station and forty people were confirmed in one day and another twelve were confirmed the next day, Hubbard expressed the prospects of the mission with optimism.⁸⁸¹

It is also important to note that Mirza Fakhr-al-Din (the heir apparent) encouraged the Ulema to respond to missionary activity. He gave his patronage to some of the responses of the Ulema to missionary activity. This is important because it shows that members of the Royal family were helping the Ulema to respond to the challenge of missionaries.⁸⁸² Mirza Fakhr-al-Din died in 1856, possibly due to poisoning. However after his death, the Ulema did not receive the same level of support from Bahadur Zafar Shah.⁸⁸³

As mentioned in the previous chapter, over the years there was an increase in the number of missionaries in India, and legislation was passed which advantaged new converts; caste distinctions had been threatened and this was considered to be deliberate in the eyes of many Indians.⁸⁸⁴ In 1857, the mission at Delhi was barely four years old, thus it is important to understand the backdrop to this mission and the

⁸⁸⁰ J. Sherer, *Daily life during the Indian Mutiny, personal experiences of 1857* (London: Swan Sonnenschein, 1910), p.2.

⁸⁸¹ Letter A. Hubbard to Mr Hawkins, *Jennings Papers*, USPG E2-115, Bodleian Library.

⁸⁸² Powell, *Muslims and Missionaries in pre – Mutiny India*, p. 225.

⁸⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 218

⁸⁸⁴ Hughes, *The Mutiny Chaplains*, p. 19.

void created by time between this mission and the mission at Serampore which had been set up much earlier.

By 1857, the Ulema were convinced that the English were attempting to convert Indians,⁸⁸⁵ for example Molvi Muhammad Baqar of Delhi (also editor of the Urdu *The Delhi Newspaper*) thought that Jennings was a ‘fanatic’.⁸⁸⁶ Many Delhi citizens were becoming suspicious and uneasy regarding the zeal of the missionaries, and this led the Ulema to take a more active stance against the missionaries, as Avril Powell highlights: ‘For by the last years of the reign the newly intrusive activities of the Protestant missionaries would induce ... some new defining of positions among the Ulema’.⁸⁸⁷

Uneasiness had grown in Delhi, and the English language paper the *Delhi Gazette* had commented that Jennings was overzealous in his approach. One correspondent wrote, ‘The zeal of the missionaries is greater than their discretion in selecting this Heathen pandemonium as the theatre of their exertions’.⁸⁸⁸ The fact that in some cases missionaries were given masjids in Delhi as places of residence by the government,⁸⁸⁹ and that in other cases masjids and temples were demolished to make way for new churches for missionaries,⁸⁹⁰ did not help to remove the doubts of the Delhi citizens either.

⁸⁸⁵ Malik, ‘Letters, prison sketches and autobiographical literature: The case of Fazl-E-Haqq Khairabadi in the Andaman penal colony’, p. 28.

⁸⁸⁶ Dalrymple, *The Last Mughal*, p. 68.

⁸⁸⁷ Powell, *Muslims and Missionaries in pre – Mutiny India*, p. 194.

⁸⁸⁸ Dalrymple, *The Last Mughal*, p. 60.

⁸⁸⁹ Nizami, *Madrasahs, Scholars and Saints: Muslim Response to the British Presence in Delhi and the Upper Doab*, p. 194.

⁸⁹⁰ Dalrymple, *The Last Mughal*, p. 69.

The Protestant missionary activity in Delhi had left some Ulema isolated from the Company; many, such as Allamah Fazlul Haqq Khayrabadi, had left their Company posts as a result. Some Ulema kept their posts with the Company even until 1857, but even those who had kept their posts, such as Mufti Sadruddin Azurda, were keeping a close eye on the activity of the missionaries in Delhi. And despite leaving their Company posts, some such as Molana Khairabadi continued to influence events in Delhi, in his case via his links with the circles associated with Sayed Ahmad Khan and Mufti Sadruddin Azurda.⁸⁹¹

⁸⁹¹ Liddle, 'Azurda scholar, poet and judge', p. 126.

Chapter 7. Peshawar : ‘The key to other countries’⁸⁹²

This chapter assesses the success and impact of the Peshawar Mission, but is considerably shorter than previous chapters due to the short life of the mission. This was only two years old in 1857, though it did survive, since unlike Agra and Delhi, Peshawar was not affected by mutiny.

Establishing a mission at Peshawar

The funding for a mission at Peshawar was first established in 1853. The founder of the Mission was a military officer named Colonel Martin, in charge of the 9th Bengal Native Infantry which was stationed at Peshawar.⁸⁹³ He put aside £1000 to establish the mission – this he donated anonymously in the shape of ten thousand rupees to the CMS, but Colonel Frederick Mackeson (Commissioner at Peshawar) would not allow a mission to be established as he feared it would lead to discontent against the British in the area.⁸⁹⁴ Mackeson was assassinated in September 1853 and Herbert Edwardes took over as Commissioner, to Martin’s delight, Edwardes’ outlook differed to that of Mackeson, and he was a staunch supporter of such missions.⁸⁹⁵ He believed India had been given to England instead of France because the English had ‘made the greatest effort to preserve the Christian religion in its purest apostolic form’.⁸⁹⁶

Amongst those who called for a mission at Peshawar, were a Major Hugh

⁸⁹² *CMS Intelligencer* (London: Seeley, Jackson and Halliday, vol. 5, 1854), p. 148.

⁸⁹³ Edwardes, *Memorials / life and letters of Major-General Sir Herbert B. Edwardes*, p. 299.

⁸⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 300-1.

⁸⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 300.

⁸⁹⁶ David, *The Indian Mutiny: 1857*, p. 52.

James, Sir James Brind, Sir Henry Norman, Colonel Urmston, Colonel Bamfield, Dr. Baddeley, and the Reverend R.B. Maltby.⁸⁹⁷ It is interesting to note the number of officers that are mentioned above. Essentially they argued that the Peshawar mission would take Christianity into Afghanistan – Peshawar was a crossing point and it was hoped ideas could be forwarded into Afghanistan from here.⁸⁹⁸ In this respect the Peshawar mission was unique as it was one of the furthest outposts of British rule; it was as far as the missionaries could go.⁸⁹⁹ The goal was to push Christianity forward, and to come away from ‘defensive’ positions and instead ‘advance and attack’.⁹⁰⁰

Letters from Peshawar reveal that the missionaries felt the character of the people of Peshawar was bold and independent and that they would be perfect ‘instruments’ for the propagation of Christianity in India, ‘well fitted by natural qualifications to spread abroad matters.’⁹⁰¹ The location as well as the people would help propagate Christianity further as Peshawar was a trading centre, visited by large numbers of people and was a ‘trans-Indian country’ – providing further opportunities to spread Christianity beyond India and Afghanistan.⁹⁰² It was hoped the establishment of a mission at Peshawar would have a ‘ripple effect’ of some sort, as ‘results effected here must be felt through many countries.’⁹⁰³ So it was requested that a ‘bold’ missionary should be sent to Peshawar.⁹⁰⁴

⁸⁹⁷ Edwardes, *Memorials / life and letters of Major-General Sir Herbert B. Edwardes*, p. 322.

⁸⁹⁸ *CMS Intelligencer* (London: Seeley, Jackson and Halliday, vol. 5, 1854), p. 89.

⁸⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

⁹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

⁹⁰¹ Letter from residents at Peshawar to CMS committee, 4 November 1854, *CMS Archive*, CMS/B/OMS/CI1/016/6, Cadbury Research Library.

⁹⁰² *Ibid.*

⁹⁰³ *Ibid.*

⁹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

It was even felt that Peshawar could be used as a base for further missionary activity in Central Asia.⁹⁰⁵ Surely this missionary adventure would not end here, so they hoped.⁹⁰⁶ Indeed once the mission had been established, in 1856, missionaries were hoping to use Peshawar as a stepping stone to other areas, such as Kafiristan.⁹⁰⁷

The station at Peshawar had a military presence of 18000 men according to the *CMS Intelligencer* in 1854, but despite this peace was not always maintained, and financial inducements were used to keep subjects silenced, as the *CMS Intelligencer* reported ‘they are, however gradually becoming accustomed to us; and the very large sums which daily come into their hands’.⁹⁰⁸

But it was not only the tribesmen who were obtaining large sums of money, the Mission Fund was also seeing increases in donations as between just two sermons, a figure of 10, 269 rupees was raised for the Peshawar mission in 1854.⁹⁰⁹ Funding came from some surprising sources, as official figures were donating; as by 1854, the Commander in Chief at Peshawar had donated one hundred pounds, along with Mr. Henry Carre Tucker who was the commissioner of Benares, who also made a special effort to distribute the report of the Peshawar Mission in every district of his division.⁹¹⁰

They were joined by John Nicholson, though he was not an open supporter of missionaries, he was happy to donate towards Edwardes’ mission, as he stated in a

⁹⁰⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁰⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁰⁷ Letter from residents at Peshawar to CMS committee, 4 November 1854, *CMS Archive*, CMS/B/OMS/CI1/016/6, Cadbury Research Library.

⁹⁰⁸ *CMS Intelligencer* (London: Seeley, Jackson and Halliday, vol. 5, 1854), p. 90.

⁹⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 152.

⁹¹⁰ Edwardes, *Memorials / life and letters of Major-General Sir Herbert B. Edwardes*, p. 312.

letter to Edwardes: ‘As far as my experience of missionaries goes, they are generally selected with infinitely less care than recruits’.⁹¹¹ Even so, Nicholson was prepared to donate five hundred rupees for the mission, at a time when according to the rules of the East India Company, it was forbidden for any officer to promote missionary work in India, but as Charles Allen states ‘the rules were being broken with ever-increasing flagrancy in these last pre-Mutiny years’.⁹¹²

What was unique in so many ways about the Peshawar mission was that it had such blatant official backing; the fact above all that Herbert Edwardes headed the Mission.⁹¹³ This was because Edwardes’ missionary zeal was apparent, Charles Allen argues ‘Here shoulder to shoulder stand two dominant elements in the Edwardes character: The intolerant Evangelical zeal which so endeared him to Ruskin, and a self-belief bordering on arrogance’.⁹¹⁴ Allen argues that the art critic and social reformer John Ruskin saw Edwardes as ‘Officially a soldier, practically a Bishop’.⁹¹⁵

Edwardes was clearly aware of the backlash, but adopted a policy opposite to that which Mackeson had used with the missionaries, as he commented in a speech:

come what will, we will do it, and use our utmost efforts for the establishment of a Mission...should it possibly create some disturbance

⁹¹¹ C. Allen, *Soldier Sahibs: The men who made the north west frontier* (London: John Murray Publishing, 2000), p. 251.

