BARBARA D. METCALF

Islamic Revival in British India

Deoband, 1860-1900

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Islamic Revival in British India: Deoband, 1860-1900

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Barbara Daly Metcalf

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To All My Parents

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Berkeley, California
July, 1980

Note on Transliteration

I have transliterated Urdu letters into English according to the chart on the following page. I have followed Platts[1] in making choices about the pronunciation of short vowels, which, of course, are not usually noted in the script: Thus if Urdu takes *suluk* to be correct, not *saluk*, I have used that. Unlike Platts I do not distinguish actual pronunciation of short vowels when they vary in response to their linguistic environment, for example where "u" becomes "o," "i" and "a" become "e" when followed by "h" or "ḥ." These variations are not included so as to give a more consistent rendering of the words as written. Hence *ṣuḥbat* rather than *ṣoḥbat*, *mihrbān* rather than *mehrbān*, *maḥbūb* rather than *meḥbūb*.

In the text I have transliterated without diacriticals in order to present a less encumbered appearance. Thus, I write *ʿulama*, somewhat less denuded than the *ulama* one sometimes finds, since I represent the letter *ʿain* (as I do *hamza* except at the end of a word). I appreciate very much the argument of Marshall Hodgson that diacriticals are crucial in order to accommodate the eye and ear to Muslim words and to make one comfortable with them,[2] but the full representation of the words is given here only in the glossary (there alone is *ʿulamāʾ*). Similarly, personal names are presented without diacriticals, but names that appear in the index are to be found fully transliterated there. Titles of books are fully transliterated in the notes and bibliography.

Plurals are formed in a variety of ways in Urdu, depending on whether the noun is of Arabic, Persian, Hindi, or some other origin. Generally I have simply added an "s" to the transliterated word to make a plural, particularly if

1. John T. Platts, *A Dictionary of Urdu Classical Hindi and English* (Delhi, 1977; first published 1884).
2. Marshall G. S. Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam: Conscience and History in a World Civilization* (Chicago, 1974), I, 4-6.

the word is somewhat familiar in English—thus Sufis, *muftis, hajjis*, and so on. In two cases I have kept the Arabic "broken" plural: ʿulama as plural of *ʿalim*; and *fatawa* as plural of *fatwa*. These two are frequently used words here, and their singular form is not familiar.

In general I have avoided Anglo-Indian forms of Urdu words. I do this because I am working from Urdu, not from English spoken in India. Thus I write not moulvi, but *maulawi*, not nawab, but *nawwab*, not punkah, but *pankha*. Nor have I used the "loan-word" form of terms that have come into English from other Muslim languages. I write *hadis*, not hadith; *zikr*, not dhikr; Ramazan, not Ramadan.

For place names I generally use the common English form of well-known places: Delhi, not Dihli; Allahabad, not Ilahabad. I use Oudh and Punjab for the correct Awadh and Panjab because in British India the former were official titles. When a place name becomes a locative, I transliterate correctly (e.g. Dihlawi, Ilahabadi).

Long Vowels: ā, ū, and ī
Short Vowels: a, u, and i
Dipthongs: au, o, ai, and e
Consonants are represented as (in the Urdu alphabetical order): b, p, t, ṭ, s̤, j, ch, ḥ, kh, d, ḍ, ẕ, r, z, zh, s, sh, ṣ, ẓ, t̤, z̤, ʿ, gh, f, q, k, g, l, m, n, ṅ (for nazalization), w, h, y, ʾ (for hamza).
Persian *izafah*: -i; -yi (after silent h or vowel)
Arabic definite article: al-, *lam* assimilated before "sun" letters
Examples of names: Shah Waliyu'llah, ʿAbdu'l-ʿAziz

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Introduction: The Pattern of Islamic Reform

THROUGHOUT Muslim history religious reform movements have transformed not only belief but also political and social life. In modern times the movements, under the stimulus of European domination, have been endemic. Muslim states had earlier protected Muslim interests and had, ideally at least, set policy and provided patronage to foster religious learning and a Muslim way of life. As these states declined, many Muslims, troubled by the constraints put on the political expression of their faith as well as by the inevitable social and economic dislocations that ensued, drew on their own traditions for interpretations and patterns for action. Among the resulting movements the earliest is perhaps that of ʿAbdu'l-Wahhab (1703-1792); the currently best known is that culminating in the Iranian revolution of 1979.[1]

There is no single convenient rubric under which to place these movements. The modern ones, depending on what has been seen as central, have been called movements of primary resistance; rebellion; social reform movements; peasant, working class, or nationalist movements; movements of religious syncretism or accommodation, modernization, or even reaction. Such categories are useful for comparative purposes, and point to important recurring patterns in origin and process of social behavior. Yet the movements defy our pigeonholes, and call for consideration in their own Islamic terms. However different their strategies and social settings, the movements share unities in both meaning and structure.

1. I am indebted to Ira Lapidus for a series of discussions that have contributed to this introduction, and I have been especially influenced by his paper, "The Islamic Religion and the Historical Experiences of Muslim Peoples: A Challenge for Contemporary Scholarship," presented to the Seventh Biennial Giorgio Levi Dellavida Conference at the University of California, Los Angeles, April 28, 1979. Hamid Algar and Edmund Burke will see evidence here of recent discussions; and Peter Brown, of his illuminating review article, "Understanding Islam," *New York Review of Books*, February 22, 1979, pp. 30-33.

To take the Islamic reform movements as a whole takes into account the perspective of the participants who themselves saw this unity. It subsumes movements that may or may not be violent; that may take place in any social milieu; that may happen in any period in history. What unites them is an acceptance of the period of the life of the Prophet and the first decades of Islam as providing the fundamental examples of behavior and belief; all seek self-consciously, by a wide variety of means, to relive that pristine time. A cluster of terms describes these movements, of which two particularly recur. One is *tajdid*, which suggests the process of renewal and specifically commitment to the way of the Prophet, who is the embodiment of revelation as conveyed in Islamic Law. A second is jihad, which points to the effort or the action required in conforming to the way of God. The term jihad transcends external form in favor of intention and goal, for in one usage, the "greater jihad" (*jihad-i akbar*), it denotes the inner struggle of individual moral discipline and commitment to Islam, whereas in a second usage, the "lesser jihad" (*jihad-i asghar*), it defines legitimate political and military action, the "holy war" known in the West.

Certain patterns can be found in all these diverse movements, starting with the beliefs of their participants. They believe afresh that God is real, that the Prophet Muhammad is real, that the angels are real. They believe that God makes decisive interventions in time, above all in the perfect revelation of the Qur'an. They believe that life is very serious, for it is a testing ground for obedience to God. Heaven is real and Hell is real. They believe that they, and all men, are called to live in the world knowingly, ever watchful against the great danger of life, which is oblivion (*ghaflat*) of what one owes to God and what one owes to others. To do this they take the life of the Prophet as their model, believing that he unquestionably provides a pattern for revolution in his deep religious anger at the kind of society in which they themselves live: societies dominated by the callousness and pride of the unjustly rich who squander wealth and oppress the weak. The modern period of

colonial and neocolonial economic dependency, which has typically been seen to benefit Europeans and their collaborators, has thus proven fertile ground for renewal and revolt, for it recalls the endemic injustice perceived by the early Muslims of Muhammad's Arabia. Muslims in these movements have sought to be in touch with the period of revelation, seeking by various means to create at least a shadow of that uncorrupted community where humans had a framework in which to live with each other as they ought. The resulting efforts have differed, depending on the cultural and political constraints within which Muslims have found themselves.

Despite their diversity, the Islamic movements, whether directed to gradual or to immediate change, can be seen to share specific characteristics. First, the participants, troubled by the world they live in and seeking explanations for their situation, invariably interpret problems as religious, for Islam is a religion that takes all of life in its purview. Those who threaten one, or one's political or economic interests, in fact are seen to threaten Islam. As a corollary, no enemy can be a good Muslim, nor can he seek the welfare of Muslims, or he would not be an enemy. One's motives for action are thus legitimate.

Second, the ultimate cause of the present troubles has typically been attributed to one's own individual moral corruption. This is an attitude that students of India associate with Gandhi, but it is central in Islam as well. The enemy would not be strong if one were oneself strong. Hence even those movements that have opted for militant action, the "lesser jihad," have at the same time insisted on the centrality of the "greater jihad." The Iranian revolutionaries, to take a recent example, have not only sought to remove a political regime that was regarded as un-Islamic, corrupt, and the tool of imperialists, but also to create a new kind of religious person as the basis of a new society.[2]

Third, in seeking to define individual morality on the basis of a return to true Islam, the movements have es-

2. See, for example, *On the Sociology of Islam: Lectures by 'Ali Shari'ati*, translated from the Persian by Hamid Algar (Berkeley, 1978).

chewed customary practices, tending to be "scripturalist" in returning to the written records of the Qur'an and the traditions of the Prophet.[3] The Sunni movements in particular have been suspicious of practices and beliefs associated with the sect of the Shi'ah and with what has been deemed the false sufism of the medieval shrines. They are not, however, antimodern in the sense of antitechnological in their concerns.

Finally, the movements have been alike in being led by religious leaders, men of learning and piety who symbolize the aspirations of the community and who come to the fore in what are seen as times of crisis. Men like the *mujaddid*, the renewer, or the Mahdi, the rightly guided one, are seen to activate the movements, and great weight is put on their initiative in recalling Muslims to original revelation.

To isolate this pattern in Islamic religious movements is helpful in the same way social scientific models are: it describes a general phenomenon that takes place in a wide variety of contexts; it sensitizes one to issues requiring investigation; it suggests points of possible comparison. It puts its emphasis on the meaning of experience for participants, but is not without relevance to overt behavior. Indeed, it offers a degree of predictability, since participants shape events by imitation of the life of the Prophet and other reformers of the past. Thus to analyze the jihad movement in north India in the 1820s and 1830s, one must of course take into account the circumstances in which the Sikhs and the British had effectively checked the autonomy of the Muslim ruler, changed the pattern of elite recruitment, and in other ways begun to make inroads on economic and social life. But one must also take into account the cultural pattern of jihad. Only then, for example, can one make sense of the decision to move to the frontier and not, say, to Bengal, where the economic dislocation had been far greater. "Mere rebellion," declared Sayyid Ahmad Barelwi, "was not intended." And only then can one understand something of the thoughts and goals—the whole

3. The phrase is from Clifford Geertz, *Islam Observed* (New Haven, 1968).

meaning of the enterprise—to Sayyid Ahmad and his fellows.

In taking these cultural statements seriously I am influenced by an important trend in the writing of history in the last several decades: that of finding meaning and intention in the actions of those often ignored—the mobs, the peasantries, the colonized, the women—people who in the past have been treated as background figures in history, as those acted upon, subject either to irrational acts or to impersonal economic and social forces. By treating Muslims in this way I am also influenced by a recent trend in Islamic studies that disassociates itself from the position that vitality and creativity in Islam is a high cultural phenomenon limited to the classical age and found only in the Middle East.

Indeed, I would suggest that if one seeks access to the Islamic movements of modern times, one ought to turn to the history of the Muslims of South Asia, who are now divided among the countries of Pakistan, India, and Bangladesh. South Asian Muslims constitute a significant proportion of the world's Muslims, in all about the same number as the entire population of the United States. Their elites have always been in contact with the larger Muslim world, sharing institutions, learned languages, ideology, even ruling personnel with Muslims farther west. They are, to be sure, a minority in the subcontinent as a whole, but Muslims have been a minority through much of history, as they are today in the ever-more-integrated modern world. The language, the theories, the paradigms used by South Asian Muslims are precisely those that echo and reecho through Muslim history, from the Sudan to Sumatra, from the seventh century to the present. That may surprise us, but it does not surprise Muslims.

Why has modern South Asia produced such a diversity of Islamic movements? One reason may well be the extreme form in which political loss here took place. The Mughal Empire disappeared; Muslim successor states either disappeared or lost all autonomy. The Ottoman Empire, by contrast, continued and was still symbolically compelling even when it was weakened and dependent. A second rea-

son surely is the particular form of colonial control established by the British, whose interests—not necessarily deliberately—sustained the old elites and simultaneously strengthened communal cleavages and the dissemination of high forms of Hindu and Muslim culture. In dramatic contrast to this, for example, the French in colonial North Africa coopted the old religious elites while undermining the autonomy and vitality of traditional religious institutions. Yet another reason, no doubt, rests in the increasing competition of Muslims with non-Muslims in both the economic and political spheres.

In this book I describe at length one of the major movements of religious revitalization or renewal in British India, that of the reformist ʿulama, the religious scholars, of the late nineteenth century; but I also touch on many others. A brief review of the movements here will both serve as preview to the book and underline the constants in diverse Islamic movements as well as their vitality in the Indian setting.