⁹¹² Ibid.

⁹¹³ Weitbrecht, *Missionary sketches in north India with reference to recent events*, p. xii.

⁹¹⁴ Allen, *Soldier Sahibs: The men who made the north west frontier*, p. 107.

⁹¹⁵ Ibid.

for a time, then it will be my duty, as a magistrate, to interfere, and give that protection which every European and every native may claim.⁹¹⁶

Edwardes maintained that force should not be used – he saw this as impractical and believed, instead that the Christianisation of India was the private duty of Christians.⁹¹⁷ Edwardes was confident that the setting up of the mission would not affect the political situation, as he stated ‘For these reasons, I say plainly that I have no fear that the establishment of a Christian Mission at Peshawur will tend to disturb the peace’.⁹¹⁸ A rather daring stance for an official to hold in India, but he was determined that Christianity would be embraced with open arms as he argued that Benares ‘was a far more bigoted capital of Hinduism than Peshawar ... yet it is now filled with our schools, and colleges, and Missions, and its pundits are sitting at the feet of our professors’ and he hoped that the same could be done with the citizens of Peshawar.⁹¹⁹

Against this backdrop, on 19 December 1854, a public meeting was held at Peshawar, presided by Edwardes, and it was agreed that thirty thousand rupees would be put towards the project.⁹²⁰ The missionaries appealed to the rich to donate to the missionary cause, as for example in one letter a request is made ‘and also that the rich may be made willing to give liberally of their wealth to maintain those who

⁹¹⁶ *CMS Intelligencer* (London: Seeley, Jackson and Halliday, vol. 5, 1854), p. 91.

⁹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 154.

⁹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 155.

⁹¹⁹ *CMS Intelligencer* (London: Seeley, Jackson and Halliday, vol. 5, 1854), p. 155.

⁹²⁰ *Ibid.*

may present them in heathen lands'.⁹²¹ Yet not all the British men and women at Peshawar were so hopeful about the success of the mission, as when the meeting decided on employing missionaries, the subscription list was passed around for funding, and one captain thought it necessary to sarcastically write 'one rupee towards a Colt's revolver for the first missionary'.⁹²²

Nevertheless, the missionaries did not hold back and in 1854, Robert Clark had been invited from Amritsar, but Edwardes and his committee felt the need for a more experienced missionary and thus they invited Pfander.⁹²³ Pfander left Agra for Peshawar with his wife and two children,⁹²⁴ leaving behind Hoernle and Schneider at Agra.⁹²⁵ It is interesting that like the USPG at Delhi, the CMS was also asked to exercise discretion in the area, and ensure that 'unnecessary' provocation was avoided. Pfander the 'loose cannon' referred to by Dalrymple, was hardly the best suited missionary for this purpose. Furthermore Pfander was set to Peshawar despite the fact the missionaries were aware that the city had a strong tradition of religious learning:

Their teachers are often men of learning, well read in the philosophy and Science as well as the religion of the Arabians, and the teachers of a new religion should be therefore well qualified to unravel their subtleties and

⁹²¹ Letter from residents at Peshawar to CMS committee, 4 November 1854, *CMS Archive*, CMS/B/OMS/CI1/016/6, Cadbury Research Library.

⁹²² Edwardes, *Memorials / life and letters of Major-General Sir Herbert B. Edwardes*, p. 309.

⁹²³ Gibbs, *The Anglican Church in India 1600 – 1970*, p. 193.

⁹²⁴ Barney, *A star in the east*, p. 221.

⁹²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 172.

lay open before them the reasons of their wrong conclusions.⁹²⁶

It is interesting that even prior to an official mission this confrontation was being mentioned; maybe this was the reason for the choice of a man such as Pfander, as they wanted a missionary with experience such as that of the Munazara to attempt to challenge the Molvis at Peshawar.

Pfander was also joined by the Reverend J.A McCarthy from Islington.⁹²⁷

Soon after, Colonel Martin gave up his post in the army and involved himself in the mission work.⁹²⁸ John Lawrence, even when he was Chief Commissioner believed that ‘nothing but good could come from the presence of a man like Dr. Pfander’.⁹²⁹ He was not alone in holding the men in such high regard, the Bishop of Madras thought these men were a fine selection for the mission, as he wrote later in June 1857 ‘You have just the men for the places – clear headed, judicious, earnest, and full of the spirit of love’.⁹³⁰

Clark believed that there was a need for three missionaries, one who would supervise schools and overlook their functioning, another who would take up bazaar preaching, and the final one would travel and take charge of translation. Clark did not think it fit for one individual to be involved in more than one of these activities.⁹³¹ By 12 February 1855 there were two ordained and one lay missionary at

⁹²⁶ Letter from residents at Peshawar to CMS committee, 4 November 1854, *CMS Archive*, CMS/B/OMS/CI1/016/6, Cadbury Research Library.

⁹²⁷ Barney, *A star in the east*, p. 218.

⁹²⁸ Edwardes, *Memorials / life and letters of Major-General Sir Herbert B. Edwardes*, p. 308.

⁹²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 330.

⁹³⁰ Barney, *A star in the east*, p. 220.

⁹³¹ *CMS Intelligencer* (London: Seeley, Jackson and Halliday, vol. 5, 1854), p. 153.

the station (Pfander, Clark and Martin).⁹³² It appears Clark himself took on the role of supervision of schools as Edwardes reported in a letter to *The Colonial Church Chronicle*, dated 21 November 1855 ‘Mr. Clark’s exertions during the last hot weather, in the discouraging task of beginning a school on Missionary principles in a Mahomedan city, have been very great indeed’.⁹³³ According to Edwardes’ letter it also appears that Pfander took on the role of bazaar preaching. This may have left Martin and McCarthy with the task of translating and travelling.

⁹³² Edwardes, *Memorials / life and letters of Major-General Sir Herbert B. Edwardes*, p. 310.

⁹³³ *The Colonial Church Chronicle and Missionary Journal, July 1847- December 1874*(London: W.H Bartlett, 1869), p. 31.

The missionaries set to work

It appears that the missionaries had some kind of fascination with the tribes who inhabited the Peshawar region, as they make frequent mention to this in missionary letters and CMS journals, as Clark wrote to the *Intelligencer*: ‘I have talked on the subject with almost every European whom I have met ... and the opinion seems almost universal’. The subject which he alluded to was the belief that the Pashtuns belonged to the lost tribes of Israel.⁹³⁴

Clark had high hopes for their conversion – he felt it an ‘honour’ to work to convert them. This is rather interesting, as this idea opened up a range of new possibilities for the missionaries, as more missionary interest gathered in the region. At one point Shaftesbury even desired to devote work and funding from his society (he was president of the London Society for the propagation of Christianity among the Jews) at Peshawar – to this he was advised that until such views that the Pashtuns were ‘sons of Israel’ were confirmed, it would not be wise to do so as it would divert funds from elsewhere.⁹³⁵

Whether this was true or not, as regards to the origins of the Pashtuns, it was clear that their tribes and customs and codes of honour (Pashtunwali), their way of life was unique in many respects as for example it was customary for the men of Peshawar to be heavily armed.⁹³⁶ This would inevitably lead to questions of security for the missionaries – they would have to be more discreet, as a letter to the *CMS Intelligencer* of 1854 reported ‘nor are they accustomed to bow to another’s will:

⁹³⁴ *CMS Intelligencer* (London: Seeley, Jackson and Halliday, vol. 5, 1854), p. 901.

⁹³⁵ Edwardes, *Memorials / life and letters of Major-General Sir Herbert B. Edwardes*, pp. 314-15.

⁹³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 229.

their character, therefore, calls for discretion in those to whom that office is entrusted'.⁹³⁷

Clark made no secret of the fact that the character of the inhabitants of Peshawar could in some cases be threatening, but he believed the time was ripe for a mission here and he spoke to the authorities who advised him that if 'prudent' missionaries were used, all would be well.⁹³⁸ However, would Pfander make a 'discreet' missionary, as he was known to preach at both cantonments and bazaars,⁹³⁹ where he could obtain hearing from Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus?

Yet Pfander did face opposition in many ways other than direct violence, as Barney states 'they have frequently met with opposition – everything short of actual violence; but they have persevered'.⁹⁴⁰ What prevented violence, is a question which shall be explored later in this chapter. Clark however found the climate to be less hospitable, as he recorded in one instance he was walking away from the European cantonments when John Lawrence the Chief Commissioner of the Punjab and Edwardes were driving by, they ordered him to get on to their carriage and condemned him for putting himself in such danger.⁹⁴¹

Preaching in bazaars would only be effective if the missionaries could grasp knowledge of the local languages, these being Persian amongst the wealthier classes and Pashto which was spoken by most of Peshawar's inhabitants, though Urdu was

⁹³⁷ *CMS Intelligencer* (London: Seeley, Jackson and Halliday, vol. 5, 1854), p. 150.

⁹³⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹³⁹ Barney, *A star in the east*, p. 218.

⁹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴¹ T. Hughes, *All Saints' Memorial Church the the city of Peshawar, Afghanistan* (London: 1885), p. 2.

also spoken.⁹⁴² These linguistic barriers made missionary work more complicated. Pfander had come from Agra and Delhi, where, though Persian was spoken Pashto was not spoken as the main language. This meant that time had to be devoted to the learning of the language.

Also the Bible had to be translated into Pashto to target the missionaries' audience at Peshawar and so by 1854, the translation of New Testament was instigated, by two 'gentlemen' at the station – though no names are recorded.⁹⁴³ Peshawar could offer the missionaries scope for development, but the missionaries would have to familiarise themselves with a new language – one which would be key to a passage into Afghanistan.⁹⁴⁴

Initially, Clark struggled with the linguistic challenges of the mission, at Peshawar, he had no helper in the native Pushto, as he stated:

I have no helper in my Pushtoo work, I am quite alone. There is neither European nor native at present who will undertake it ... A pattana catechist would be of the very greatest help.⁹⁴⁵

Later he was aided by a Captain James.⁹⁴⁶ It is noteworthy that once again a military officer was involved in the mission work and this created a link in the eyes of the

⁹⁴² *CMS Intelligencer* (London: Seeley, Jackson and Halliday, vol. 5, 1854), p. 90.

⁹⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴⁴ Letter from residents at Peshawar to CMS committee, 4 November 1854, *CMS Archive*, CMS/B/OMS/CI1/016/6, Cadbury Research Library.

⁹⁴⁵ Copy of a letter from R. Clark, 21 November, 1856, *CMS Archive*, CMS/B/OMS/CI1 069/116, Cadbury Research Library.

⁹⁴⁶ Edwardes, *Memorials / life and letters of Major-General Sir Herbert B. Edwardes*, p. 314.

Indians – did they distinguish between missionary, army or government?

It was a long process which could take a few months to translate one Gospel alone.⁹⁴⁷ Although the Baptist Mission at Serampore (the BMS was the first Baptist Society active in North India)⁹⁴⁸ had translated the New Testament in Pashto, it was difficult to obtain as there were so few copies. Besides, the CMS felt there was need for changes to this version of the translation.⁹⁴⁹ By the end of 1854, parts of the Pashto Serampore New Testament were reproduced in the form of 3000 copies and distributed in Peshawar.⁹⁵⁰

If at Agra, printed books impressed the natives, then at Peshawar it was hoped medicine would make an impression upon the native mind, it was felt essential that the missionaries should possess some knowledge of medicine.⁹⁵¹ A missionary who had medical knowledge was required.⁹⁵² This was one way in which they could attract potential hearers and converts. Another reason why medical aid was so important at the mission was because of practical technicalities – many diseases flourished at Peshawar as Clark reported to the *CMS Intelligencer* ‘The health of the station is said not to be good for two, or some say, three months in the year, but at other times it is very healthy’.⁹⁵³ Clark reported that in the autumn months

⁹⁴⁷ *CMS Intelligencer* (London: Seeley, Jackson and Halliday, vol. 5, 1854), p. 90.

⁹⁴⁸ Forrester, *Caste and Christianity: Attitudes and policies on caste of Anglo Saxon Protestant Missionaries in India*, p. 22.

⁹⁴⁹ *CMS Intelligencer* (London: Seeley, Jackson and Halliday, vol. 5, 1854), p. 90.

⁹⁵⁰ Edwardes, *Memorials / life and letters of Major-General Sir Herbert B. Edwardes*, p. 314.

⁹⁵¹ Letter from residents at Peshawar to CMS committee, 4 November 1854, *CMS Archive*, CMS/B/OMS/CI1/016/6, Cadbury Research Library.

⁹⁵² *CMS Intelligencer* (London: Seeley, Jackson and Halliday, vol. 5, 1854), p. 156.

⁹⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 90.

inhabitants of Peshawar fell ill with fever.⁹⁵⁴ Again such illnesses could bring Muslims to the mission station for medical aid, allowing missionaries to preach to them.

Missionaries believed they were up against two types of challenges – one being the Muslims and the second being nominal Christians.⁹⁵⁵ They believed that the Molvis were responsible for the ‘fanatical’ character of the inhabitants of Peshawar.⁹⁵⁶ But despite all their efforts, it appeared that the missionaries had to work within the existing frame of customs, as even thirty years on from the establishment of the mission, one part of the Church was set apart for women who observed ‘purdah’.⁹⁵⁷ This is interesting as it shows that the missionaries could not change all of the customs of their converts (or rather even after conversion they would not shed all their beliefs), and shows that purdah still remained a barrier for the missionaries up until after 1857.

Other obstacles in the way of missionary work at Peshawar included the presence of the military as Clark commented:

It is a deep disgrace to our country and to our religion to say so, but still it is a fact acknowledged by all, that the presence of European troops is, generally speaking, still one of the greatest impediments to Christian Missions.⁹⁵⁸

⁹⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 153.

⁹⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 150.

⁹⁵⁷ Hughes, *All Saints’ Memorial Church the the city of Peshawar, Afghanistan*, p. 1.

⁹⁵⁸ *CMS Intelligencer* (London: Seeley, Jackson and Halliday, vol. 5, 1854), p. 149.

Was he referring to the physical military presence or was he referring to the lack of religious observance by troops?

If the success of the mission was to be measured by the number of converts then the analysis would prove disappointing, as it does in relation to Agra and Delhi, as the mission claimed very few converts prior to 1857. It appears that converts were not easily attracted by the Peshawar Mission, rather most of the converts mentioned in the mission records appeared to have been travellers, such as Persians, for example one being named as Yahya Bakir who had heard of Pfander at Agra and travelled to Peshawar to convert. But a few days after his conversion he was found unconscious and wounded, and had lost two fingers; he was the target of an attack.⁹⁵⁹

This shows there was opposition growing in Peshawar towards missionaries and their converts. The question that arises here is how far the missionaries were protected from such violence. This may have been because they were seen to be so closely affiliated with the government and Commissioner of Peshawar; connections which protected them; but the same could not be said of converts and therefore they were attacked.

According to a speech made by Edwardes, two Persians had been baptized by 12 February 1855.⁹⁶⁰ One of these may have been a convert known as ‘Abdul Masih’.⁹⁶¹ He was baptised by Reverend R.B Maltby, who was the chaplain at the station. Clark seems to forward the idea in the *Intelligencer* that this convert could not wait to convert other natives ‘At one time he could hardly be kept from going to preach in the city though he could not do it, alone as he was, without some risk to

⁹⁵⁹ C. Field, *With the Afghans* (London: Marshall Brothers, 1908), p. 2.

⁹⁶⁰ Edwardes, *Memorials / life and letters of Major-General Sir Herbert B. Edwardes*, p. 311.

⁹⁶¹ *CMS Intelligencer* (London: Seeley, Jackson and Halliday, vol. 5, 1854), p. 90.

himself'.⁹⁶² The chaplain as at Delhi was active in the works of the mission, as he preached sermons on behalf of the mission, something he was forbidden to do by the rules of the East India Company.⁹⁶³ But despite all the efforts of the missionaries, it appears that the first native convert was not baptised until 1858, a man named 'Dilawar Khan'.⁹⁶⁴

However, the missionaries did not expect large numbers of converts straight away, as Clark commented in a letter, quoted in the *Intelligencer* 1854, 'We are not to wait till the people of whole districts are converted, but to sow the seed, and then leave it, in the ground of men's hearts, to itself, or rather to the grace of God, to germinate and bring forth fruit under the care of those who are called to water that which has been sown by others'. However, like at Agra and Delhi, converts often converted for material gain, as Robert Clark wrote in a letter 'I often think we are like King David in the hold when all the debtors of bad character flocked to him. They certainly often do to us but it is temporal not spiritual gain they seek for.'⁹⁶⁵

The missionaries at Peshawar expected more converts in years to come, that being a long term aim but hoped to influence the native mind in the mean time.⁹⁶⁶ Robert Clark describes his life as a missionary at Peshawar in 1856: 'I now sit over my books very much less and go out much more into the city and villages to preach'.⁹⁶⁷ This shows he was going out in public – he was physically present and

⁹⁶² Ibid.

⁹⁶³ Ibid., p. 152.

⁹⁶⁴ Field, *With the Afghans*, p. 5.

⁹⁶⁵ Copy of a letter from R. Clark, 21 November, 1856, *CMS Archive*, CMS/B/OMS/CI1 069/116, Cadbury Research Library.

⁹⁶⁶ *CMS Intelligencer* (London: Seeley, Jackson and Halliday, vol. 5, 1854), p. 148.

⁹⁶⁷ Copy of a letter from R. Clark, 21 November, 1856, *CMS Archive*, CMS/B/OMS/CI1 069/116, Cadbury Research Library.

opponents of missionary activity could now see him. Yet he maintained that ‘the people of the city though noisy, never did more than make a noise’.⁹⁶⁸ Typical activities of the missionaries at Peshawar involved driving out and gathering a number of people in the villages.⁹⁶⁹

⁹⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁶⁹ Ibid.

The absent Mutiny

Though the Mutiny did not occur at Peshawar, it is worthwhile assessing how the mission at Peshawar operated during the Mutiny, as it reveals more about the official attitudes in 1857. Even with the threat of the Mutiny looming, Sir John Lawrence and Mr. Montgomery urged the continuation of missionary preaching at Peshawar.⁹⁷⁰ In the areas surrounding Peshawar events occurred which could have caused a stir, but surprisingly relative peace was maintained at Peshawar.

At Bannu (south of Peshawar), John Nicholson publicly insulted a Muslim mullah. The Mullah was sitting outside the village masjid, when Nicholson rode past, alleging that the man stared at him with contempt, to this the mullah was brought before Nicholson, who punished him by ordering that his beard be shaved off – an important issue for a Muslim.⁹⁷¹ This could have heated the general atmosphere prior to the Mutiny; however no large uprising occurred, as Pfander wrote to the Evangelical repository in July 1857: ‘the Mohammedan hill tribes around us have not only remained quiet, but are bringing in all the sepoy that have deserted, and they have themselves flocked in by hundreds to be enlisted in the new levies raised here to be used against the rebels’.⁹⁷²

Yet, this is not to say there was absolutely no opposition and panic during the Mutiny, as Reverend McCarthy stated in letter, dated 11 June 1857, ‘The people in the city, too, said that if the sepoy attacked the Christians they would join them. You may be sure we were in an anxious state of mind’.⁹⁷³ McCarthy slept in his

⁹⁷⁰ Weitbrecht, *Missionary sketches in north India with reference to recent events*, p. xiii.

⁹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 244.

⁹⁷² *The Evangelical repository*, (Philadelphia: W.M Young, 1857, volume 16), p. 403.