In the first chapter I discuss the situation of the eighteenth century when, following the death of Aurangzeb in 1707, the Mughal Empire grew ever weaker, buffetted by external invasions and undermined by the increased autonomy of old provinces and new confederacies such as those of the Sikhs and Marathas. One response to this political instability came from the landed shrine-based Sufi *pirs* of the Punjab and Sind, who, like other intermediary powers, seem to have asserted themselves against regional political leaders who no longer had the backing of the imperial authorities. At the same time, some among them were committed to a religious revitalization that supplemented the "routinized" charisma inherent in their shrines with personal authority of their own. A second response, which I discuss in greater detail, came from the ʿulama of the imperial capital of Delhi. With no local base like that of the *pirs*, they were particularly influenced by the Naqshbandi Sufi order to set a synthetic and unified standard of correct religious belief and practice for the ruling and religious elites, and to reassert the balanced relationship be-

tween them that had long been the political ideal of Sunni Islam. Another important group of ʿulama of the eighteenth century were those associated with Farangi Mahall in Lucknow, who, like the Delhi ʿulama, were concerned to preserve religious learning in a period without imperial patronage, and to maintain the old relationship between scholar and ruler. The richness of these eighteenth-century responses to political decline lies behind Albert Hourani's judgment that the eighteenth century is the "Indian century" of Islam. They modify the widespread view that that century everywhere in the Muslim world was one of cultural decadence and decay. Their contemporary influence was limited to a very small segment of the more privileged members of the society, but, by striking a note of religious commitment and moral regeneration and by signaling the possibility for independent action by the ʿulama without the support of the state, they were important as foundation for the later roles of the religious leaders.

The context for these later leaders was set by the changes that followed the increase of British power, which I discuss in Chapter II. In the course of the eighteenth century, the British East India Company, long limited to coastal enclaves, had increasingly involved itself in alliances with the local rulers to whom the Mughals had given way. By mid-century they had in particular established themselves in Bengal. By 1765, supported by their Bengali trading allies, and with the Muslim governor under their control, they themselves acquired the right to collect the revenue of the region. This was one of the earliest and most complete examples of European domination of a former Muslim power. The decades that followed in Bengal were ones of unmitigated plunder. From 1784, however, the British government did pass acts designed to regulate the Company and control exploitation. Still, the very existence of a colonial power brought inevitable change. By the first decades of the nineteenth century, indigenous rule had been ended; the attempt to establish fiscal stability had brought substantial change to the land-controlling class; and the society as a whole had begun to change to one dependent on the

Western industrialized economy. No longer did Bengal export its high-quality, low-volume crafts, particularly its fine cloth; now the economy was almost wholly agricultural and geared increasingly to the export of primary goods such as indigo and jute. Against this background, the Muslim peasantry rallied to the cause of Hajji Shariʿatu'llah (d. 1838), newly returned from twenty years in the Wahhabi-dominated Hijaz, to defend their interests against Hindu zamindars and British indigo planters. He and his followers insisted on the fulfillment of the fundamental obligations of Islam and the eschewal of suspect practices. Particularly under the leadership of his son, Dudhu Miyan (d. 1862), the Bengal peasantry became imbued with greater religious consciousness and began to attempt to protect their corporate and individual interests through the institutions of the British state. The same moral urgency that had characterized the Delhi intellectual elite now provided an ideology for a movement of peasant self-assertion.

From Bengal, British control had spread up the Gangetic plain through both military and political maneuvers. In 1803 they established themselves as protectors of the king in Delhi, although they continued until the Mutiny of 1857 the fiction of continued Mughal rule. Two distinct patterns of Islamic response emerged in the Delhi region in the first half of the nineteenth century. One, fostered by the sons and heirs of Shah Waliyu'llah, focused on reformist religious guidance, but with a new urgency to reach beyond the old elites. A second, an offshoot of this same group, came to believe that the whole order of society had to be challenged and a new Islamic society created through jihad. The interests of the north Indian leadership and some tribal chiefs on the frontier, pressed as they were by Afghans and Sikhs, briefly coalesced in the 1820s and 1830s. Their jihad, aimed first against the Sikhs but intended for the British as well, was defeated by internal divisions among the tribal Muslims as much as by the Sikhs. The embers of jihad smoldered on until the 1860s.

The consolidation of British control over India was dramatically challenged in 1857 when a military rebellion was

joined by civil disorder in a series of uprisings that spread across the north. Brutally and ruthlessly suppressed, it left no doubt as to the power of the British. The decades that followed, with the Company abolished and the Queen proclaimed Empress, were the height of imperial rule, of belief in the British mission, of expansion of the bureaucracy and of British institutions. It is the activities of north Indian Muslim religious leaders in these years, from roughly 1860 to 1900, that this book, beginning with Chapter III, primarily treats. Scholars have typically focused on only one group of Muslims of this period: Sayyid Ahmad Khan and his associates, who were involved in the foundation of the highly important Aligarh movement and school. This was a movement committed to collaboration of the more privileged classes of Indian Muslim society with the imperial regime. Sayyid Ahmad wanted well-born Muslims to cherish Islam and a Muslim social identity while mastering modern European arts and sciences and social graces. I have included a discussion of this movement in Chapter VII to the extent that it shares in Islamic reform.

The ʿulama of this period, my main focus, have not been much studied because their activities were relatively inconspicuous. They have, indeed, been dismissed as an isolated "underworld," relics of a traditional, unchanging past. In fact, significant groups among them were committed to religious renewal and moral purification, using both new institutional forms and modern technological devices. Their style of religious belief has come to be increasingly characteristic of the Muslims of South Asia—and indeed, as suggested above, of all Muslims.

In this period the ʿulama chose a strategy of turning within, eschewing for the time all concern with the organization of the state and relations with other communities. Their sole concern was to preserve the religious heritage—the classic role of the ʿulama from the post-ʿAbbasid centuries on—and to disseminate instruction in authentic religious practice and belief. They sought to be, and to create in others, personalities that embodied Islam. To this end they preached and wrote, offered advisory legal opinions,

and acted as spiritual guides to their followers. Their form of organization and their techniques of communication were new; their broad-based audience was new; and their emphases within their religion and their consciousness of it were new in their time.

Increasing numbers of Muslims were becoming, as Geertz has put it, "oppositional Muslims." Their religion was not traditional in the sense of being accepted without question. Rather it was self-conscious, formulated often against the *pirs* of the Sufi shrines, against other Muslim ʿulama, and against non-Muslims, both Indian and British. One hears most of the religious movements of the late nineteenth century that were "modernist" or "syncretist," but far more characteristic were those that worked within the repertoire of received beliefs, but always shifting emphases, reformulating, and redefining. Indeed, if any single label were to be put on religious change in this period it could be that of "rationalizing" in the Weberian sense of making religion self-conscious, systematic, and based on abstract principles. Weber identified this process in the emergence of the historic religions, but it is clearly represented in later periods both in conversion to the world religions and in the "internal conversion" to the scripturalist tradition represented here.[4]

This process provided a sense of cultural worth and community to its participants, and it also provided a style of religion that appealed to people who were part of an increasingly integrated political and social world. Reformed religion traveled with one, for it opposed the ceremonies and rituals that tied one to a saint's tomb, or a pilgrimage, or a family festival on a particular day. It made possible the sharing of religious universals with Muslims of varied geographic backgrounds, at the cost of parochial cults. Such was the context that directed some Muslims to a rediscovery of their faith.

I have focused in this book on what I call "the reformist ʿulama," of whom the most important group is that asso-

4. Clifford Geertz, " 'Internal Conversion' in Contemporary Bali," in *The Interpretation of Culture: Selected Essays* (New York, 1973), pp. 170-89.

ciated with a theological academy founded in the town of Deoband in 1867. I also include as reformist the less numerous Ahl-i Hadis (Chapter VI) and the ʿulama of Nadwah (Chapter VII). Their opponents, the Barelwi ʿulama or the Ahl-i Sunnat wa Jama'at (Chapter VI) adhered to a more custom-laden religious practice and a more intercessory style of religious leadership linked to the *pirs* of the medieval tombs. In fact, however, they also thought of themselves as reformist (that is, as scholars engaged in *tajdid* or renewal) and indeed—even if I and the Deobandis begrudge them the title of reformers—in their self-consciousness and their concern with disseminating familiarity with the Law, they were, in the end, close to those they opposed. All these orientations took shape in the late nineteenth century, and continue as basic divisions among the Sunni Muslims of South Asia to the present.

To go beyond this book to the twentieth-century period of nationalist political activities is instructive for evaluating the role of the ʿulama. As Marshall Hodgson has suggested, the dilemmas facing Indian Muslims in that political context were particularly severe: "what sort of nationalism was open to the Muslims of India, who had no territory of their own? In fact, several conflicting types of nationalism were open, on none of which all could agree . . . in the world as a whole the Muslims are, as in the more local case of India, distributed among a non-Muslim majority. The problem of the Muslims of India was in the end the problem of the Muslims in the world."[5] In the diverse movements of this period, some Islamic and some shaped by other ideologies, the role of the ʿulama was in fact modest. Indeed, one can argue the very success of their inward-looking strategy developed during the nineteenth century was a hindrance to them in the twentieth.

From this perspective, the most significant event was the foundation in 1919 of the Jamiʿat-i ʿUlama-yi Hind, many of whose leaders were involved in the post-World War I agitation in support of the Ottoman caliphate. The Jamiʿat

5. Marshall G. S. Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam: Conscience and History in a World Civilization*, III (Chicago, 1974), 333.

joined the Indian National Congress in working toward independence from Britain; but, far from espousing ideas of parliamentary democracy, most of its members still thought in terms of the self-regulated *millat*. In direct continuation of the position of the earlier ʿulama, they believed that with independence they could in fact form their own community, with their own *sharʿiat*-based courts and their own educational institutions, inhabiting the same space as Hindus but culturally apart—until such time, at least some of them thought, as their example would win the Hindus to Islam at last.[6] Such a position in a period of rival nationalism and an increasingly interventionist state was chimerical.

The Muslim League, the party that ultimately won the demand for the separate state of Pakistan, illustrates a Muslim movement whose conception was less religious than communal. In the end it was supported by some of the religious leadership, some ʿulama, and many of the *pirs* of the shrines, who brought the old ideal of Shah Waliyu'llah into play, for they wanted a Muslim state with all that symbolized and devoutly hoped to establish the religious leadership as advisers, even partners, to a ruling class whose political goals (as they perhaps failed to see) were largely secular.

The organizations of the ʿulama largely stood apart from the League. It is, in fact, in their apolitical role that the organizations of the ʿulama have been most effective in India and Pakistan both. In India, Deoband itself continues as a flourishing religious school, drawing its students not only from the whole of India but from Southeast Asia and Africa as well. In March of 1980, on the occasion of a celebration of the fourteenth centennial of Islam, half a million visitors thronged to the school. Delegates from Middle Eastern countries offered munificent gifts. The prime

6. Peter Hardy, *Partners in Freedom—and True Muslims: The Political Thought of Some Muslim Scholars in British India, 1912-1949* (Lund, 1971); Yohanan Friedmann, "The Attitude of the *Jamʿiyyat-i ʿUlama'-i Hind* to the Indian National Movement and the Establishment of Pakistan," in Gabriel Baer, ed., *The ʿUlama' in Modern History*, Asian and African Studies, Israeli Oriental Society, VII (Jerusalem, 1971), 157-83.

minister of India and other leading political figures praised the school for its scholarship, its patriotism, and its contribution to the cultural mosaic of a plural society.[7] In this same year the Government of India issued a thirty-paisa stamp in honor of "Darul Uloom Deoband," its name printed in English and Devanagri below a handsome engraving of its buildings.

Throughout the entire period, those at the center of the Islamic movements were people whose reality was shaped by participation in a great traditional religion. They lived in the company of the Prophet and the great Muslims of the past, above all in the company of their great Sufi forebears, who were their models and mediators and guides. They were men who surely doubted their own religious capacity, but had no doubts whatsoever about the truth their tradition embodied. And from that truth they derived patterns of behavior and interpretation that were called into play in British India, as they had been and would be in other times and places.

The late nineteenth-century ʿulama of Deoband, the main subject of this book, had a clear and coherent view of the way the world was and the way one ought to live within it—a view, one need hardly add, radically different from that of the imperial administrators who, by and large, little dreamed how irrelevant such notions as progress and constitutional government and European superiority would remain to many of their subjects. In describing these ʿulama I hope to present something of Islamic reality and, in so doing, not only to contribute to an important and unstudied dimension of modern Indian and Islamic history, but also to suggest that the religious conceptions of jihad and *tajdid* provide a useful entrée for understanding significant dimensions of Muslim history.

7. "Dar Ul Uloom Centenary Celebrations," *India News*, March 31, 1980, pp. 2, 4.

I

The 'Ulama in Transition: The Eighteenth Century

What about the *'ulama'*? They, too, have emerged. There is a tendency, from which some of us at least have found ourselves suffering, to take this concept for granted; to suppose that there are *'ulama'* in Islam and that this is somehow "natural," that they have always been there. Not so. . . . They emerge in Islamic history in consolidated form a good deal later than is usually supposed, and develop in the Muslim history of India as a formal and constituted class a very great deal later—and perhaps even, in certain significant senses, only in the modern period.—Wilfred Cantwell Smith[1]

THE role of the religious leader in Islam is at once loosely defined and centrally important. There is no tradition of priesthood in Islam—no caste or family that has special power, no sacrament that sets some men apart from their fellows, no monasticism. Indeed, it has not been uncommon for people regarded as religious leaders to merge with the general population, often filling other occupational roles in society as well. As Shah Waliyu'llah (1703-1762) explained, those who have religious knowledge, whether they acquire it by means of revelation or wisdom or visions, are recognized by others as having gifts of leadership and signs of grace, and are therefore obeyed—for this is the central requirement of Islam—in doing what is commanded and eschewing what is forbidden.[2] Muslims may be predisposed to accord this authority to men descended from the Prophet or from some saintly lineage, or to those holding some

1. Wilfred Cantwell Smith, "The 'Ulamā' in Indian Politics," in C. H. Philips, ed., *Politics and Society in India* (London, 1963), p. 42.
2. From the *Ḥujjatu'llāhu'l-Bālighah*, quoted in Muhammad Mujeeb, *The Indian Muslims* (London, 1967), p. 279.

judicial or educational bureaucratic post. But the true basis of authority—always waiting in the wings if not front stage—has been the standard of personal knowledge and its pious embodiment expected of men who are at once exemplars to their fellows and communal representatives to Muslims and to others.