⁹⁷³ Barney, *A star in the east*, p. 220.

clothes and boots that night.⁹⁷⁴ According to McCarthy, Pfander did not think ‘the God who had given India to England that the Gospel might be preached to its benighted people, would now allow it to fall back into the hands of idolaters and Mohamedans’.⁹⁷⁵ So Pfander continued to preach throughout most of the Mutiny period except for a few days – even Pfander had to stop then. Like at Delhi and Agra, school attendance was low throughout the crisis. People feared the school would be attacked if mutiny broke out and so did not let their sons go to school.⁹⁷⁶

The sepoy were disarmed and therefore Mutiny was avoided at Peshawar, but there was some level of discontent, as some soldiers deserted. Weitbrecht may have exaggerated when she reported that almost all of the eight native regiments were showing signs of discontent and so they were disarmed - one regiment was even ‘cut to pieces’.⁹⁷⁷ The accuracy of this statement is questionable, however there is evidence to show that during the Mutiny, executions took place every Tuesday morning at Peshawar, and within five months, according to some sources five hundred and twenty three military executions occurred, forty four mutineers were blown from guns, twenty had been hanged and four hundred and fifty nine had been shot.⁹⁷⁸ Meanwhile any deserter to have been found was ordered to be killed, and his property was rewarded to those who caught him.⁹⁷⁹

⁹⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 221.

⁹⁷⁵ Barney, *A star in the east*, p. 221.

⁹⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷⁷ Weitbrecht, *Missionary sketches in north India with reference to recent events*, p. xiii.

⁹⁷⁸ Field, *With the Afghans*, p. 8.

⁹⁷⁹ Allen, *Soldier Sahibs: The men who made the north west frontier*, p. 307.

However, Saul David in his study of the Indian Mutiny has argued that there wasn't a mutiny at Peshawar, because the sepoys had been disarmed and therefore the frontier was secure.⁹⁸⁰

Reflecting upon the causes of the Indian Mutiny, Pfander admitted in a letter dated July 1857, that the Mutiny had religious roots but maintained that nowhere had the missionaries and their activities been cited as the cause by rebels.⁹⁸¹ He was obviously unaware or concealing the fact that his activities had turned heads in Delhi where scholars and soldiers had identified missionary activity as a cause of their action. Pfander believed it was all a 'remarkable retaliation and punishment for the ungodly and unchristian policy' of the government.⁹⁸² But despite such comments Pfander did not shy away from his belief that the rebellion showed the influence of Christianity on Indians 'And further it proves what a deep impression the spread of Christianity has made upon the native mind. Both Hindoos and Mohammedans feel that the ground is giving away under them... the opening up of the gigantic Ganges – canal, the holy Ganges having been obliged to obey the Sahibs, and to flow in the channel dug for her by them...together with the widespread preaching of the Gospel, have produced that impression'.⁹⁸³ Was Pfander not admitting here that missionary activity was the cause of the rebellion?

Maybe the reason for the quiet reactions to the mission was because people did not differentiate between missionaries, government, the military and company, they just saw them as part of the 'government'? As Claud Field states: 'Dr. Pfander

⁹⁸⁰ David, *The Indian Mutiny: 1857*, p. 66.

⁹⁸¹ *The Evangelical repository*, 403.

⁹⁸² *Ibid.*

⁹⁸³ *The Evangelical repository*, p. 403.

seems to have been able to obtain far quieter hearings in the city as a bazaar preacher than the ordinary evangelistic preacher can obtain now. At first it was supposed that he preached by order of the Government; now, when it is understood that missionaries have no official connection with Government, it is far harder for them to obtain a patient hearing in this kind of preaching'.⁹⁸⁴

Therefore when missionary activity was no longer associated with the governments so closely, opposition did occur in the form of violence, as for example an attempt was made to kill a missionary, the Reverend T. Tuting in 1861.⁹⁸⁵ Perhaps The opponents of missionaries were deterred by reprisals, however once they came to know that missionary preaching no longer enjoyed official backing, they went on the offensive against missionaries in India.

Furthermore could it be argued that the Peshawar mission had not developed enough by 1857, to make enough noise to attract opposition from the local Muslim religious scholars, as mentioned earlier, it took a few months to translate one Gospel alone, the progress of such a Mission would not turn heads as that at Agra had done, therefore it survived the Mutiny. Furthermore, there was geographical distance between Peshawar and Delhi and Agra. Delhi and Agra were within close vicinity, unlike Peshawar, and Peshawar had a different language and culture and thus the activities of those who opposed the missionaries at Peshawar were not in union with those at Delhi and Agra.

It has been suggested that some of the cells of the Sayyid Ahmed of Rai Bareilly's Mujahideen movement had survived the initial crackdown by the British

⁹⁸⁴ Field, *With the Afghans*, p. 2.

⁹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

authorities – it is interesting then that they did not appear to show up in Peshawar, if they were still existent and organised, discontent would have been expected at Peshawar, as this was where Sayyid Ahmed had once raised a ‘Mujahideen movement’ army – at Peshawar.⁹⁸⁶ There had been attempts by Syed Ahmed of Rai Bareilly to unite the various Pashtun tribes at Peshawar⁹⁸⁷ but it would be interesting to research into what remained of his movement at Peshawar and the role it played if any at Peshawar during 1857 – yet again this is beyond the scope of this thesis.

Despite all the varying interpretations, for Edwardes the outcome of the Mutiny was a triumph and that ‘the Giver of Empires is indeed God’, he continued with his missionary propagation. For the government however, it signalled that less risk now had to be taken otherwise Mutiny could take place. This marked a change in policy in terms of attitudes to religious sensitivities.⁹⁸⁸ However the effects of the Mutiny would have an impact on the lives of both Indians and the British in all three of the cities (Agra, Delhi and Peshawar) as will be examined in the next chapter.

⁹⁸⁶ Wherry, *Islam and Christianity in India and the Far East*, p. 174.

⁹⁸⁷ Jalal, *Partisans of Allah, Jihad in South Asia*, p. 87.

⁹⁸⁸ Allen, *Soldier Sahibs: The men who made the north west frontier*, p. 340.

Chapter 8. Epilogue : ‘flee for your lives’⁹⁸⁹

The Mutiny at Agra

During the Mutiny, the Agra missionaries ceased to preach.⁹⁹⁰ Yet this did not prevent the mutineers from attacking the Agra Mission; Hoernle wrote in a letter after the mutiny, regarding the mutineers: ‘some of them said in our presence: we shall hang your Padres first and then kill you all’.⁹⁹¹ This leads us to question, if this did happen, why were some of the mutineers intent on hanging the clergymen first, was this indicating their grievances were related to the missionaries or to the preaching of Christianity in India?

The Christian village, Church and the Kattrra were all destroyed.⁹⁹² The new Church, which was almost near completion was ready for operation when the mutiny struck.⁹⁹³ The iron and heavy materials from the buildings were thrown into the wells and the river Jumna.⁹⁹⁴ The press at Secundra was also destroyed as Barney commented:

Secundra became a heap of ruins – the press, with all its implements,

⁹⁸⁹ Taken from T. Hoernle’s account of the news of Mutiny at Agra ‘We were waiting for Mr. F, who was to administer the Lord’s Supper to us, but instead news came ‘no service, flee for your lives, guard and save yourselves.’ Letter from T. Hoernle to CMS secretary, *CMS Archive*, CMS/B/OMS CI1/0140/15, Cadbury Research Library.

⁹⁹⁰ Barney, *A star in the east*, pp. 172-3.

⁹⁹¹ Letter from T. Hoernle to CMS secretary, *CMS Archive*, CMS/B/OMS CI1/0140/15, Cadbury Research Library.

⁹⁹² Weitbrecht, *Missionary sketches in north India with reference to recent events*, p. 459.

⁹⁹³ Letter from F. Schneider to Venn, 2 June 1857, *CMS Archive*, CMS/B/OMS/CI1/ 0256/10, Cadbury Research Library.

⁹⁹⁴ Letter from T. Hoernle to CMS secretary, *CMS Archive*, CMS/B/OMS CI1/0140/15, Cadbury Research Library.

types, works in progress, even account books, completely destroyed, the orphan asylums ravaged, the Church stripped of bells, organ, pulpit, font, and all other fittings, and reduced to bare walls – and the houses of villagers, in some cases undermined, that not even the walls should be left standing.⁹⁹⁵

The state of the mission at Secundra was such that Hoernle wrote in 1857: ‘The re-establishment of this mission remains very doubtful’ he added the destruction was too much to recover from and that the missionaries ‘have not the means of rebuilding and redoing what has been destroyed ... I am afraid Secundra must, at least for years to come, remain what it at present is! A heap of ruins’.⁹⁹⁶ Schneider was so affected by the devastation at the Agra Mission that he commented to Hoernle: ‘The impression which this ruin of Secundra made upon my mind, I have no desire to go there again’.⁹⁹⁷ The loss of the printing press was estimated at 30,000 pounds; Schneider applied for compensation from the government and received £12,500.⁹⁹⁸

Letters from the mutiny period, such as one to Henry Venn, reveal that during September, the missionaries at Agra felt there was no security of peace, yet they were proud of the fact they had not shut the mission except for three days when their

⁹⁹⁵ Barney, *A star in the east*, p. 174.

⁹⁹⁶ Letter from T. Hoernle to CMS secretary, *CMS Archive*, CMS/B/OMS CI1/0140/15, Cadbury Research Library.

⁹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁹⁹⁸ Letter-book: 19 December 1857-25 January 1862, *CMS Archive*, CMS/B/OMS/CI1 L5, pp. 470 – 480, Cadbury Research Library.

operation had come to a halt.⁹⁹⁹ Yet Schneider commented on the situation in Agra:

Round about Agra plunder and harming of houses and surrender is so very frequent, that we are not a moment safe. Missionary work is at present quite impossible. My two flocks of native Christians at Secundra and in the city are lying heavy on my heart, for I can do nothing for their security.¹⁰⁰⁰

This shows the extent to which the mission was halted by the mutiny. Missionary work at Agra did become more difficult during the mutiny, even though some sources show it continued throughout this period. A missionary at Agra stated: 'direct missionary labours are at present almost impossible'.¹⁰⁰¹ Schneider commented in a letter to Venn: 'a good time must elapse before we continue direct missionary work'.¹⁰⁰²

The property of the mission station at Agra was destroyed. The missionaries at Agra did survive unlike the missionaries at Delhi because they had managed to take cover in the Agra Fort before the battle had begun.¹⁰⁰³ Of the three Hubbard brothers, one died as he left the fort to get something from home on 5 July 1857 and the mutineers found him there (he was the brother of Alfred Hubbard in Delhi, but

⁹⁹⁹ Letter from L. James to H. Venn, 12 September 1857, *CMS Archive*, CMS/B/OMS/C11/0176/4, Cadbury Research Library.

¹⁰⁰⁰ Letter from F. Schneider to Venn, 2 June 1857, *CMS Archive*, CMS/B/OMS/C11/0256/10, Cadbury Research Library.

¹⁰⁰¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰² *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰³ Letter from L. James to H. Venn, 12 September 1857, *CMS Archive*, CMS/B/OMS/C11/0176/4, Cadbury Research Library.

resided at Agra), he also lost his mother in the mutiny at Agra.¹⁰⁰⁴ Two other Christians had been murdered at Agra, though it is unclear whether they were Indian Christian converts or British residents in India.¹⁰⁰⁵

As the Mutiny broke out, the Mission College added two weeks to its vacation.¹⁰⁰⁶ The college buildings had been damaged and were stripped of their doors and windows.¹⁰⁰⁷ Barney commented: ‘Mr. French’s Missionary College was about the last to close, and the first to re-open, of all our public institutions at Agra during the period of the revolt’.¹⁰⁰⁸ Much damage had also been done to other areas of the mission as according to Hoernle by 1857, the translation and copying of the New Testament had been completed, but 5,000 copies were burnt as well as other literature from the Mission.¹⁰⁰⁹

Prior to the Mutiny of 1857, the Ulema emphasised the importance of reacting to Christian missionary activity instead of ignoring it, as seen in the previous chapter,¹⁰¹⁰ and so many did not hesitate in joining the mutineers in 1857. Amongst those who exchanged their pens for the gun were Molana Rahmat Allah Kairnawi and Wazir Khan who joined a fighting contingent in Delhi.¹⁰¹¹ Wazir Khan was placed as the head of a contingent from Agra, he followed Bakht Khan and Sarfraz

¹⁰⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰⁵ Letter from F. Schneider to Venn, 2 June 1857, *CMS Archive*, CMS/B/OMS/CI1/ 0256/10, Cadbury Research Library.

¹⁰⁰⁶ Weitbrecht, *Missionary sketches in north India with reference to recent events*, p. 453.

¹⁰⁰⁷ Barney, *A star in the east*, p. 174.

¹⁰⁰⁸ Ibid., p. 173.

¹⁰⁰⁹ Letter from T. Hoernle to CMS secretary, *CMS Archive*, CMS CI1/0140/15, Cadbury Research Library, Birmingham University.

¹⁰¹⁰ Nizami, *Madrasahs, Scholars and Saints: Muslim Response to the British Presence in Delhi and the Upper Doab*, pp. 201-2.

¹⁰¹¹ Haq, *The Great Revolution of 1857*, pp. 44-5.

Ali to Delhi and then to Lucknow.¹⁰¹² The intellectuals had been mobilised and took part in the Mutiny. Dr. Wazir Khan was later made governor of Agra after the fighters had taken it from the British.¹⁰¹³

As Sharma has argued, the reaction of the Ulema at Agra should be seen in the context of the city's importance as a Muslim centre, it had been a major Mughal city and therefore the scholars would not let Agra fall to missionary influence, they made an effort to hold on to Agra.¹⁰¹⁴ However, Agra was also important for the Ulema as it was the base of consultations between the leaders of the Mutiny and secret activity took place there, as numerous British officials were resident at Delhi.¹⁰¹⁵

The Ulema and others had used advanced organisation during the Mutiny, and were prepared to fight till death, as Ashraf comments:

In fact, the three striking features of this conspiratorial technique, as revealed in the course of the trials after 1857, were the resourcefulness and sagacity of their agents; the secrecy with which complicated operations were conducted; the absolute fidelity which the members of the organisation displayed towards each other; and their resolve to persevere till death in the service of the cause which they believed to be

¹⁰¹² I. Qureshi, *Ulema in politics: a study relating to the political activities of the ulema in the South-Asian subcontinent from 1556 – 1947* (Englewood: Renaissance Publishing House, 1998), p. 198.

¹⁰¹³ Nizami, *Madrasahs, Scholars and Saints: Muslim Response to the British Presence in Delhi and the Upper Doab*, p. 217.

¹⁰¹⁴ Sharma, *Christian Missions in north India*, p. 224.

¹⁰¹⁵ Haq, *The Great Revolution of 1857*.

God's own.¹⁰¹⁶

Some of the boys at the mission school proved loyal to the missionaries, at times even risking their own lives. French's pupils remained loyal. Wright explained:

Most of the junior boys of the school manifested an attachment to us throughout the Mutiny, some of them not without risk to themselves, visited us in the fort, others employed themselves in searching for books on the sides of the roads belonging to the college or to our private libraries, and this when the danger was so great that no European was allowed to leave the fort.¹⁰¹⁷

Despite the efforts of French's pupils to protect the property of the missionaries, Schneider lost his library, furniture and horses.¹⁰¹⁸

After the Mutiny, French taught his pupils in a house and after that in the old college building which was still in ruins, lacking doors and windows, and according to missionary sources pupil numbers recovered to some extent after the Mutiny.¹⁰¹⁹ It appears that many of the native converts survived the Mutiny, unlike at Delhi, according to missionary sources only one native Christian was killed during the

¹⁰¹⁶ Ashraf, 'Muslim revivalists and the revolt of 1857' *Rebellion 1857: A Symposium*, p. 81.

¹⁰¹⁷ Letter from J. Wright to CMS secretary, *CMS Archive*, CMS CI1/021/19A, Cadbury Research Library, Birmingham University.

¹⁰¹⁸ Letter from F. Schneider to Venn, 2 June 1857, *CMS Archive*, CMS/B/OMS/CI1/ 0256/10, Cadbury Research Library.

¹⁰¹⁹ Barney, *A star in the east*, p. 174.

Mutiny.¹⁰²⁰

The students of French's college stood by their teacher throughout the Mutiny as Charles Raikes (judge of the Sudder Court)¹⁰²¹ commented in 1857:

While highly paid native officials deserted to the enemy, the students in French's college, Hindu or Mohammedan though they might be, stayed where they were; and when the city had to be abandoned, and all retired to the fort, they still proved trusty friends.¹⁰²²

Those involved in the mission appear to have left their valuable possessions with the boys who attended the Mission school, as J. Wright wrote to the secretary of the CMS, reflecting upon the events of 1857 at Agra, the boys who took on such responsibilities were often taunted by the inhabitants of Agra, as in this case a boy named 'Ballab Ram' had done so.¹⁰²³ This, Wright believed was proof that the missionaries at Agra had done nothing to upset the people of Agra as he wrote:

These things should be sufficient proof that at Agra at least neither the missionaries nor the missionaries' doctrine produced the ill will of the

¹⁰²⁰ Ibid., p. 175.

¹⁰²¹ Nizami, *Madrasahs, Scholars and Saints: Muslim Response to the British Presence in Delhi and the Upper Doab*, p. 219.

¹⁰²² Stock, *An Heroic Bishop: The Life-story of French of Lahore*, p. 4.

¹⁰²³ Letter from J. Wright to CMS secretary, *CMS Archive*, CMS CII/021/19A, Cadbury Research Library, Birmingham University.

natives. The Government college was burnt ours escaped; but the cause may have been that ours was too lofty for them.¹⁰²⁴

Most of the missionaries had left Agra after the Mutiny, despite the fact that the mission survived, French left for England, Hoernle also ‘separated’, Leighton left for Meerut and Schneider left for the hills on the pretext of ill health.¹⁰²⁵ Miss Goodenough – the teacher at the girls’ school – returned to England on the basis of deteriorating health.¹⁰²⁶

After 1857, Molana Rahmat Allah Kairnawi was wanted by the British authorities, the Molana left India and the authorities took over his property.¹⁰²⁷ Haq’s research supports the view that the Molana migrated to Saudi Arabia.¹⁰²⁸ Wazir Khan also migrated to Saudi Arabia, although the British tried unsuccessfully to extradite him.¹⁰²⁹ Shah Wali Allah’s sons continued their father’s work and after 1857, Shah Abdul Ghani and Shah Abu Sa’id also migrated from India. Some of their pupils had participated in the Mutiny.¹⁰³⁰ A large number of Ulema left India for Saudi Arabia during this period.

The missionaries believed that the prime instigators of the Mutiny were the Muslim opponents to their activity as Hoernle commented in a letter in 1857,

¹⁰²⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰²⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰²⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰²⁷ Siddiqui, *Christian Muslim dialogue in the twentieth century*, p. 7.

¹⁰²⁸ Haq, *The Great Revolution of 1857*, p. 44.

¹⁰²⁹ Powell, ‘Muslim-Christian confrontation: Dr. Wazir Khan in nineteenth-century Agra’, p. 77.

¹⁰³⁰ Haq, *The Great Revolution of 1857*, p. 46.

reflecting on the events of the Mutiny ‘It is now quite evident that the Muslims were the instigators and leaders in the mischief. They had invited the mutineers’.¹⁰³¹ He further added that the scholars who engaged in the Munazara with Pfander ‘have taken an active part in the destruction of the Agra station and our missions. They left the place together with many other Muselmans and joined, I believe the King of Delhi’.¹⁰³²

Schneider was under the impression that the Indian Muslims were responsible for the mutiny at Agra.¹⁰³³ Time and time again there are numerous references in his letters to statements such as ‘the whole Musulman population is against us’ and ‘there cannot be the least doubt, that it is the work of the Musulmans’.¹⁰³⁴

What is interesting is that Schneider believed that Delhi had been responsible for the uprising at Agra – speaking of the Muslim at Agra he commented:

for years they have been worked upon by emissaries from the court of Delhi: for a holy war of the believers against the unbelievers or Christians has been unfurled and it is absurd to think, that this is only a rising of the discontented Hindoo.¹⁰³⁵

¹⁰³¹ Letter from T. Hoernle to CMS secretary, *CMS Archive*, CMS/B/OMS C11/0140/15, Cadbury Research Library.