There were of course, people who had such knowledge from the beginning of Islam, starting with the Companions of the Prophet. But it was only after the decline of the ʿAbbasid Empire in the tenth century, when power was often wielded by new converts to the faith, that explicit classes of religious leaders emerged. There were, generally speaking, two kinds of religious specialists: the Sufis, who engaged in meditative disciplines and sought direct knowledge of religious truths; and the ʿulama, who knew the scholarly traditions of the faith and, above all, the injunctions of the Law. These categories usually overlapped, and a man was known as Sufi or *ʿalim* on the basis of which of the two kinds of interdependent knowledge he emphasized.

Both ʿulama and Sufis acted at times as foci for revolutionary movements, but more often gave their support to any ruler who maintained order and provided a stable framework for the continuation of Muslim social and religious life.[3] Such allegiance, however guarded, was often troublesome, for Muslims have cherished the ideal of organizing all aspects of life in accordance with the same religious values. The *shariʿat* or Law embodied a comprehensive way of life. Nonetheless, compromise was regarded as inevitable. To their followers, the religious leadership could then act as guides and guardians of the traditions of the community whatever the qualities of the political leadership. To the rulers, they served as spokesmen for local interests.[4] The ʿulama were typically linked to landholders, traders, and other influential people by class and marriage,

3. See Peter Hardy, "The Muslim Ruler in India," in William Theodore de Bary, ed., *Sources of Indian Tradition* (New York, 1958), pp. 463ff.

4. See Ira M. Lapidus, *Muslim Cities in the Late Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1967), for a detailed study of the role of the ʿulama in Muslim social and political life.

and acted as legal officials for small communities. When they held formal appointments, they were influential but often suspect, dismissed as the *ʿulama-yi zahir*, the externalist ʿulama who cared only for form and letter, or even as the *ʿulama-yi su*, the evil ʿulama. Some Sufis, too, were condemned for subordinating religious values to those of political interests. The pious among them sought to be personally true to their faith and argued the necessity of compromise in order to influence political aspects of life.

In the eastern provinces of the Islamic world, the Sufis often emerged as local intermediaries with newly conquered and converted peoples, whereas ʿulama appeared as officials for legal and charitable matters at the court. This was the case in India. In the early centuries of Muslim rule (that is, in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries A.D.), the Sufis were the dominant religious figures—teaching, writing, and mediating between their followers and the government and between rival claimants to political power. In Mughal India (1526-1739), however, their role was somewhat eclipsed and the role of the ʿulama was more dominant. In that period, religious authorities of all kinds dealt with a state that wielded effective and long-lasting power.

The sixteenth century saw the creation of a new political stability in the Muslim world, stability unprecedented in its scope and duration. Three great empires—the Ottoman, the Safavid, and the Mughal—all agrarian-based and structurally similar, were then to rule from the Balkans to Bengal for over two hundred years. In each empire the role of the ʿulama expanded as the respective bureaucracies expanded.[5] The power of the ʿulama was, to be sure, severely circumscribed, for as in other periods of centralized imperial rule, the ʿulama tended in fact to become members of the bureaucracy of the state. Still it was they who were responsible for the education of the entire nobility; who staffed the various levels of the judiciary; and who oversaw the whole charitable establishment of the empire.

5. Marshall G. S. Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam*, III, *The Gunpowder Empires and Modern Times* (Chicago, 1974) discusses at length the structures of these three empires.

Leading members of the ʿulama ranged from those who acted as prayer leader at a town mosque to the most influential of courtiers. The intellectuals among them were sought out as adornments to the various entourages of the nobility.

A career as *ʿalim* in this period was seen as a route to prestige, or, at least, to respectability. Then, as later, anyone who acquired education could expect the same recognition as that given to scions of learned families. Education was informal, fees or gifts loosely defined, and a patriarchal relation between teacher and student the norm. A boy might study from members of his or a neighboring family; then, if he proved apt and inclined, go from city to city, staying with relatives or pious people, and study with scholars known for expertise in various specialties.

A boy who chose to follow a religious career would not only learn Persian, the language of the court and of letters, but would also study Arabic. Academic disciplines studied through the medium of Arabic were divided into two broad categories: *manqulat*, the "transcribed" or "copied" subjects of Qur'an and the *hadis* or sayings of the Prophet; and *maʿqulat*, the rational sciences, or those which were the product of man's own thought and study. These latter subjects ranged from Arabic grammar and rhetoric to logic, mathematics, philosophy, and theology, to—above all—books of legal commentaries and jurisprudence. As a student completed each book he would receive a certificate from his teacher testifying to his accomplishment. His knowledge was judged by the number of books he had read and the scholars under whom he had studied.[6] The Indian ʿulama in the Mughal period specialized in the rational sciences, many of whose exponents had come to India from scholarly centers in Transoxiana. However, from the time of ʿAbdu'l-Haqq Dihlawi (1551-1642) and the establishment of close ties to scholars in the Hijaz, Delhi was known as an important center for the study of *hadis* as well.[7]

The core of the curriculum in India as elsewhere, how-

6. Mujeeb, *Indian Muslims*, pp. 204-205.

7. Aziz Ahmad, *An Intellectual History of Islamic India* (Edinburgh, 1969), p. 8 suggests that this new interest was in part the result of the sea opening to the Hijaz, in part "the challenge of Akbar's eclecticism."

ever, was the study of works on the Law or *fiqh*. Commentaries on the Qur'an and collections of *hadis* were studied only as supplements to it. By the Law, Sunni scholars—far more numerous in India than the Shiʿah—meant the four schools of Law that had evolved in the ninth century, each accepted as equally valid and legitimate. These schools, subsequently known by the names of their founders as the Hanafi, Maliki, Shafiʿi, and Hanbali, respectively, all agreed on basic matters of belief and worship, but differed on a wide variety of minor points. Each, moreover, had a somewhat different approach to the Law, so that one could describe the Maliki, for example, as being closest to the *hadis* and the Hanafi as the most flexible in adopting customary practices. Generally speaking, each school was associated with a particular geographic area, the Hanafi being dominant in India.[8] Students studied commentaries and compilations of decisions based on the works of Abu Hanifa (d. 767) and, like legal specialists throughout the Muslim world, ceased to consult the Qur'an and *hadis* in legal matters, and did not even know the writings of the founder of the law school himself. The most important legal work in India was thus a twelfth-century Central Asian text, the *Hidayat* of Burhanu'd-Din Abu'l-Hasan ʿAli Marghinani.[9]

Education and the subsequent application of the Law were not necessarily a matter of parroting received answers. The study of the *Hidayat*, for example, was a substantial undertaking, and its successful application could be a challenging enterprise. The work consisted of fifty-seven books covering such diverse aspects of life and belief as the basic religious duties, purification and cleanliness, apostasy, marriage and divorce, slavery, criminal offenses, peace and security, taxes, the status of non-Muslims, the treasury, re-

8. Mujeeb, *Indian Muslims*, p. 58.

9. The work was translated from Arabic into Persian and thence to English by Charles Hamilton in the late eighteenth century. He left out, however, the whole section on *ʿibadat* except for those portions related to *zakat*. In 1870 Standish Grove Grady prepared an edition of Hamilton's translation, omitting further such topics as the role of the *qazi*, irrelevant in British India. This edition has been recently reprinted as *The Hedaya or Guide: A Commentary on the Mussulman Laws* (Lahore, 1963).

bellion, partnerships and trusts, commercial transactions, gifts, wages, preemption, mortgage, and the administration of justice. Each chapter included divergent opinions of various scholars, an indication of the inclination of the majority, and a statement of the author's own preference. The student did not need to accept the author's opinion, but could consult the sources mentioned in the text and weigh the opinions of the learned himself.[10]

Those who completed scholarly training in Mughal India usually sought out official positions or grants and endowments offered by kings and aristocrats. The Mughal 'ulama did not, however, form a precisely defined and powerful estate, as did their counterparts among the Ottomans. There a man who completed his studies sought enrollment as an officially recognized candidate for office. If subsequently admitted to a post, he moved through a graded series of teaching positions and thence into the similarly graded ranks of the religious bureaucracy made up of mosque functionaries, teachers, jurisconsults, and judges. Such men were enrolled as 'ulama in official ledgers, exempted from taxation, and even exempted from confiscation of their personal estates at death. Their leading families became, one scholar has judged, "the nearest thing to a hereditary aristocracy in Ottoman history."[11] If less powerful, the Mughal 'ulama may well also have been more independent. There was among them a strong tradition of moral detachment, and in every reign there were resignations over policies deemed irreligious. There were, moreover, semi-independent centers of scholarly activity. Nevertheless, most 'ulama felt that the significant arena for their work was among the powerful.

An *'alim* would, moreover, associate himself with the state not only in order to have a successful career, but also

10. Mujeeb, *Indian Muslims*, p. 405.

11. Richard L. Chambers, "The Ottoman Ulema and the Tanzimat," in Nikki R. Keddie, ed., *Scholars, Saints, and Sufis: Muslim Religious Institutions since 1500* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1972), p. 34. In addition to the Chambers article, see also Richard Repp, "Some Observations on the Development of the Ottoman Learned Hierarchy," pp. 17-32 in the same volume.

to further his religious ideas and interpretations. This is clear, for example, in the career of the eminent religious leader Shaikh Ahmad Sarhindi (1564-1624). Born into a scholarly family in the Punjab, he traveled to the capital, where he frequented the court and cultivated relations with prominent nobles, some of whom became his disciples. He conducted an extensive correspondence not only with his disciples and students but with political leaders, including the emperor. Summoned to the court of Jahangir (r. 1605-1627), his views proved offensive to the king, and he was jailed for a year. Later he again found favor and was the recipient of royal patronage. His goal was to gain an audience for his intellectual and religious interpretations, and to do so he adopted the strategy of lending his prestige and dignity to the support of patrons who, in turn, furthered his concerns. One can imagine this pattern repeated at all levels of the government. It held true for Sufi *shaikhs*—as, indeed, Ahmad Sarhindi was—as well as for the 'ulama.[12]

There were tensions in the balance between religious and political authorities. But religious leaders who found particular policies offensive had little choice but to chafe or resign, then to live on endowments or the earnings of some humble occupation.[13] A ruler, in contrast, could tip the balance ever more in his favor by patronizing only the compliant religious leaders or by asserting his own claim to a religious role. Akbar (r. 1556-1605) and Aurangzeb (r. 1658-1707), although viewed by historians as archetypal opposites, both tried to enhance the royal position at the expense of the 'ulama. Indeed, leading 'ulama resigned from the court of each. Akbar, the eclectic, initially claimed scholarly preeminence among the 'ulama, and later went on to assert himself both as an enlightened *imam* with immanent spiritual authority and as the most advanced Sufi of his age, a spiritual guide himself to members of the

12. For an excellent study of Sarhindi's thought, see Yohanan Friedmann, *Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi* (Montreal, 1971).

13. For a discussion of the forms of support given the 'ulama, see Irfan Habib, *The Agrarian System of Mughal India* (London, 1963), chapter VIII.

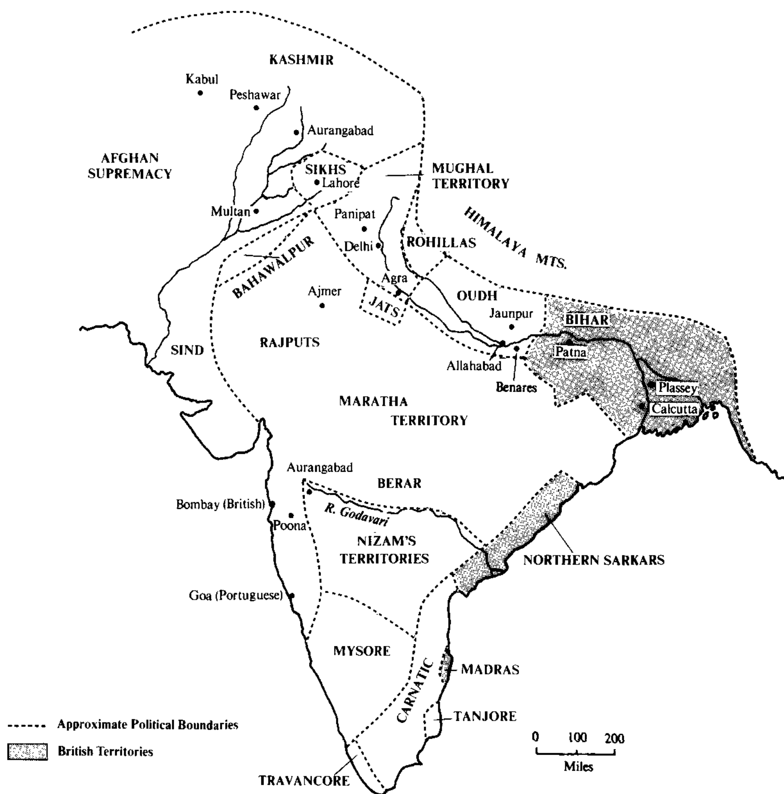
court.[14] Aurangzeb, known for his dedication to the religious Law, seems to have emphasized the perfect ordering of his own moral life as example and as cause of order in the political life of the kingdom. That he had little interest in sharing authority with the ʿulama is indicated by his definitive compilation of judicial decisions in the *Fatawa-yi ʿAlamgiri*, for, as the court historian wrote: "When the work, with God's pleasure, is completed, it will be for all the world the standard exposition of the law, and render everyone independent of Moslem doctors."[15] Thus there appears to have been little scope for independent influence on the part of the religious leadership.