¹⁰³² *Ibid.*

¹⁰³³ Letter from F. Schneider to Venn, 2 June 1857, *CMS Archive*, CMS/B/OMS/C11/ 0256/11, Cadbury Research Library.

¹⁰³⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁰³⁵ *Ibid.*

The Mutiny at Delhi

The Mutiny at Delhi is viewed from three angles: the fate of the Delhi Mission, the role of the King (the nature of his interaction with the Ulema) and the role of the Ulema. On 11 May 1857, Reverend Midgley John Jennings and his daughter, as well as Captain Douglas who provided much support to the mission, were all killed at Delhi. The missionary, Reverend Alfred Hubbard, had fled to the house of a Mr Beresford who was the manager of the Delhi Bank; however the mutineers broke into the house, killed its occupants and set it alight.¹⁰³⁶ Corrie Sandys had left to take a boy home from school, but on his return he was also killed.¹⁰³⁷ Lewis Koch was also killed by the mutineers.¹⁰³⁸ Jackson had returned to England in 1856 due to ill health.¹⁰³⁹

The mission would be founded again in 1859, but for now it had been destroyed. It appeared as if Delhi had become the 'paradise lost'.¹⁰⁴⁰ A Baptist missionary was also murdered and the wife of the missionary Reverend Thompson of the BMS and his three daughters and a son.¹⁰⁴¹ It seems ironic that Koch commented only three days before the outbreak that his students were very interested in the scriptures and that they were eager to fully understand them.¹⁰⁴² It seems that Koch

¹⁰³⁶ 'Victims of the Mutiny, Indian Mission Fund', *The Mission Field*, November 1857, p. 262, 25246A (vol. 2) USPG archive, Bodleian library.

¹⁰³⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰³⁸ Pascoe, *Two Hundred Years of the S. P. G., 1701–1900: An Historical Account of the Society for the Propagation of Bible in Foreign Parts*, p. 615.

¹⁰³⁹ Letter Rev. A. Hubbard to Mr. Bullock, 18 November, 1854, USPG CLR 14, p. 41, Bodleian Library.

¹⁰⁴⁰ Crawfoot, 'A Sketch of the S.P.G Mission at Delhi', pp. 206-11.

¹⁰⁴¹ *The Evangelical Repository*, p. 290.

¹⁰⁴² Pascoe, *Two Hundred Years of the S. P. G., 1701–1900: An Historical Account of the Society for the Propagation of Bible in Foreign Parts*, p. 615.

felt that the prospects of the mission were positive, what he did not know was that three days later there would take place the clash of two sets of beliefs, a clash between two rival ‘fundamentalisms’: Christian Evangelicalism and ‘Islamic fundamentalism’.¹⁰⁴³

During the revolt, Europeans were killed and Indian Christians were offered the chance of being spared if they converted to Islam; many refused and were killed, but Ram Chandra escaped.¹⁰⁴⁴ Chimmun Lal was killed during the outbreak and news reached England that ‘the Delhi Mission has been completely swept away’.¹⁰⁴⁵ But in 1859, the Cambridge Mission to Delhi was established and Ram Chandra returned to teach at the school.¹⁰⁴⁶

It is significant to note those Christians who had converted to Islam were not harmed by the mutineers during the Mutiny; but converts to Christianity were attacked openly.¹⁰⁴⁷ What is also interesting to note, is that Urdu sources that survive in relation to the Mutiny of 1857 refer to the British as ‘Kafirs’ (infidels) or ‘Nazrani’ meaning ‘Christian’ rather than ‘Feringee’ meaning Franks or foreigners.¹⁰⁴⁸ Again this shows that the mutineers were seeking out the Christians in Delhi rather than all of the British residents.

Some of the Delhi princes, in particular Mirza Mughal, were heavily involved in the rebellion. Mirza Mughal held a prominent position in court, he took a role as ‘fort keeper’ and commanded some of the rebel army at Delhi as he was ‘commander

¹⁰⁴³ Dalrymple, *The Last Mughal*, p. 80.

¹⁰⁴⁴ L. Henderson, *The Cambridge Mission to Delhi: A brief History* (London: 1931), p. 2.

¹⁰⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴⁷ Dalrymple, ‘In defence of faith: religious rhetoric in the Delhi uprising of 1857’, p. 10.

¹⁰⁴⁸ Ibid.

in chief'. Dalrymple has suggested he had links with the 'Mujahideen movement'.¹⁰⁴⁹ Mirza Mughal and his brother Abu Bakr and Khizr Sultan may have been in touch with the sepoys prior to the Mutiny.¹⁰⁵⁰ Mirza Mughal was later appointed as 'Adjutant General', when Bakht Khan took over as 'Governor General'. This in effect made Mirza Mughal the head of the administration, and no longer military commander.¹⁰⁵¹

The stance of Bahadur Zafar Shah throughout the Mutiny was not always clear; Dalrymple has argued that he was a weak monarch who was being persuaded by his wife Zinat Mahal not to join the uprising and encouraged by the rebels and sepoys on the other hand. But on 11 May 1857, he addressed the people of Delhi saying; 'we have joined hands to protect our religion and our faith'.¹⁰⁵² The King was going to use the cause of religion to rally the masses. In his circular letter to the princes and inhabitants of Delhi he wrote:

The English are people who overthrow all religions. You should understand well the object of destroying the religions of Hindustan; they have for a long time, been causing books to be written and circulated throughout the country by the hands of their priests, and exercising their authority, have brought out numbers of preachers to spread their own tenets.¹⁰⁵³

¹⁰⁴⁹ Dalrymple *The Last Mughal*, p. 218.

¹⁰⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵¹ Ibid., p. 287.

¹⁰⁵² Dalrymple, *The Last Mughal*, p. 23.

¹⁰⁵³ Qureshi, *Cry for freedom: Proclamations of Muslim revolutionaries 1857*, p.61.

Even the King made mention of missionary activity to mobilise the people of Delhi. Was the Ulema asked to take part in drafting this letter or did the King himself see the effects of missionary activity in his city? Mirza Mughal appears to have drawn upon the idea that the British were a threat to the faiths of Indians, as he played a large role in a circular sent out to Indian Rajahs based on this.¹⁰⁵⁴ Interestingly, the circular draws upon issues such as sati, inheritance of converts and Company backing of missionary activity.¹⁰⁵⁵

General Bakht Khan was an influential member of the Mujahideen movement.¹⁰⁵⁶ Bakht Khan's spiritual mentor was Molvi Sarfaraz Ali who had taught at Mufti Sadruddin's Madrassahs in Delhi. Ashraf has argued that because of the existence of these individuals, army morale was kept high as they 'often snatched the initiative from the enemy even when patriotic resistance had broken down'.¹⁰⁵⁷ Four thousand jihadis had come with Bakht Khan; their spiritual mentor was Molvi Sarfaraz Ali – a clear example of how the Ulema could unite and organise such large numbers of people on religious grounds.¹⁰⁵⁸

Bakht Khan tried to persuade the King of Delhi to agree to opening a second front, when the king refused, Bakht Khan set up forces with Molvi Ahmadullah Shah and Nana Sahib. This alliance is interesting as it crossed religious differences.¹⁰⁵⁹ During Bakht Khan's administration at Delhi, Ashraf argues his system had democratic policies; it was based on support from the masses, soldiers, artisans and

¹⁰⁵⁴ Dalrymple *The Last Mughal*, p. 220.

¹⁰⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵⁶ Ashraf, 'Muslim revivalists and the revolt of 1857' *Rebellion 1857: A Symposium*, p. 94.

¹⁰⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 87.

¹⁰⁵⁸ Dalrymple *The Last Mughal*, p. 285.

¹⁰⁵⁹ Ashraf, 'Muslim revivalists and the revolt of 1857' *Rebellion 1857: A Symposium*, p. 88.

city workers.¹⁰⁶⁰ Bakht Khan made arrangement for the payment of royal salaries and instructions were given to arrest all looters.¹⁰⁶¹

Many Muslims as well as Hindus travelled to Delhi to partake in what they hoped would be the overthrow of the British. The Ulema were cautious not to isolate the Hindus, and they often appealed to both Hindus and Muslims to protect their respective religions.¹⁰⁶² Though the purpose of this thesis is to assess the Muslim response to the missionaries in Delhi, it is important to note that the Hindu Pundits also tried to mobilise the Hindu population in Delhi; for example Pundit Harichandra had apparently predicted the day of the battle between the British and the Indians.¹⁰⁶³ The militant Hindus, such as the Naga Sadhus, took a stance against Jennings' missionary activity and were often busy 'stalking about in the thick of the congregation, abusing or driving out any non-Hindoo interloper who crosses their presence'.¹⁰⁶⁴

The Hindu reformist movement, Arya Samaj, would not appear in Delhi for another two decades, and thus, in contrast to the case of the Ulema, there was no single leadership amongst the Hindus who opposed the missionaries in Delhi.¹⁰⁶⁵ The missionary-Company link was evident to native eyes, the Hindu soldier Sita Ram wrote in his memoir:

I have also observed the increase of late years of padre sahibs, who stood

¹⁰⁶⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶¹ Dalrymple *The Last Mughal*, p. 287.

¹⁰⁶² Qureshi, *Cry for freedom: Proclamations of Muslim revolutionaries 1857*, p.61.

¹⁰⁶³ Dalrymple, 'In defence of faith: religious rhetoric in the Delhi uprising of 1857', p. 8.

¹⁰⁶⁴ Dalrymple, *The Last Mughal*, p. 60.

¹⁰⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 78.

up in the streets of cities and told the people their cherished religion was all false, entreating them to become Christians; they always said that they were not employed by the Sircar (Government), and that they received no money from it, but how could they say what they did without its permission?¹⁰⁶⁶

Likewise Muslim intellectuals such as Syed Ahmed Khan, a judge who pointed out the causes of the rebellion included the grievance that the British were interfering with the religious life of Indians.¹⁰⁶⁷ He wrote in his assessment of the causes of 1857:

Government and the officers of government throughout the country were in the habit of giving large sums of money to these missionaries ... thus it happened that in the course of time no man felt sure that his creed would last even his own life time.¹⁰⁶⁸

It appears both Muslims and Hindus were concerned by the presence of the missionaries and the official backing they enjoyed.

There were of course many reasons for the revolt of 1857, but some of those who took part were motivated by religious reasons as Chaudhuri comments:

¹⁰⁶⁶ S. Ram, *From Sepoy to Subhadar* (London: Routledge and Keegan Paul, 1873), p. 117.

¹⁰⁶⁷ S. Khan, *The Causes of the Indian Revolt*, introduced by Francis Robinson (Karachi: 2000), p. 16.

¹⁰⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

In fact, for nearly four months Delhi remained the centre of revolt, a beacon to the struggling spirits to flock there for the great holy war lying ahead, very much as the faithful would react on hearing the call of the Muezzin.¹⁰⁶⁹

This provides evidence for the success of some of the Ulema in mobilising the Indian population. All the Ulema seemed to be united: even though not all of the Ulema participated in the revolt, not one actually boycotted it.¹⁰⁷⁰

The Ulema performed two roles in the Mutiny, they mobilised the masses as well as gave legitimacy to the struggle by declaring it a jihad for Muslims.¹⁰⁷¹ Thirty scholars at Delhi, including Molana Rahmatullah Kairnawi, Sadruddin Khan Azurda, Sarfraz Ali, and Allamah Fazlul Haqq Khayrabadi signed the declaration stating the uprising of 1857 was a 'jihad'.¹⁰⁷² Other Delhi Ulema however did not join the uprising because of other reasons, such as the idea that the Muslims were not in a position to overthrow British rule in India and therefore physical 'jihad' in this instance would not be permissible on religious grounds.¹⁰⁷³

After the Mutiny, the Ulema made up large numbers of those who were shot or hanged by the British, including Imam Baksh 'Sahba'I,¹⁰⁷⁴ while others such as Allamah Fazlul Haqq Khayrabadi were arrested in 1857 and exiled to the Andaman

¹⁰⁶⁹ Chaudhuri, *Civil Rebellion in the Indian Mutinies, 1857-9*, p. 67.

¹⁰⁷⁰ Nizami, *Madrasahs, Scholars and Saints: Muslim Response to the British Presence in Delhi and the Upper Doab*, p. 209.

¹⁰⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 211.

¹⁰⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 214.

¹⁰⁷³ Nizami, *Madrasahs, Scholars and Saints: Muslim Response to the British Presence in Delhi and the Upper Doab*, p. 216.

¹⁰⁷⁴ Liddle, 'Azurda scholar, poet and judge', p. 138.

Islands and imprisoned.¹⁰⁷⁵ Surprisingly, the Ulema and their role seem to be missing in contemporary narratives: the Nationalists almost disown them, and they seem to have little place in existing literature, yet is they played an active role in the Mutiny,¹⁰⁷⁶ as the evidence presented in this thesis shows.

Muslim localities were especially targeted by the British forces, for example in Delhi the area where Shah Abdul Aziz lived, hundreds of people were killed.¹⁰⁷⁷ Delhi masjids were taken over by the British and insensitive attitudes were adopted, some masjids were razed to the ground, and Charles Raikes thought the Jama Masjid should be converted to a church.¹⁰⁷⁸ Hindu traders and bankers bought up two of the masjids at Delhi,¹⁰⁷⁹ and one masjid named the ‘Zinat-ul Masajid’ was used as a kitchen for fifty years after the Mutiny.¹⁰⁸⁰

Despite all their efforts, the mutineers were unable to defeat the British rule in India and so a new approach had to be used, as Sharma argues:

Christians had won but not Christianity. The Hindus and Muslims were worsted but not their respective faiths ... Nevertheless, the bulk of the Indian Christians were loyal to the cause of British Empire almost up to the close of the nineteenth century.¹⁰⁸¹

¹⁰⁷⁵ Alavi, ‘Jihadi Muslims and Hindu Sepoys, rewriting the 1857 narrative’, p. 10.

¹⁰⁷⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷⁷ Nizami, *Madrasahs, Scholars and Saints: Muslim Response to the British Presence in Delhi and the Upper Doab*, p. 218.

¹⁰⁷⁸ Dalrymple *The Last Mughal*, p. 408.

¹⁰⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 461.

¹⁰⁸⁰ Nizami, *Madrasahs, Scholars and Saints: Muslim Response to the British Presence in Delhi and the Upper Doab*, p. 219.

¹⁰⁸¹ Sharma, *Christian Missions in north India*, p. 208.

The Ulema were quick to regain their influence and position, but now they chose to resort once again to the pen for their struggle: ‘Within a decade of the uprising they were establishing new madrassahs ... Jihad-i saif had been resorted to and had failed; it was now jihad-i qalam (of the pen) ... which had to be employed in the succeeding decades’.¹⁰⁸²

¹⁰⁸² Nizami, *Madrasahs, Scholars and Saints: Muslim Response to the British Presence in Delhi and the Upper Doab*, p. 220.

Chapter 9. Conclusion

The British had prepared a scheme for the conversion of India to Christianity. They believed that Indians would find no one to help their cause and would never have the courage to raise their heads. They had appreciated that the religious differences between the rulers and their subjects would always remain hurdles in the establishment of empire and would eventually lead to a revolution. They, therefore, used every means, fair or foul and made every possible effort to destroy the native religions and society.¹⁰⁸³

The above was the opinion of Allamah Fazlul Haqq Khayrabadi, who was deported to the Andaman Islands for his role in the Mutiny. The Molana was writing after the mutiny and was convinced the British were scheming to convert the inhabitants of India to Christianity. However, the Molana's view was not unfounded. He had resided at Delhi and was aware of the situation. Even after the Mutiny he maintained that the British sought to convert India to Christianity.

William Howard Russell, a correspondent for *The Times* newspaper wrote about the Mutiny:

Our antagonism to the followers of Muhammad is far stronger than that between us and the worshippers of Shiva and Vishnu ... If we could

¹⁰⁸³ Sharma, *Christian Mission in North India 1813-1913*, p. 39.

eradicate the traditions of Muhammad by one vigorous effort, it would indeed be well for the Christian faith and for the British rule.¹⁰⁸⁴

Such was the feeling towards the Muslims of India that Salahuddin Malik writes Russell was not alone in his view, such an opinion was representative of many British people in the period during the mutiny. Another example is that of an Englishman in India who wrote concerning Delhi:

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 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.¹⁰⁸⁵

Indeed much of the post Mutiny period literature makes mention of such attitudes as outlined above. The need for revenge and retaliation is a common theme as is the treatment of the British women in India during the Mutiny.

Even though many Indians were suspicious of the attitudes of British officials – the root cause was believed to be the missionaries. As Sita Ram wrote in his memoir regarding the changing attitude of the sahibs ‘Now they seldom attend

¹⁰⁸⁴ S. Malik, ‘Muslim Historical literature in the era of early Muslim nationalism – a case study of Sir Sayyid and Taib’, *Ajiss*, 1:2 (1984), p. 6.

¹⁰⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

nautches as their Padre Sahibs have told them it is wrong. These Padre Sahibs have done, and are still doing, many things to estrange British officers from their sepoys'.¹⁰⁸⁶ This shows the missionaries were not just alienating Indians but also alienating Europeans from Indians.

There are a few shared themes in the activity of the Agra, Delhi and Peshawar missions; all three had some degree of official support, yet they also had British opponents, there were critics too. At all three cities, there were new administrators who were religious men – a shift from the old days, when for example Seton the British resident in Delhi asked Shah Abdul Aziz if he had anything in his power to 'promote his comfort or convenience'. Shah Abdul Aziz replied that he had no wants.

According to Seton, Shah Abdul Aziz only asked that his disciples would be taken care of when he passed away.¹⁰⁸⁷ However, when in 1832, the King Bahadur Zafar Shah lodged a complaint that a group of Englishmen had entered the masjid with shoes on,¹⁰⁸⁸ the administrators however responded that there was no law to cover this; they did not share in the king's worries. In contrast to this, in the past, they had taken on their role as 'protectors' in Delhi.¹⁰⁸⁹

James Thomason the Lieutenant Governor of the North Western Provinces (1843 – 1853) donated gifts to the missionaries to encourage them in their work. Succeeding officials did the same, for example Sir William Muir was president of

¹⁰⁸⁶ Dalrymple, *The Last Mughal*, p. 137.

¹⁰⁸⁷ Fusfeld, *The shaping of Sufi leadership in Delhi: The Naqshbandiyya Mujaddidiyya 1750 to 1920*, p. 28.

¹⁰⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

The Tract and Book Society for 20 years and its patron for another five years.¹⁰⁹⁰ He willingly covered the costs for all publications of the society as well as writing some of its first books. Between 1848 and 1849, eight of the Presidents of The Tract and Book Society were members of the civil service, two army officers, three judges of the high court, one in the medical service and one who was the head of the province.¹⁰⁹¹

Cox has argued in particular with the case of Peshawar that though administrators were religious men they did not do much to ‘Christianise’ the area, instead they just made official proclamations, they were not willing to use force for conversion, with their prime objective being to govern despite their support for missions – to back his arguments he argues that in 1857 Robert Clark’s conversion of thirty soldiers of the 24th Punjab infantry at Peshawar, led to the prohibition of missionaries preaching past military lines, as well as officers being prohibited from discussing religion or worshipping with Indian Christians.¹⁰⁹²

Education was closely intertwined with religion. In places such as Peshawar the missionaries were invited to begin work by Englishmen and women to preach Christianity. However in other cities they were invited because of the educational and social works they could carry out.¹⁰⁹³ The Indians in all three cities: Agra, Delhi and Peshawar were less anxious about interaction with missionaries in the educational sphere – they sent their children to the mission schools, despite opposition in other areas: this was partially due to the lack of alternatives for some

¹⁰⁹⁰ Sharma, *Christian Missions in North India*, p. 34.

¹⁰⁹¹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹² Cox, *Imperial Fault Lines: Christianity and Colonial power, 1818 – 1940*, p. 33.

¹⁰⁹³ Neil, *A History of Christianity in India: 1707-1858*, p. 333.