Yet even under the Mughals, Muslims regarded religious leaders as having authority that did not depend on whatever official position or favor they might have, but rather on their closeness to God himself. A courtier or a king who was the disciple of a Sufi *shaikh* owed him an unquestioning allegiance far more compelling than that he owed anyone else. The *shaikh* was understood to have been preordained for a special role in spiritual guidance; the king—whatever theories might be developed—was to be respected only as long as he was considered strong. Not only the *shaikh* but the *ʿalim* as well earned respect if he were skilled and pious. This autonomous moral authority of the religious leadership was of great importance despite the more obvious strength of the officials of the state. It was to be apparent in the eighteenth century, when Mughal authority began to weaken and the relation between political and religious authority began to change.

With the death of Aurangzeb, the last "Great Mogul," in 1707, the break-up of the empire began. By mid-century, as shown in Map 1, the successor states of Bengal, Oudh, Punjab, and the Nizam's territories of Hyderabad were es-

14. See Hodgson, *Venture of Islam*, III, 75-80 for an analysis of the political theories advanced during Akbar's reign. See also the selections in de Bary, *Sources of Indian Tradition*, I, chapters XVI and XVII, for the divergent political theories of Mughal thinkers.

15. Bakhtawar Khan, "Mir-at-i-ʿAlam," in H. M. Elliott and John Dowson, *The History of India as Told by Its Own Historians* (Allahabad, 1964 reprint), VII, 160.



1. India in 1761

tablished, as well as the new kingdoms carved out by the Marathas, Sikhs, Rohillas, and Jats. Although the imperial line continued at the center, it was subject to the rivalries of innumerable contenders for influence. From outside Delhi came the devastating invasion of the Persian Nadir Shah (r. 1736-1747) in 1739. As the poetry of the times reveals, no single event shook the inhabitants of north India more than did that first invasion. The event was perceived as a catastrophe, not only to Delhi but to civilization as a whole.[16] It was to be followed by the successive attacks of the Afghan Ahmad Shah Abdali (r. 1747-1773) in 1748, 1757, and 1760. Later historians have pointed to imperial overexpansion and consequent proliferation of *mansabdari* ranks as central to the decline of the empire.[17] For people alive then the disastrous events seemed nothing less than a divine judgment.

In general, the religious leadership profited from the decline in central authority in the eighteenth century. This was true not only of the ʿulama but also of the Sufi *pirs* of the medieval shrines who had continued to form the religious leadership in the areas of Sind and the Punjab, in particular. There the *pirs*, like their counterparts elsewhere in the Muslim world, mediated among their followers and between them and political authorities and—above all—between the believer and God. Not necessarily pious themselves, they derived their authority from the *barakat* or charisma inherent in the tomb and lineage of their saintly forebear.[18] Although Mughal overlordship extended to both these provinces, the bureaucracy was less effective, and local leaders had maintained substantial influence. In both

16. Ralph Russell and Khurshidul Islam, *Three Mughal Poets: Mīr, Sauda, Mir Hasan* (London, 1968), pp. 15-22.

17. See Satish Chandra, *Parties and Politics at the Mughal Court: 1700-40* (Aligarh, 1959).

18. J. Spencer Trimingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam* (Oxford, 1971) presents an analysis of the routinization of charisma in these shrines and the consequent stability and popular influence this afforded. See also David Gilmartin, "Tribe, Land, and Religion in the Punjab: Muslim Politics and the Making of Pakistan" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1979) for an excellent discussion of the shrine-based Punjabi *pirs*.

areas the *pirs*, like other intermediary powers throughout the old empire, asserted themselves against regional political authorities who no longer had the backing of the imperial government.[19] At the same time, in each area movements of revitalization endowed the *pirs* with religious charisma of their own in addition to the authority derived from the shrine itself.

In Sind, the Sufi *shaikhs* were among the largest landholders of the area and had long acted as local intermediaries to political powers. The decline of the empire saw them ever more dominant. With that dominance came an outburst of religious creativity capped by the work of the Sufi poet Shah ʿAbdu'l-Latif Bhita'i (1689-1752). His poetry transmuted the meaning of local legends and folk tales by putting them into the framework of the high, particularly Persian, poetic tradition in which love for the Divine and love for the human beloved serve as metaphors for each other.[20] In the Punjab the poetry of Bulhe Shah (d. 1752) and Waris Shah (fl. 1790) used local materials in exactly the same fashion.[21] The eighteenth century was a period of great cultural vitality at the regional level, the result in part of the stimulus provided by shifts in social structure, the patronage of the new regional powers, and the creative contact between courtly and local traditions as personnel drifted from the capital to the new courts.[22]

19. For a study of this process in Bengal, see Philip Calkins, "The Formation of a Regionally Oriented Ruling Group in Bengal, 1700-1740," *Journal of Asian Studies*, 29 (August 1970), 777-806.

20. H. T. Sorley, *Shah Abdul Latif of Bhit* (Karachi, 1966) includes both an essay about the poet and his times and translations of his poetry. Annemarie Schimmel, *Pain and Grace: A Study of Two Mystical Writers of Eighteenth-Century Muslim India* (Leiden, 1976) is a detailed study of the poetry and religious thought of Mir Dard ("Pain") and Shah ʿAbdu'l-Latif ("Grace").

21. For translations of the Punjabi poetry, see Lajwanti Rama Krishna, *Panjabi Sufi Poets* (London and Calcutta, 1938). The entire *Hir Ranjha* of Waris Shah, the most popular poem in the language, has been translated into English by Charles Frederick Usborne, available in an edition edited by Mumtaz Hasan (Karachi, 1966).

22. Richard B. Barnett, *North India Between Empires: Awadh, the Mughals, and the British, 1720-1801* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1980) discusses the extent to which competition among the nobility in a protected state took the form of cultural competition.

In the Punjab, as in Sind, the Sufi leadership seems to have enhanced its position as local notables, and acted not only as foci for the religious aspirations of their followers but as a worldly leadership as well. There the eighteenth century saw a revitalization of the Nizamiyyah branch of the Chishti Sufi order as a major response to the decay of the imperial institutions. Disciples of the Delhi *pir*, Shah Kalimu'llah Jahanabadi (d. 1729), effectively preached the necessity of an adherence to the basic requirements of the religious law, denying that the intercession of the saints of the shrines was sufficient for leading a truly religious life.[23] This emphasis on the teaching of basic doctrines and requirements of the faith was to be shared by the popularly based ʿulama of the subsequent century, as both groups left off discussion of the theological and philosophical issues that had been the staple of earlier religious leaders. The *pirs*, however, as locally based aristocrats, continued to work through political leaders. The preeminent Chishti of the eighteenth century in the Punjab, for example, Khwajah Nur Muhammad (d. 1790) was known to have great influence over Baha'u'l-Haqq, the ruler of Bahawalpur. He himself played a political role, taking the field against the Sikhs at the end of the century, and inspiring the local Muslim population to join him in resistance. With imperial power in decay, the *pirs* not only filled a political void but—at least in the case of the Chishtis—acted to preserve the religious tradition as well.

The religious revitalization evident among the *pirs* in Sind and the Punjab was no less apparent in the imperial heartland. There the most prominent influence, affecting Sufis and ʿulama alike, came from the Naqshbandi order, which had been introduced into India primarily through the teaching of Khwajah Baqi Bi'llah (1563-1603), whose disciples had included Shaikh Ahmad Sarhindi and ʿAbdu'l-

23. See K. A. Nizami, "Čishtiyya," in the *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2nd ed. (Leiden, 1954—) (hereafter *EI*²), II. See also: M. Zameerudin Siddiqi, "The Resurgence of the Chishti Silsilah in the Punjab during the Eighteenth Century," in Indian Historical Congress, *Proceedings of the Thirty-Second Session* (Jabalpur, 1970), I, 408-12.

Haqq Dihlawi. In the eighteenth century there were prominent Naqshbandi leaders across north India. In Sind, for example, learned Naqshbandis in Thatta wrote commentaries on the Qur'an and *hadis*, and opposed local customs such as that of ecstatic dancing among the tombs of the saints on Makli Hill.[24] In Delhi itself, the leading mystics of the day were all Naqshbandi, among them Mirza Mazhar Jan-i Janan (1700-1780), Mir Dard (1721-1785), and the man who was at once the greatest *ʿalim* and a leading Sufi, Shah Waliyu'llah. In Delhi, too, vernacular poetry was a vehicle for expressing religious feeling, and poets infused Urdu with Persian meters and metaphors in order to make it a medium fit for poetic expression.[25] Jan-i Janan and Dard were among the Sufi masters distinguished as poets. The Naqshbandi order, increasingly influential, was to shape the views of many ʿulama toward sobriety in spiritual experience and rigorous adherence to the religious Law.[26]

The basic response of the ʿulama to the decline in central authority appears to have been quite different from that of the *pirs*. The ʿulama had no local base like that of the wealthy shrines, and sought first to restore the old balance

24. Annemarie Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1975), p. 397.

25. The flowering of Urdu poetry in the eighteenth century has been well studied in Russell and Islam, *Three Mughal Poets*. See also the general histories of Urdu: Ram Babu Saxena, *History of Urdu Literature* (Allahabad, 1940); Muhammad Sadiq, *A History of Urdu Literature* (London, 1964); and Annemarie Schimmel, *Classical Urdu Literature from the Beginning to Iqbal* (Wiesbaden, 1975). Two opposing theories about the change from Persian to Urdu are in: Aziz Ahmad, *Studies in Islamic Culture in the Indian Environment* (London, 1964), pp. 252-53, where the author anachronistically attributes the change to a concern for the preservation of a minority culture, seeing it as an "instinctive escape from the fear of submergence into the Hindu cultural milieu"; and Fritz Lehman, "Urdu Literature and Mughal Decline," paper delivered at the 82nd meeting of the American Historical Association, Toronto, December 29, 1967, where the change is described as a statement of "Indianness," "a desire to speak not to an international but to an Indian Muslim community." Neither explanation seems to me as significant as the fundamental shift to a regional focus for political and cultural expression.

26. For a bibliography of works relating to the Naqshbandi order, see Hamid Algar, "Biographical Notes on the Naqshbandi Tariqat," in George F. Hourani, ed., *Essays on Islamic Philosophy and Science* (Albany, 1975), pp. 254-59.

between themselves and the political leaders. (In the nineteenth century, when it was evident that no such balance was possible, they sought—as we shall see—to establish themselves as popularly based religious guides.) There was an urgency in the efforts of the leading ʿulama in the eighteenth century, for while stability had been created in some of the new regional systems, no such stability existed in the heartland of the empire. The ʿulama—and other thinkers as well—judged moral and religious failure to be the cause of the evident political and social failure of the times. Many therefore urged greater attention to the Law and singled out pervasive Shiʿi influence as a notable problem. Above all, the ʿulama wanted to fulfill their responsibility of guarding the intellectual heritage of the faith, even without the court as protector. This impulse was evident in the protection and development of the learned tradition at Farangi Mahall in Lucknow, and in the synthetic and encyclopedic work of the great thinker, Shah Waliyu'llah.

Farangi Mahall

At the turn of the eighteenth century a family of men famed for their religious learning and long supported by the Mughal court, settled in Lucknow.[27] Its patriarch, Mulla Qutbu'd-Din (d. 1691/2), had retained close ties with the Delhi court and, with his sons, had participated in the collection of the *Fatawa-yi ʿAlamgiri*. When Qutbu'd-Din was killed in a land dispute with a family of rival *shaikhs*,[28] the

27. The material in this section is primarily abstracted from the biographical compendium by Muḥammad ʿInāyatu'llāh Anṣārī, *Taẕkirah-yi ʿUlamā'-yi Farangī Maḥall* (Lucknow, n.d.). I am very grateful to Francis Robinson for informative comments on Farangi Mahall (in a personal communication, June 12, 1978). He notes that the family was supported at least from the sixteenth century, when Akbar made a generous *madad-i maʿash* grant to Mulla Hafiz, Qutbu'd-Din's great-great-grandfather.

28. The term *shaikh* in India is used for a Sufi master and, as here, for those regarded as descendants of the companions of the Prophet. The *shaikhs* were part of the *ashraf*, the well-born or respectable of Indian Muslim society, whose definition seems to have taken form in the eighteenth century. The *ashraf* were divided into four ranked grades, each

emperor punished his opponents and generously compensated his sons, two of whom had accompanied him on his campaign to the Deccan. His award included land in Bahraich district of Oudh, given as *jagir*; and the quarter of Lucknow where a French adventurer had once built a mansion known as Farangi Mahall, given in revenue-free tenure. It was to be by the name of Farangi Mahall that the family was subsequently known.