Indians, for example a Hindu writer complained in the *Bengal Hukaru* (1850):

Perhaps it would be asked, why are the Hindu boys sent to the Missionary Schools? ... Educated in English they must be, and unless you can set up institutions to match those of the missionaries in point of efficiency and usefulness, you cannot prevent the evil of Missionary infection.¹⁰⁹⁴

It is interesting to note the anti-missionary sentiment in the statement, yet it provides evidence that there was a demand for schools, and the Indians were willing to send their children to the mission schools even in 1850.

One of the High schools at Peshawar was established by Herbert Edwardes in 1850, although it did not have many Christian pupils, the education provided was heavily mixed with Christian teachings.¹⁰⁹⁵ Such schools it was hoped would change the character of the Indians and 'civilise' them, as Robert Clarke commented regarding his pupils:

I have been much pleased lately with the altered appearance of some of them; their whole manner and character seems changing and not only do they seem to be laying hold of and appropriating what they learn, but also

¹⁰⁹⁴ N. Adams, D. Adams, 'An examination of some forces affecting English Educational Policies in India:1780-1850', *History of Education Quarterly*, 11:2 (1971), p. 171.

¹⁰⁹⁵ Cox, *Imperial Fault Lines: Christianity and Colonial power in India*, ,p. 108.

to be a different class of beings from the rough, ignorant and wild creatures which they were before.¹⁰⁹⁶

Pfander visited all three cities; there was a link between the cities.

Furthermore quite often there was more than one society which had operated in each of the cities, for example the BMS had been active in Delhi prior to Jennings's USPG Mission. Pfander had then visited on behalf of the USPG. The Serampore trios' translation of the Gospel was being used at the CMS Mission at Peshawar.

Agra College and Delhi College played an important role in Delhi and Agra in terms of effects of Christianity. Was the absence of a college at Peshawar the reason for the quietened opposition there- or was intellectual opposition was weaker at Peshawar?

There were few converts at all three missions and there was some sort of confrontation before the Mutiny: at Agra the Munazara and at Delhi the literary efforts of the press. Chaplains immersed themselves fully in the work of all three missions. However, in doing so they faced similar barriers in all three cities; linguistic barriers.

Was Jennings' personality the crucial factor behind the rising tension in Delhi? The Baptist Mission in Delhi also had the same fate, as everyone in the Baptist Delhi mission was killed during the Mutiny too, although the church was left standing.¹⁰⁹⁷ There was clearly a difference between Padre Thompson's and Jennings

¹⁰⁹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹⁷ *The Evangelical Repository*, p. 290.

approaches, as Thompson did not seem to trouble the Ulema as much as Jennings did, for the latter had brought preaching out into the open.¹⁰⁹⁸

It is important to consider that in India, religion was taught either in houses or masjids, and so if anyone wanted to learn more then they visited these places. Religion was not taught in bazaars, as the missionaries preached.¹⁰⁹⁹ Though the Serampore missionaries were just as intolerant of Indian religions as Jennings, they had arrived on the field at a much earlier stage when Indian society was unprepared to react. The missionaries sought a ‘religious and social revolution’.¹¹⁰⁰ After all, they were Evangelists who were devoted to ‘improving’ the lives of the Indian people.¹¹⁰¹

Arguably, it was more due to Jennings’ timing that his mission met its fate, as the situation was changing in Delhi, against the backdrop of the religious revival occurring there.¹¹⁰² At the time when the Serampore Trio had begun their activities in India, they faced less opposition, and many of the Ulema were unsure of how to react. In contrast, by the time Jennings had arrived in India, Delhi society was still dealing with the shocks of the Sati legislation and other laws which to them seemed like attacks upon their respective traditions and religions.

But it is important to highlight the fact that the Serampore Trio were no more tolerant than Jennings. They also produced anti-Hindu and anti-Muslim pamphlets,

¹⁰⁹⁸ Khan, *The Causes of the Indian Revolt*, p. 40.

¹⁰⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

¹¹⁰⁰ Forrester, *Caste and Christianity: Attitudes and policies on caste of Anglo Saxon Protestant Missionaries in India*, p. 24.

¹¹⁰¹ Laird, ‘The contribution of the Serampore Missionaries to education in Bengal, 1793 – 1837’, p. 93.

¹¹⁰² Nizami, *Madrasahs, Scholars and Saints: Muslim Response to the British Presence in Delhi and the Upper Doab*, p. 207.

yet the reaction was different in Serampore. Offensive pamphlets such as the controversial ‘Persian Pamphlet’ were produced, which attacked Muslim beliefs labelling them as ‘idolators’.¹¹⁰³ When asked by the Company to account for his actions (the publishing of the pamphlet), Carey at first did not recognise what was unacceptable about the pamphlet; it was only when it was pointed out to him that he agreed to stop further circulation.¹¹⁰⁴ Likewise the Serampore missionaries produced pamphlets which attacked Hindu beliefs, describing Hindu deities in ‘a hateful or disgusting light’.¹¹⁰⁵

Importantly, Jennings’ mission was still in its infancy when the Mutiny broke out, thus it had little time to have ‘beneficial’ effects on the Delhi population on the same scale as Serampore. Links were being made between officials and the missionaries which further heightened the tension, as when the Lieutenant Governor General in 1856 ‘expressed a warm interest’ in the work of the mission.¹¹⁰⁶ Yet it is important to note that there were some limitations to the activities of the Delhi Mission – for example as mentioned earlier, when Jennings hoped to purchase land for a mission school, his request was rejected on the principle that the land was too close to the Mughal King’s Palace in Delhi.¹¹⁰⁷

The evidence suggests that the missionaries helped to heighten the excitement of 1857 in revivalist circles, and sometimes strengthened the link between the Company and missionaries in native eyes; it gave the revivalists fuel for

¹¹⁰³ Carson, *Soldiers of Christ: Evangelicals and India 1784-1833*, p. 160.

¹¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁰⁶ Letter Rev. A. Hubbard to Mr. Hawkins, Easter Monday, 1856, USPG CLR 14, p. 104, Bodleian Library.

¹¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

their struggle as they now had an aim: whilst Jennings was planning his mission, they too were now planning a mission against him.¹¹⁰⁸

Perhaps the signs were obvious, but the Delhi missionaries did not anticipate such a reaction; in 1856 the number of pupils at the USPG Delhi Mission School had fallen, but Hubbard believed this was partly due to the opening of a new Baptist Mission school in the city.¹¹⁰⁹ Could this in fact have been partly due to the efforts of the revivalists?

All three missions capitalised upon various natural factors to make the most of their presence in the cities, for example there were the famines at Agra, so the CMS missionaries took in orphans, the fever at Peshawar so Pfander's missionaries dispensed medical aid. Abdul also took up the role of 'hakeem' at Agra in order to obtain interest in Christianity.¹¹¹⁰ Desperate Indian people may have converted for such benefits and other material benefits, in many cases when many of the missionaries' promises did not materialise, converts reverted in the hundreds in India.¹¹¹¹ Interestingly, Majumdar identifies that in some instances; missionaries encouraged false hopes for the natives and sometimes even used force to 'keep hold on their victims'.¹¹¹² At Agra, Corrie had sent some of the Ashraf converts to other cities for translation work, however most of them reconverted soon after Corrie's departure from Agra.¹¹¹³

¹¹⁰⁸ Dalrymple, *The Last Mughal*, p. 84.

¹¹⁰⁹ Letter Rev. A. R. Hubbard to Mr. Hawkins, 26 June 1857, USPG CLR 14, p. 104, Bodleian Library.

¹¹¹⁰ Powell, 'Creating Christian Community in early nineteenth century Agra', p. 127.

¹¹¹¹ Carson, *Soldiers of Christ: Evangelicals and India 1784-1833*, p. 355.

¹¹¹² Majumdar, *The History and culture of the Indian people*, p. 420.

¹¹¹³ Powell, 'Creating Christian Community in early nineteenth century Agra', p. 127.

Kenneth Jones writes Indians ‘searched for the means by which they could avoid the dilemma by accommodating the best fruits of the West’s material achievements while preserving their own religious and cultural identity’.¹¹¹⁴ Some Indians were willing to accept material benefits including medical aid, schooling, jobs and financial aid but many did not want to embrace Christianity.¹¹¹⁵

The result by 1857 was a challenge to all three missions. If Peshawar escaped the fate of Agra and particularly Delhi, this may well only have been because the mission was set up later and so did not have an equally troubling impact as the other missions. By the time the Mutiny had been suppressed. Jennings had been killed at Delhi and the Agra Mission had been attacked. The only mission to be completely destroyed, however was Delhi. Agra and Peshawar survived the Mutiny and continued, though the record of what happened to Peshawar Mission during the Mutiny is limited.

Even after the mutiny, the missionaries tried to convince the British public that India was given to Britain for the purpose of converting its inhabitants to Christianity:

That voice that says ‘India is your charge’. I am the lord of the world ... I give India into the hands of England. I did not give it solely for your benefit. I gave it for the benefit of my 180 million creatures. I gave it to you whom I have given the best thing man can have – the Bible ... I gave

¹¹¹⁴ Jones, *Religious controversy in British India*, p. 7.

¹¹¹⁵ G. Bearce, *British attitudes towards India, 1784-1855* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961), p.88.

it to you that you might communicate this light and knowledge and truth to my heathen creatures.¹¹¹⁶

If time had permitted, the scope of this study would have included Indian language sources. The Indian sources which have been examined have been few in comparison with others. Nevertheless, this thesis has highlighted further avenues of research to be addressed such as the contrast between the Muslim reaction and the Hindu reaction to Christian missionaries. It would also be interesting to examine what survived of Sayyid Ahmed's movement in Peshawar until 1857, and why it appears to have been inactive in Peshawar during 1857.

Delhi and Agra were within close vicinity, unlike Peshawar, and Peshawar had a different language and culture and thus the activities of those who opposed the missionaries at Peshawar were not in union with those at Delhi and Agra. This idea would be subject to further assessment and research which is beyond the scope of this M.Phil thesis but is an interesting topic for further research.

¹¹¹⁶ E. Stock, *The History of the CMS*, London, CMS, 1899, vol. 2, p. 232, CMS BV/2500/5, Cadbury Research Library, Birmingham University.

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