The shift to Lucknow was significant, for, as we have noted, as the century progressed the locus of artistic and intellectual vitality was to be increasingly in the regional kingdoms. In Lucknow, the Nawwab, although a Shiʿi, patronized the school because it offered training for bureaucrats. He required newly arrived Iranis to present a certificate from Farangi Mahall before they could receive court patronage. Preparing *qazis* and *muftis*, the legal officials required by Muslim courts, was the specialty of Farangi Mahall, which now filled a void left by the disruption of scholarly centers in the capital.

The scholarly efforts of these ʿulama, however, went far beyond the simple training of officials. The career of one of the most famous of the family in the eighteenth century, Maulana ʿAbdu'l-ʿAli (1731-1810) suggests the scope of their scholarship. After he had completed his studies, ʿAbdu'l-ʿAli took service under a succession of different princes. But despite official responsibilities and frequent shifts from place to place, he demonstrated a prodigious scholarly capacity. Committed to the metaphysical doctrine of *wahdatu'l-wujud*, he wrote commentaries on the *Fusus* of Ibnu'l-ʿArabi (1165-1240) and on the *Masnawi* of Jalalu'd-Din Rumi (d. 1273). His main fields of scholarship, however, were jurisprudence, theology, and philosophy. He wrote in excellent classical Arabic and Persian. A recent scholar has judged his works to be "according to the fashion of his time, commentaries, glosses, and super-glosses on

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claiming non-Indian descent: the *sayyids*, the descendants of the Prophet; the *shaikhs*, the descendants of his companions; the Mughals, who entered India with the Timurid rulers; and the Pathans or Afghans, who came both as rulers and settlers.

most of the usual text-books." But his contempories called him "Bahru'l-ʿUlum," the "Ocean of the Sciences," and "Maliku'l-ʿUlama," the "chief of the ʿulama," and judged his contributions to be of great value and significance.[29]

The most important measure of the intellectual contribution of the Farangi Mahalli ʿulama was their systematization of a new curriculum which, with modifications, has dominated religious teaching in South Asia to the present. The Farangi Mahallis, under the direction of a son of Qutb Sahib, Mulla Nizamu'd-Din (d. 1748), expanded the existing corpus of works typically studied to include a number of books on each of the various subjects of *maʿqulat*: Arabic grammar, logic, philosophy, mathematics, rhetoric, *fiqh*, and theology. Qur'an and *hadis* were only marginally studied, the former through two commentaries, the latter through one abridgment.[30] This emphasis was to be reversed, as discussed below, by other groups of ʿulama, but even they were influenced by the scholarly standard set by this school. The Farangi Mahallis were respected for their desire to guard and foster the intellectual tradition in a period of political instability. This concern was widely shared by the ʿulama, as evidenced by the extent to which the new syllabus, subsequently known as the *dars-i nizami*, was adopted. Students came to Farangi Mahall from a wide geographic area, and they carried this syllabus with them to their homes. When, for example, the Madrasah-yi ʿAliyah in Calcutta was established under British auspices in 1780, its first principal was a graduate who instituted the *nizami* curriculum there.[31] To the extent that an important dimension of the modern transformation of the ʿulama rested in closer ties among themselves, this contribution of Farangi Mahall was an important one.

The Farangi Mahallis also fostered the tradition of combining scholarly and mystic learning. Like other religious

29. Muhammad Shafiʿ, "Bahr ul-ʿUlūm," *EI*², II.

30. Mujeeb, *Indian Muslims*, pp. 406-408, lists the books included in the *dars-i nizami*.

31. For this and other examples of students who came to Farangi Mahall from Bengal, see ʿAbdu's-Sattār, *Tārīkh-i Madrasah-yi ʿĀliyah* (Dacca, 1959).

people in this period, they increasingly came to be initiated in more than one mystic order, and greatly valued mystic experience. Sufi bonds strengthened the family, for members would often be bound by common fealty to a *pir*, in the early eighteenth century to Sayyidu's-Sadat 'Abdu'r-Razzaq Banswi; and family ties were often reinforced by the passing of *ijazat*, the permission to make one's own disciples, from one generation to another. It is significant that the Farangi Mahallis did not eschew Sufi experience. As we have seen, the Punjabi Chishtis in the same period came to be known for their teaching of the Law, the subject par excellence of the 'ulama. Increasingly in post-Mughal India, the pattern of religious leadership was to become one in which the institutional distinction of *'alim* and Sufi mystic was substantially blurred.

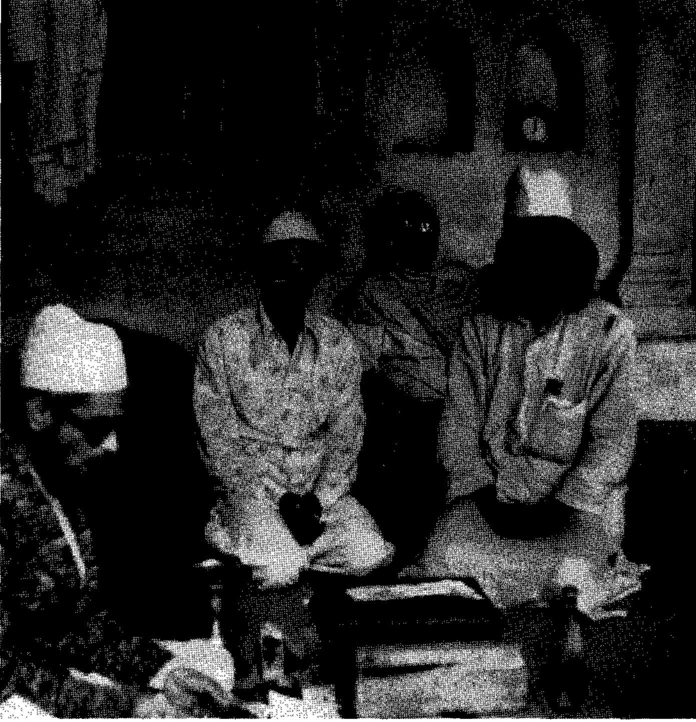
The school's policy of preparing family members and students for careers in princely service was increasingly fraught with difficulties. Nonetheless, the family clung to that style of religious occupation. Wherever there was a prince, the Farangi Mahallis sought positions under him. Thus in the mid-eighteenth century one family member was appointed as *qazi* in Delhi. 'Abdu'l-'Ali, whose scholarship was described above, journeyed from prince to prince, from Shahjahanpur to Rampur to Buhar to Madras and finally to the Carnatic, where the Nawwab, who was from Gopamau in Oudh, granted him both a large stipend and a *madrasah* in perpetuity. Another member of the family was patronized by Hafiz Rahmat Khan (1708-1774), the ruler of Rohilkhand; then, as conditions deteriorated, he fled first to Delhi, then to Rampur.[32] One family member was appointed *mufti* by the government of Oudh—only the first of many of the family to hold that post. Three members of the family joined princely armies. The travels, the varieties of employment, the violent deaths of at least one member in each of the first four generations of the family—all this suggests the difficulties facing the family in maintaining the pattern of dependence on princes.

32. Syed Altaf Ali Barelvi, *Life of Hafiz Rahmat Khan* (Karachi, 1966), p. 268.

Still, this pattern continued without change well into the nineteenth century. In each generation there would be some to uphold the family tradition of teaching and serious scholarship. There would also be pious mystics, one of whom in each generation held the imamship of the Farangi Mahall mosque. Hazrat Muhammad ʿAbdu'l-Wali was one such *ʿalim,* a man who had thousands of disciples in the period before 1857. But most of the family, in any generation, would seek a livelihood in official employment. After completing their education they would turn to princes or the British government as a source of jobs and support. Their motive was in part financial, for many who lacked jobs lived very impecuniously; but they were also simply following the pattern of occupation that had continued from Mughal days.

The princes encouraged this arrangement. The Muslim courts of the eighteenth and early nineteenth century prided themselves on their cultural attainments, among which religious learning held an important place. In Rohilkhand a Pathan kingdom flourished; at its height under Hafizu'l-Mulk as many as five thousand scholars were said to be supported by the ruler and other patrons. Hafizu'l-Mulk himself presided over a board of the learned who supervised education, and he honored those who completed their studies with lavish court ceremonial. But Hafizu'l-Mulk's kingdom, like that of many princes, did not last long.

The Farangi Mahalli ʿulama, however, even though demand for their skills declined and the availability of princely patronage was increasingly scarce, did not consciously seek a more independent position for themselves by addressing a more widely based audience. Rather they continued to focus, as had the ʿulama of Mughal days, on abstruse and technical kinds of scholarship. They did not as a group have the interest in popular reform characteristic of some other ʿulama. This was evident in their continued emphasis on *maʿqulat* and in the fact that they taught Shiʿi as well as Sunni students, cooperating as they did with the Oudh court. The Farangi Mahallis thus represented in attenuated form the style of religious leadership that had flourished



1. A group of scholars at Farangi Mahall today

under the Mughals. Yet in their independent efforts to maintain a high intellectual standard for the ʿulama, their success in drawing students from a wide area, and their integration of the bookish and mystic traditions, they exemplified increasingly important characteristics of the ʿulama in the post-Mughal period. It was, above all, their erudition that won them respect and support from Muslims anxious to guard their intellectual heritage. When the Farangi Mahallis found themselves, willy-nilly, without a role at Muslim courts, that distinction remained.[33]

33. Shaikh Muḥammad Ikrām, *Rūd-i Kauṣar* (Lahore, 1968), pp. 603-10, criticizes their activities as totally out of touch with the needs of the Muslim community. Maulānā ʿAbdu'l-Ḥalīm Sharar, *Guzashtah Lakhna'ū yā Mashriq kē Tamaddun kā Ākhirī Namūnah* (Lucknow, n.d.), pp. 25-26, 93, 119-22, the account of a litterateur at the beginning of this century, offers

Shah Waliyu'llah

Like the Farangi Mahallis, Shah Waliyu'llah hoped for a restoration of stable Muslim rule in which the 'ulama would play an important role.[34] Unlike them, he explicitly analyzed the basis of the arrangement between ruler and 'ulama and argued the necessity of their complementary functions and the need for proper balance between the two. The importance of appropriate political leadership was as self-evident to him as was the importance of religious leadership. He understood history to follow an evolutionary pattern in which society progressed through increasingly complex and encompassing stages from primitive to urban to monarchical and finally to universal orders. In the final stage, a caliph would supervise Muslim monarchs who would appoint officials to enforce the religious Law and foster, to the extent possible, an Islamic organization of society. For Shah Waliyu'llah, his era marked a regression, for not only was there no *khilafat* but there was not even a stable monarchical order. Going beyond analysis to active involvement, he wrote in turn to Nizamu'l-Mulk (r. 1724-1748) of the successor state of Hyderabad, to Najibu'd-Daulah (d. 1790) of Rohilkhand, and even to Ahmad Shah Abdali of Afghanistan, inviting each in turn to take on the required role. In the course of his letters he offered the leaders of the day advice on statecraft and policy, urging them to cease indolence, suppress rebellions, and set the revenues aright by limiting *jagir* holdings and increas-

a far more positive appraisal. This book has recently been translated by E. S. Harcourt and Fakhir Hussain under the title, *Lucknow: The Last Phase of an Oriental Culture* (London, 1975). For Farangi Mahall see especially pp. 74-76.

34. Shah Waliyu'llah—like the Farangi Mahallis—still awaits a definitive study. One of the most useful books available on Shah Waliyu'llah is G. N. Jalbani, *Teachings of Shah Waliyullah of Delhi* (2nd ed., Lahore, 1973). It organizes material about him by academic subject: Qur'an, *hadis, fiqh, tasawwuf*, etc., and attempts to present faithfully Shah Waliyu'llah's own views. For details of his life, see Aziz Ahmad, *Studies*, pp. 201-209; Muḥammad Ikrām, *Rūd-i Kauṣar*, pp. 527-68; Masood Ghaznavi, "Shah Wali Ullah Dehlavi: His Political and Social Thought" (an unpublished paper); and S.A.A. Rizvi, "The Breakdown of Traditional Society," in *The Cambridge History of Islam* (Cambridge, 1970), II, 67-96.

ing the amount of land under direct control.[35] His efforts proved vain, but he thus enunciated the pervasive ideal of enlightened Muslim leadership guided by responsible ʿulama.

In that ideal, the "outer caliphate," the *zahiri khilafat*, would be responsible for securing order and stability, whereas the "inner caliphate," the *batini khilafat* of the religious leaders, would guide the ruler and instruct the community. Even in a flawed political order, however, Shah Waliyu'llah sought an important role for the religious leadership, the kind of role he himself exemplified in advising rulers, guiding the community, and safeguarding the intellectual heritage. The more independent stance he advocated for the ʿulama contrasted with that of the Farangi Mahalli ʿulama. His own family had chafed at the subordinate role the Delhi court was willing to accord the leading ʿulama. His father, Shaikh ʿAbdu'r-Rahim (1644-1718), had been called on to assist in the collection of the *Fatawa-yi ʿAlamgiri*, but he had disliked courtly life and had withdrawn to found a college, the Madrasah-yi Rahimiyyah. Shah Waliyu'llah succeeded his father as director of that school and devoted his life wholly to study and teaching.

It was his success in mastering the intellectual tradition that gave him his influence. In this Shah Waliyu'llah's contribution was no less great than that of the Farangi Mahalli ʿulama. His success, however, rested neither in curricular and institutional innovation nor in the compilation of mere commentaries, but in a major individual effort at intellectual synthesis and systematization, an unprecedented *tatbiq* of the whole range of Islamic knowledge. Troubled by the disorder he saw around him, perhaps even sensing that he was at the end of an age, he sought to stem the tide of decline by consolidating and clarifying the entire body of the Islamic tradition. Knowledge of the truth would bring Muslims to religious obedience that would end the divisions and deviations he so greatly deplored. He felt himself

35. Khalīq Aḥmad Niẓāmī, *Shāh Waliyu'llāh Dihlawī ke Siyāsī Maktūbāt* (Delhi, 1969); Hafeez Malik, *Moslem Nationalism in India and Pakistan* (Washington, D.C., 1963), pp. 135-39.

uniquely endowed by divine gifts for a task, as he understood it, never before attempted.[36] His *Hujjatu'llahu'l-Balighah* is a monument to his efforts to elucidate and enshrine the glorious intellectual tradition of the faith.

Shah Waliyu'llah's work was characterized by an insistence on the necessity of the study of *hadis*, a study that had been peripheral for most of the ʿulama. Inspired by Shaikh Abu't-Tahir ibn Ibrahim and other scholars during his stay in the Hijaz, he made *hadis* his major academic interest to the point that he is, in fact, typically known by the title of scholar of *hadis, muhaddis*. His work and the work of his family in this field placed the seal on India's reputation in *hadis* and decisively set the emphasis for many ʿulama who were to follow.

Shah Waliyu'llah argued that unquestioning adherence to late compilations of legal decisions was an inadequate guide to religious truth. He blamed this dominant approach to the Law, known as *taqlid*, for laxity in religious matters and for differences among the law schools. Were learned Muslims to study revelation, they could unite in obedience to authentic teachings. He argued that the "door to *ijtihad*," in the classical phrase, was not closed, and that those skilled in the traditional sciences had the right and indeed the responsibility to consult original sources.[37] He did not deny the high worth of the writings of the *imams* of the law schools, but rather believed they should be used in the light of *hadis*. An *ʿalim*, he argued, should know the judgments of all the law schools and consult them eclectically, using whichever accorded best with *hadis*. The *Muwatta* of Imam Malik (d. 795), he suggested, best corresponded with the *hadis*, and disagreements between the Hanafi and Shafiʿi schools could be reconciled by consulting it. The *hadis*, he maintained, provided an absolute standard, and he sought to demonstrate in his writings how seeming conflicts among the *hadis* could invariably be rec-

36. Fazlur Rahman, "The Thinker of Crisis: Shah Waliy-ullah," *Pakistan Quarterly*, 6:2 (1956), 44.

37. On this subject see Mohammad Daud Rahbar, "Shah Wali Ullah and Ijtihad," *The Muslim World*, 45 (October 1955), 357.

onciled if they were properly understood, and if only *hadis* of unquestioned authenticity were accepted. He made the same point about the Qur'an, arguing cogently in his Qur'anic commentary its consistency and clarity. He urged acceptance of the obvious meaning of verses and tried to demonstrate that very few if any had been abrogated by later revelation. His espousal of jurisprudential eclecticism combined with consultation of Qur'an and *hadis* clearly enhanced the responsibility of the ʿulama for interpreting the Law to their followers.

Shah Waliyu'llah explicitly denied the value of study of *maʿqulat*, regarding those subjects as mere intellectual exercises and a source of confusion.[38] The value, by contrast, of *manqulat* in bringing people closer to the central teachings of Islam was apparent. He wanted both the sources and his interpretations of them readily available to the whole educated class, not only to the ʿulama. To this end he translated the Qur'an from Arabic into Persian, the cultural and political lingua franca of the day. This was one of his earliest endeavors and a mark of his independence of character, for it earned him only criticism from the official ʿulama.[39] He was convinced of the importance of this effort, and in his *Fathu'r-Rahman* he urged people to study the Qur'an directly, not even using a commentary and—again insisting on the central role of the religious leadership—to consult a teacher if in doubt.[40]

Shah Waliyu'llah, however, did not invite all Muslims or even all educated Muslims to engage in *ijtihad*. In matters of the Law, as in other aspects of the faith, he sustained the pervasive Islamic orientation that certain interpretations of the faith could only be understood by the religious elite, the *khass*, and should not even be discussed with the *ʿamm*, who could easily slip into error. Hence, on the matter

38. Mawlavi M. Hidayat Husain, "The Persian Autobiography of Shah Wali-ullah bin ʿAbd al-Rahim al-Dihlavi: Its English Translation and a List of His Works," *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 8 (1912), 167.
39. Mujeeb, *Indian Muslims*, p. 277.
40. Jalbani, *Waliyullah*, p. 7.

of the Law he felt that most ʿulama and believers should adhere to the Hanafi school of law, and that only the few should pursue the reinvigoration of the faith he espoused. Indeed, a divine revelation had indicated that Hanafi law should be followed in India.[41] This prudent discrimination also characterized his work on sufism.

One of the central issues in Indian sufism, one that had engaged intellectual circles at least since the seventeenth century, was that of *wahdatu'l-wujud,* literally Unity of Being, but commonly defined as ontological or existential monism or even as pantheism.[42] The *wujudi* position had been formulated by the thirteenth-century Spanish mystic Ibnu'l-ʿArabi and had reached India through the writings of nearly contemporary Persian poets. The issue derived from the attempt to define the basic relationship between man and God. In this view, the better to affirm the singleness of God, creation is denied anything but an illusory empirical existence. This existence, the mystic argued, had to obliterate itself (*fana*) in the Existence that alone subsists (*baqa*). For such identity to be possible, the human spirit has to be a direct emanation from the Divine. Opponents have claimed that this view in fact denies *tauhid,* the unity and transcendence of God, and encourages the believer to be lax in matters of the Law.

In India, opposition to this theory was associated with the early Naqshbandis, above all with Shaikh Ahmad Sarhindi, who asserted that the experience of *wahdatu'l-wujud* did not represent an understanding of the ultimate nature of reality, but rather was merely a perception of unity that was superseded by perceptions associated with yet higher stages of spiritual advancement. His position, associated

41. Professor Masood Ghaznavi has, in a personal communication, pointed to this *kashf* recorded in the *Fuyūẓu'l-Ḥaramain,* and has suggested that this position in particular is suggestive of the comprehensiveness of Shah Waliyu'llah's *tatbiq*.

42. These are the terms, respectively, of Aziz Ahmad, *Studies,* p. 187; L. Gardet, "Allāh," *EI*², I; and K. A. Nizami, "Hind," *EI*², III. Each of these authors presents a worthwhile perspective on this complex subject. For a lucid and compelling insight into the *wujudi* philosophy, see the writings of Seyyed Hossein Nasr, particularly *Sufi Essays* (London, 1972).

with the phrase *wahdatu'sh-shuhud,* Unity of Witness or phenomenological monism, has usually been understood to refer to this capacity to understand the unreality of Unity of Being, and the higher understanding of the transcendence of God.[43]

Shah Waliyu'llah tried in work after work to resolve the controversy on this issue. His arguments, shared by his contemporary Naqshbandi, Mirza Mazhar Jan-i Janan, altered the previously dominant view of their order.[44] Others, one might note—particularly Khwajah Mir Nasir ʿAndalib, his son Khwaja Mir Dard, and Ghulam Yahya—all continued to adhere to the views of Shaikh Ahmad. But Shah Waliyu'llah argued that the *wujudi* position was in fact legitimate, and that if properly understood confirmed the *shuhudi* position.[45] The whole universe is pervaded by a common existence, he argued, an existence both immanent and transcendent, but beyond that existence is the Original Existence of God. His understanding of this problem in no way affected his commitment to the Law. Yet he knew that others could be misled, and he therefore argued discretion in discussing such subtle matters. His father held the *wujudi* position unreservedly, but refused to discuss the issue publicly.[46] In part because of Shah Waliyu'llah's interpretation, the *wujudi* position, a complex and important strand in Sufi thought, has since been dominant in India.

A final issue in Shah Waliyu'llah's writings that attracted interest both in his time and after was his attitude toward the Shiʿah. The Shiʿah, who venerated the Prophet's son-in-law ʿAli, his family, and the *imams* who inherited his spiritual power, were thought to be little less than polytheist.[47] Hence to some Sunnis, a particular provocation to

43. Friedmann, *Sirhindi,* pp. 59-68.
44. Nizami, "Hind," *EI*², III.
45. De Bary, *Sources of Indian Tradition,* I, 454.
46. Muḥammad Ikrām, *Rūd-i Kauṡar,* p. 536.
47. For descriptions of Shiʿi customs, particularly in the successor state of Oudh, see Mrs. Meer Hasan Ali, *Observations on the Mussulmans of India* (London, 1832), an account of an English woman who married into a respectable Shiʿi family of Lucknow; and Sharar, *Guzashtah Lakhnaū.* For an account of the Shiʿah in the Deccan, see Jaʿfar Sharif, *Islam in India or the Qanun-i-Islam,* translated by G. A. Herklots and edited by

Divine displeasure in the eighteenth century was the ascendancy of the Shiʿah, which culminated in the attempts of the Emperor Bahadur Shah (r. 1707-1712) to introduce Shiʿi practices at the imperial court. Two of the most important successor states, Oudh and Bengal, were explicitly Shiʿi. The Lucknow court of Oudh, whose independence can be dated from 1722, was a center of Shiʿi culture, fostered by the nobility and stimulated by an influx of Iranians. Under its influence there were notable conversions to Shiʿism even beyond the boundaries of Oudh, including that of the Sayyids of Amrohah and the Nawwabs of Rampur.[48] The Lucknow court patronized Shiʿi *mujtahids* such as the distinguished Dildar ʿAli Khan (1753-1819), who had studied in Iran and was known for his debates with Sunni ʿulama. The court also patronized Shiʿi *madrasahs*, among them at least two new ones founded under the *nawwabs*.[49] In Hyderabad, even though the Nizam himself was Sunni, there was a marked increase of Shiʿi nobles in the eighteenth century, among them courtiers who had left places such as Mysore, Madras, and Oudh, which were affected by the presence of the British.[50] Some Sunnis have held the turning to Shiʿi doctrine to be a response to decline, "when man depends on things created instead of on the Creator."[51]

Such Shiʿi practices as the mourning assemblies and processions of Muharram were made the particular target of Sunnis seeking a scrupulous adherence to the Law. The aged Mirza Mazhar Jan-i Janan focused on opposition to Shiʿi practices in his pronouncements, and met his death

William Crooke (reprint, Delhi, 1972). Also see John Norman Hollister, *The Shiʿa of India* (London, 1953), and Murray T. Titus, *Islam in India and Pakistan* (Calcutta, 1959).

48. Muḥammad Ayyūb Qādirī, *Maulānā Muḥammad Aḥsan Nānautawī* (Karachi, 1966), p. 6; and Sayyid Manāẓir Aḥsan Gīlānī, *Sawāniḥ-i Qāsimī* (Deoband, 1955), I, 67.

49. Sayyid Ṭufail Aḥmad Manglaurī, *Musalmānōṅ-kā Raushan Mustaqbil* (Delhi, 1945), p. 138.

50. Karen Leonard, "The Hyderabad Politcal System and Its Participants," *Journal of Asian Studies*, 30:3 (1971), 581.

51. Manāẓir Aḥsan Gīlānī, *Sawāniḥ-i Qāsimī*, I, 60.

in 1780 at the knife of a Shiʿi assassin.[52] In this atmosphere, Shah Waliyu'llah again sought unity and reconciliation. He was personally devoted to the veneration of ʿAli.[53] However, like other Sunnis, he insisted that the succession of the first four caliphs was legitimate, thus disagreeing with the Shiʿah who maintained that ʿAli and his family should have followed the Prophet. He did take the original position that the first three caliphates were not all superior to that of the fourth, ʿAli's, but rather judged only the first two, when there was unity and peace among Muslims, to be superior.[54] But he was not notably successful in persuading Shiʿah and Sunni either to accept this view or to be reconciled because of it.

The Sunnis at least remember his personality as tolerant and generous in spirit. The descriptions of later ʿulama perhaps obscure his real personality in favor of the ideal of religious leadership in Indian Islam, which emphasized patience and forebearance, tolerance of others' foibles, and inclination to compromise. But he himself no doubt aspired to that ideal, and in many instances did exemplify it. His acceptance of the division of society into the *khass* and *ʿamm*, for example, was not considered conspiratorial or opportunist but wise and prudent. A man of understanding would speak to others in accordance with their capacity for understanding. This was intrinsic to the breadth religion ought to have.

He also exemplified the ideal pattern of religious leader by being both saint and *ʿalim*. As *ʿalim* he produced a prodigious body of scholarship, thanks in part to his regular habits, self-control, and great discipline.[55] But, as his title *waliyu'llah* (the friend of God) reveals, he was also a saint. Indeed it had been revealed to his mother at the tomb of the great Chishti saint Khwajah Qutbu'd-Din Bakhtiyar (d. 1236) that her future offspring would be the *qutbu'l-aqtab*,

52. Ẓuhūru'l-Ḥasan Kāsōlī, ed., *Arwāḥ-i Ṣalāṣah* (Saharanpur, 1950), pp. 22-23.
53. Muḥammad Ikrām, *Rūd-i Kauṣar*, p. 57.
54. Ẓuhūru'l-Ḥasan, *Arwāḥ-i Ṣalāṣah*, pp. 16-17.
55. Muḥammad Ikrām, *Rūd-i Kauṣar*, p. 550.

the saint of the age, the pivot around whom the world revolves. His saintly attainments were such that he himself was accorded many visions, most notably one in Mecca that instructed him to undertake his work of religious renewal.[56] His work was a celebration of Islam, for he held that every injunction of the faith was of profit and value to man, invariably conducive to some worldly or spiritual interest.[57] He exulted in his foreordained role of clarifying and systematizing the faith, for he believed himself to be a *fatih*, the inaugurator of a new era. He claimed to have created a synthesis beyond even that of al-Ghazali (d 1111), uniting not only reason (*ʿaql*) and tradition (*naql*) but the gnosis (*maʿrifat*) of the Sufi as well.[58]

Shah Waliyu'llah expected his work to be continued by his quartet of able sons and, indeed, a dream of the Prophet assured him on his deathbed it would be.[59] A fundamental orientation of his work, however, had been the hope that Muslim political leadership would be restored, with the ʿulama carrying on their collaborative role of teaching and advising the ruler of the state. His successors found that hope to be vain, and rather acted as the "internal caliphs" to the extent that it was possible in a situation of alien rule. In so doing, they were indebted to Shah Waliyu'llah for a manifold legacy: a sense of their importance as leaders; a commitment to the study of *hadis* and Law; a model in personality and attainments; and a desire for unity based on religious obedience.

Shah Waliyu'llah and the Farangi Mahallis were not alone in defining a new pattern for the ʿulama. By the time of Shah Waliyu'llah's death in 1762, a pattern had been set for the activity of the ʿulama. In the late eighteenth century, many had found employment in the new regional kingdoms, and there, as well as in Delhi, found patronage

56. Ẕuhūru'l-Ḥasan, *Arwāḥ-i S̤alās̤ah*, pp. 18-19.
57. Muḥammad Ikrām, *Rūd-i Kaus̤ar*, p. 570.
58. Dr. A. J. Halepota, *Philosophy of Shah Waliullah* (Lahore, n.d.), pp. 5-6.
59. Ẕuhūru'l-Ḥasan, *Arwāḥ-i S̤alās̤ah*, p. 19.

and stimulation for a new commitment to their historic role of preserving the cultural heritage of the community in times of political uncertainty. There was then a new self-consciousness about the role and responsibility of the ʿulama. One significant measure of this was the beginning of a new genre of writing in India, that of biographical dictionaries that explicitly took as their purview the ʿulama. Heretofore in India, with apparently only one exception, dictionaries of religious leaders were devoted to Sufis alone.[60] To be sure, many Sufis were in fact scholars as well, just as many of those later listed as ʿulama were Sufi *shaikhs*. What is important is that in the later period the institution of the ʿulama was to be the more significant one for organizing religious leadership.

Foremost among the eighteenth-century biographers of the ʿulama was Mir Ghulam ʿAli Azad of Bilgram in Oudh (1704-1786). A contemporary of Shah Waliyu'llah, he, too, performed the pilgrimage and studied *hadis* in the Hijaz. He subsequently spent almost half a century settled in Aurangabad, part of the independent territory of the Nizam, writing on *hadis*, literature, history, biography, and poetry. He wrote two biographical dictionaries of the ʿulama, a general one and one limited to the scholars of Bilgram. He also prepared a compendium of references to India culled from Qur'anic commentaries and *hadis*, indicating perhaps that he felt not only a new self-consciousness about the role of the ʿulama, but also a new awareness of geographic

60. The exception is that of ʿAbdu'l-Haqq Muhaddis. The general point about the paucity of early biographical dictionaries of the ʿulama is made in two introductions to one of the major dictionaries of the nineteenth century, *Tażkirah-yi ʿUlamā'-yi Hind* of Raḥmān ʿAlī, translated into Urdu by Muḥammad Ayyūb Qādirī (Karachi, 1964). Maulana Muhammad ʿAbdu'r-Rashid Nuʿmani, in his introduction (pp. 30-34), suggests that scholars of *hadis* are typically interested in biography as well, presumably because their study necessitates examination of the lives of transmitters of the traditions in order to decide if they were reliable. The introduction by Dr. Sayyid Muʿinu'l-Haqq (pp. 35-66) mentions one other eighteenth-century biographical dictionary (included in a general history), *Farḥatu'n-Nāẓirīn* by Muḥammad Aslam, written in 1770.

identity inspired by his experience in the Hijaz.[61] Such speculation aside, Azad's career, like the careers of the early Farangi Mahallis and of Shah Waliyu'llah, indicates clearly that in religious scholarship many 'ulama had found a role deeply valued by Muslims of their day.[62]

61. A. S. Bazmee Ansari, "Āzād Bilgrāmī," *EI*², II. See also his article "Faḍl-i Imām" *EI*², II. Fazl-i Imam Khairabadi (d. 1829), the first *sadru's-sudur* under the East India Company in Delhi, is also notable as one of the first biographers of the 'ulama. His *Tarājimu'l-Fuẓalā'* comprises biographical notices of the leading scholars of Oudh. The text with translation has been published by the Pakistan Historical Society, edited by Mufti Intizamullah Shihabi (Karachi, 1965).

62. For a list of outstanding scholars of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, see Mohiuddin Ahmad, *Saiyid Ahmad Shahid: His Life and Mission* (Lucknow, 1975), pp. 14-16.

II

The ʿUlama in Transition: The Early Nineteenth Century

> In this city [of Delhi] the *Imām al-Muslimīn* wields no authority, while the decrees of the Christian leaders are obeyed without fear [of the consequences]. Promulgation of the command of *kufr* means that in the matter of administration and the control of the people, in the levy of land-tax, tribute, tolls and customs, in the punishment of thieves and robbers, in the settlement of disputes, in the punishment of offences, the *kāfirs* act according to their discretion. There are, indeed, certain Islamic rituals . . . with which they do not interfere. But that is of no account. The basic principle of these rituals are of no value to them, for they demolish mosques without the least hesitation and no Muslim or *dhimmī* can enter the city or its suburbs except with their permission. . . . From here to Calcutta the Christians are in complete control.— Shah ʿAbdu'l-ʿAziz, 1803[1]

IN the early nineteenth century there were those of the ʿulama who felt that scholarship directed to others of the learned class was no longer a sufficient activity for religious leaders. The successors of Shah Waliyu'llah in particular moved in two new directions. One was toward an emphasis on the study of legal codes (*fiqh*) and the concomitant writing of judicial opinions (*fatawa*) for increasing numbers of individual Muslims. In this concern they differed even from the representatives of the Naqshbandi Mujaddidi line in

1. Shāh ʿAbdu'l-ʿAzīz, *Fatāwā-yi ʿAzīzī* (Delhi, 1311 A.H.), I, 17, translated in Muhammad Mujeeb, *The Indian Muslims* (London, 1967), p. 390. The *fatwa* appears in Shāh ʿAbdu'l-ʿAzīz, *Surūr-i ʿAzīzī al-Maʿrūf Fatāwā-yi ʿAzīzī* (Kanpur, n.d.), p. 35. This is the edition cited here.

Delhi, who shared their rigorous legal concerns, but at this time directed their attention only to the spiritual elite.[2] The second new direction was far more dramatic—military revolt on the borders of the old empire, in the hope of creating a new Islamic order through *jihad.* The latter effort failed; the former was to be the hallmark not only of the Waliyu'llahi family but of most groups of ʿulama by the end of the century.

From the time of Shah Waliyu'llah's death in 1763 until his own in 1824, Shah ʿAbdu'l-ʿAziz, eldest of Shah Waliyu'llah's sons, was the head of his family and the center of an important circle of reformist teaching in Delhi. He, with his three brothers, taught the religious sciences, particularly *hadis*, to large numbers of students, many of whom had journeyed great distances to sit at their feet. The brothers also acted as Sufi *shaikhs* to chosen disciples, and preached as well in the mosques of Delhi.[3] ʿAbdu'l-ʿAziz in particular was known as an excellent teacher who provided advanced students an opportunity to offer their opinions, and who supervised the initial teaching of those who had completed their studies.[4] He was deemed, in the words of a traveler from Bukhara, a great scholar from whom "rivers of *shariʿat* would flow into all the world."[5]

His *fatawa* were his major tool for disseminating instruction in *shariʿat* beyond the circle of his students and disciples. They provided the means for individual Muslims to receive day-to-day guidance in the innumerable details of life that together created a distinctive pattern of religious fidelity, whatever the vicissitudes of political life. They were explicit in seeking to adhere to the *sunnat* or practice of the Prophet by constant reference to *hadis*. Thus, for ex-

2. Christian W. Troll, *Sayyid Ahmad Khan: A Reinterpretation of Muslim Theology* (New Delhi, 1978), pp. 30-32.

3. Abū Yaḥyā Imām Khān Naushaharawī, *Tarājim-i ʿUlamā'-yi Ḥadīs̤-i Hind* (Delhi, 1938-1939), p. 151.

4. Muḥammad Iḥtishāmu'l-Ḥasan Kandhlawī, *Ḥālāt-i Mashā'ikh-i Kāndhlah* (Delhi, 1963-1964), pp. 50-56. See Muḥammad Ikrām, *Rūd-i Kaus̤ar* (Lahore, 1968), p. 577 for a list of ʿAbdu'l-ʿAziz's students.

5. Ẓuhūru'l-Ḥaṣan Kāsōlī, ed., *Arwāḥ-i Ṣalāṣah* (Saharanpur, 1950), p. 144. The elder compared him to the Naqshbandi *pir*, Shah Ghulam ʿAli, whom, in comparison to Shah ʿAbdu'l-ʿAziz, he found wanting.

ample, when asked about the legitimacy of pointing with the index finger during the attestation of faith in the canonical prayer, ʿAbdu'l-ʿAziz explained his support for that practice primarily on the basis of valid *hadis*. Only secondarily did he discuss decisions in the books of Law, and, beyond that, what one might call contextual issues, in this case that the Shiʿah subscribed to the practice (and that it was therefore no less legitimate).[6] Elsewhere in the *fatawa* he discussed at length technical problems of sifting and understanding *hadis*.[7] The desire to disseminate familiarity with the fundamental religious sources was also evident in the Urdu translations of the Qur'an written by Shah Rafiʿu'd-Din (1749-1817) and Shah ʿAbdu'l-Qadir (1753-1827), two of Shah Waliyu'llah's sons, for Urdu was fast acquiring the position that Persian had had as the lingua franca of the educated.[8]

The importance of this more popular focus on the part of these ʿulama was clearly related to the changed context of social and political life that was created with the establishment of the British as the chief military power over vast stretches of the Indian countryside. By the mid-eighteenth century the British had established their overlordship of Bengal and Bihar; by the 1770s they had succeeded in reducing Oudh to a subsidiary state; and in 1803 they ousted the Marathas as protector of the now titular king in Delhi and took on that role themselves.

The effects of early British rule were felt gradually and unevenly. The presence of powerful rulers who were more alien in culture than had been even the Marathas or the Afghans was in itself disruptive. Moreover, as the British consolidated their authority, some of their policies also initiated change. They, like other rulers, sought an effective

6. ʿAbdu'l-ʿAzīz, *Fatāwā-yi ʿAzīzī*, pp. 13-14.
7. Ibid., pp. 22-23.
8. Abū Yaḥyā Imām Khān Naushaharawī, *Tarājim-i ʿUlamā'*, pp. 64-65. Annemarie Schimmel, *Classical Urdu Literature from the Beginning to Iqbal* (Wiesbaden, 1975), p. 205, suggests that the Qur'anic translations into Urdu may have been inspired not only by the example of Shah Waliyu'llah but also by that of the missionaries Benjamin Schultze (1741) and Henry Martyn (1814), who translated the Bible into Urdu.

way of securing the fundamental source of revenue, that produced by the land. To this end they undertook land settlements, seeking to identify and clarify who had rights to the produce of the soil. In this process, some Indians benefited and some suffered. In Bengal the power of landed interests was substantially enhanced at the cost of the tillers of the soil, who in the eastern sections of that province were almost entirely Muslim. There, too, revenue-free grants, many of them supporting Muslim religious institutions, were apparently obliterated. Elsewhere, by contrast, individual Muslims flourished. A second major area of economic and social change stemmed from the increasing trade of the period, which brought into prominence new groups of intermediaries and changed some patterns of production. Yet a third general area of change was in the nature of recruitment to government service. Again, generally speaking, it was in Bengal that Muslim fortunes most precipitously declined, but everywhere employment was at the pleasure of aliens. The greatest change took place in military service, as successive princes were brought under British control and their armies, both formal and informal, were disbanded.[9]

The change that most troubled pious Muslims in the early decades of British rule was in the administration of the law. Law continued to be the law of religious communities: that is, Muslims were subject to Muslim law, Hindus to what was deemed to be Hindu law. The very categories, however, implied a common standard, that of the high culture, which was novel in India. Moreover, law for each community was codified and frozen. Muslim law, starting in late eighteenth-century Bengal, was transformed into Anglo-Muhammadan law, in which such central issues as the law of evidence and the interpretation of offenses against the state were not Muslim but British. This law was increasingly administered by British officials, even though indigenous scholars were initially retained as advisors.

It was in this context that *fatawa* took on new importance.

9. Peter Hardy, *The Muslims of British India* (Cambridge, 1972), chapter II, provides an excellent review of the effects of British rule to 1857.

Fatawa in a Muslim state were traditionally given by a court official, the *mufti*, for the guidance of the *qazi* or judge. Now in India they were given directly to believers, who welcomed them as a form of guidance in the changed circumstances of the day. They had, of course, no coercive power, and they could no longer deal with a whole range of issues related to the organization of the state. They were, however, to become a vehicle for disseminating ever more detailed guidance in minute concerns of everyday life, including in their purview decisions about customary practices that had been of little concern to the state, but were of great moment to Muslims seeking to preserve an authentic expression of their religion under alien rule.

This new role of *fatawa* in the nineteenth century has been obscured by the concern of scholars with the content of the *fatawa*, particularly with the question of whether Shah ʿAbdu'l-ʿAziz in such *fatawa* as the one quoted at the opening of this chapter did or did not declare that north India (Hindustan) had ceased to be *daru'l-islam*, the abode of Islam, and had become *daru'l-harb*, the abode of war. Most scholars have sought in the *fatawa* a source of legitimacy for the later jihad.[10] The *fatawa* were, in fact, ambiguous on the political status of India, and were more important for suggesting partial strategies for accommodating to the new circumstances and for establishing the role of the ʿulama as guides to those circumstances.

The ambiguity of the *fatawa* derived in part from the lack of clear consensus within Hanafi law on what constituted *daru'l-harb*, and beyond that, from the very complexity of the situation that ʿAbdu'l-ʿAziz faced. The classical law had developed the idea that Muslim countries would wage war with all non-Muslim neighbors. However, war was justified only if Muslim law was not in force in matters of worship and the protection of the faithful and of *zimmis*,

10. One notable exception to this interpretation is Mushir U. Haq, *Indian Muslims' Attitude to the British in the Early Nineteenth Century: A Case Study of Shah Abdul Aziz*, Master's thesis, McGill University, Institute of Islamic Studies, 1964.

and if an adjacent Muslim country had sufficient power to make war practicable. Some scholars held that a country remained *daru'l-islam* as long as a single provision of the Law was kept in force.[11] In the *fatwa* cited at the opening of this chapter, ʿAbdu'l-ʿAziz skirted the question of the status of India, only implying that the power of the British and the limitations they put on Muslims had created a *daru'l-harb*. This was partly implied in his calling the British *kafir* or infidel, whereas all Muslim law had unfailingly recognized Christians as *ahl-i kitab*, people of the Book, with whom tolerant relations were possible. However, despite this implication, ʿAbdu'l-ʿAziz did not press the point home by showing that there was a Muslim ruler to whom the faithful could shift their allegiance, someone who could wage war from *daru'l-islam*.[12] Moreover, he referred to a Muslim *imam*, albeit one quite powerless. ʿAbdu'l-ʿAziz thus appears to have wanted Muslims to behave politically as if the situation were *daru'l-islam*, for he gave no call to military action, yet he wanted them to recognize that the organization of the state was no longer in Muslim hands.[13]

This position of Shah ʿAbdu'l-ʿAziz had clear implications for the position of ʿulama like himself.[14] If the state no longer provided a hierarchy of courts and personnel to administer Muslim law, then only the ʿulama could fill what was evidently a troublesome legal void. They could not, to be sure, compel compliance to the Law, but they could offer direction to the faithful on such issues of civil behavior as trade, inheritance, and family relations, as well as on more narrowly religious matters. They could be the center for an ideology that gave meaning to the life of observant Mus-

11. A. Abel, "Dār al-Ḥarb," *EI*², II.
12. Mujeeb, *Indian Muslims*, p. 391.
13. Contrast this interpretation with the more widely held understanding represented by Ziya-ul-Hasan Faruqi, *The Deoband School and the Demand for Pakistan* (Calcutta, 1963), p. 2, "The *fatwā* was a call to religiously conscientious Muslims to mobilize themselves in the absence of any powerful Muslim warlord, under popular leadership and rise in defiance of the foreign power."
14. This point follows the argument of Wilfred Cantwell Smith, "The ʿUlamā' in Indian Politics," in C. H. Phillips, ed., *Politics and Society in India* (London, 1963), pp. 47-49.

lims. Moreover, when Shah ʿAbdu'l-ʿAziz emphasized the power of the British, he made it possible for Muslims to gain an advantage in certain economic matters that were more profitable in a condition of *daru'l-harb*. It was, for example, only then legitimate to take interest and to hold slaves unconditionally. He ruled it legitimate for Muslims to learn English and take employment under the British so long as they did not thereby oppress other Muslims. Thus they could secure needed employment. Most of Shah ʿAbdu'l-ʿAziz's *fatawa* that raised the question of the political situation were posed in the context of such economic concerns.[15]

Shah ʿAbdu'l-ʿAziz's *fatawa* on these and other matters exemplified the kind of guidance he saw as ever more important, guidance that could create a community substantially self-contained not only on matters of faith but in everyday behavior. The giving of *fatawa* was not an important concern of Shah Waliyu'llah, but for his sons and other ʿulama of the post-Mughal period, it was a major activity. Particularly with the publication made possible by newly available printing presses, *fatawa* became one of their most important tools for teaching adherence to the Law. And it was, they felt, only through such adherence that Muslim religious and political life could be fostered.

Jihad

Shah ʿAbdu'l-ʿAziz genuinely held out the hope that scholarly guidance could transform the life of Muslims. But his approach, at once gradualist and pragmatic, was rejected by several of the younger generation of the Waliyu'llahi family under the leadership of a dynamic visionary, Sayyid Ahmad of Rae Bareli in Oudh (1786-1831). His was to be nothing less than one of the genuinely utopian movements of modern India, in this case seeking not to withdraw as an exclusive sect but to destroy society itself and build it anew on a just and egalitarian basis. This endeavor, which

15. ʿAbdu'l-ʿAzīz, *Fatāwā-yi ʿAzīzī*, pp. 35, 60, 202, 327.

emerged in the final years of his life, was the fruit of many strands evident in his earlier years.[16]

Sayyid Ahmad was born into a *sayyid* family recognized as descendents of the Prophet, and was respected for his family's origin and its reputation for piety and learning. As a boy he himself showed little inclination toward the family tradition of scholarly activity, but distinguished himself for his physical strength, his generosity, and a religious bent of mind. Educated, well-born, and yet impoverished, he was like many of his background in seeking employment with a prince. At eighteen he set out for Lucknow, whence, still unsuccessful after a stay of several months, he moved on to Delhi. There he was warmly welcomed by the Waliyu'llahi family, and became a student of Shah ʿAbdu'l-Qadir. A miracle legitimized his disinclination for scholarship and enhanced the admiration for him that his enthusiasm and commitment to the faith had already created.[17] He may have spent as long as five years in Delhi, from about 1806 to 1811.

Then, at about age twenty-five, he left Delhi to spend some seven years as a cavalryman for Amir Khan (1768-1834) in central India. Amir Khan's grandfather had come to Rohilkhand and established himself as one of the new Afghan overlords of the eighteenth century. Amir Khan, born on the family's estates there, was one of the many military adventurers of this period. Aligned for a time with the Maratha power Holkar, he organized a body of the free-floating demilitarized soldiers of the area to raid and conquer, all with the not unrealistic goal of ultimately setting himself up as a prince. By 1818, however, he was

16. Descriptions of the jihad of Sayyid Ahmad are found in the *Waqāʾiʿ-i Aḥmadī*, reports of his close associates recorded in Tonk. Manuscript copies exist at several places. The most extensive study made of the jihad is the Urdu work of Ghulām Rasūl Mihr, *Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd* (Lahore, 1955). A recent work in English is both detailed and sympathetic to the subject: Mohiuddin Ahmad, *Saiyid Ahmad Shahid: His Life and Mission* (Lucknow, 1975). Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi in the Introduction contrasts this work with the "rancorous attitude to the Saiyid" characteristic of works such as those of Olaf Caroe and Peter Hardy (pp. vi-vii). See also *Ḥayāt-i Ṭayyibah* by Mirzā Ḥairat Dihlawī (Lahore, 1972 reprint).

17. Ẓuhūru'l-Ḥasan, *Arwāḥ-i S̤alās̤ah*, p. 125.

forced to come to terms with the British who, in fact, did award to him the principality of Tonk and styled him a *nawwab*. It is perhaps not surprising that a young man such as Sayyid Ahmad, known to have loved sports and physical training, and eager to find some kind of profession, would have joined Amir Khan in his enterprise.

Sayyid Ahmad's later disciples and followers, however, interpreted his years with the *nawwab* of Tonk as his first attempt to carve out a Muslim state that would be wholly organized by the *shariʿat*. There is in fact no evidence that Amir Khan had any interest in creating a religiously organized state, although it is true that he later lent his support to Sayyid Ahmad, and that his heirs were for long patrons of religious reformers.[18] Most probably the ultimate goal of Sayyid Ahmad's life only took form in the course of his career as a soldier. Only gradually did he create a synthesis of his experience in attempted state-making and his pious commitment to the Law.

When Sayyid Ahmad returned to Delhi, older and perhaps with some vision of a new military endeavor, he quickly assumed a position of leadership among some of the most respected of the Delhi ʿulama—among them Muhammad Ismaʿil (1781-1831), Shah Waliyu'llah's grandson, who was in fact his elder by a few years, and ʿAbdu'l-Hayy (d. 1828), Shah ʿAbdu'l-ʿAziz's son-in-law and Ismaʿil's great friend. Both took *baiʿat*, an oath of allegiance, to Sayyid Ahmad as their Sufi *shaikh*. Such a commitment was clear evidence of how very different Sayyid Ahmad's orientation was from that of the elders of the family, for one would have expected these two young men to have been disciples of the elders of the family, ʿAbdu'l-ʿAziz or ʿAbdu'l-Qadir. This was the more so since, as one questioner put it to Muhammad Ismaʿil, both of these elders were his "lovers."[19]

What initially distinguished Sayyid Ahmad from these

18. See H. K. Kaul, ed., *Urdu Manuscripts: A Descriptive Bibliography of Manuscripts in Delhi Libraries* (New Delhi, 1977), for a striking indication of the number of religious manuscripts that were acquired from the library at Tonk and thus presumably either commissioned or purchased by the ruler there.

19. Ẓuhūru'l-Ḥasan, *Arwāḥ-i Ṣalāṣah*, p. 89.

elders, and what was to be in fact his lasting influence, was his commitment to popular reform of custom and practice. Others of the ʿulama had interpreted revitalization of Islam in more intellectual than practical form. With him and his followers, renewal was set on a wholly different and more radical course. To be sure, Shah Waliyu'llah had, in his will, called on his heirs to forsake "the customs of *ʿarab* [pre-Islamic Arabia] and *hunud* [the Hindus],"[20] and the *fatawa* of Shah ʿAbdu'l-ʿAziz on such issues as proper conduct at the tombs of saints reflected that concern. But defining what were legitimate customs and beliefs, and working actively to eradicate all others, was only characteristic of the later movement. In fact, the elders of the family sometimes refused to abandon what came to seem suspect practices. Shah ʿAbdu'l-ʿAziz engaged in certain medical cures, as well as in determination of auspicious times, in the very fashion that the reformers denounced.[21] He also distributed food after reading the Fatihah at his father's grave. The younger members of the family, such as Shah Muhammad Ishaq (1778-1846), his grandson and future successor, quietly left when he began such practices. Shah ʿAbdu'l-ʿAziz, however, did accept and commend Sayyid Ahmad's refusal to learn the practice of *tasawwur-i shaikh*, meditation on the image of the *shaikh*. Shah ʿAbdu'l-Qadir, at the insistence of Muhammad Ismaʿil, prevented women of his house from carrying out the custom of *bibi ki sahnak*, offering food in the name of the Prophet's daughter Fatimah.[22] Although relations between the generations always remained mutually respectful, with great leeway given to sincere differences, Shah ʿAbdu'l-ʿAziz, then an old man approaching death, may even have opposed the jihad on the frontier.[23]

Sayyid Ahmad's more radical reformist teaching was the product of what was perceived as a clearly intolerable po-

20. Muḥammad Ikrām, *Rūd-i Kausar*, p. 572.
21. Mujeeb, *Indian Muslims*, pp. 508-11.
22. Ẓuhūru'l-Ḥasan, *Arwāḥ-i Ṣalāṣah*, pp. 100, 138.
23. A. Yusuf Ali, "Karāmat ʿAlī," *EI*², IV, hints at this by noting that it was after Karamat ʿAli refused to join the jihad that ʿAbdu'l-ʿAziz appointed him *khalifah*.

litical situation—proof that Muslims had failed to fulfill the requirements of the Law. Leaders of his movement found it incomprehensible that their religion itself was at fault; rather they felt that their commitment to it was lacking. In a striking parallel to other movements among Muslims in the nineteenth century, they rejected their local "classical style" of Islam in favor of a scripturalist emphasis on the original practice of the faith.[24] Hence Muhammad Isma'il's answer to the questioner above was that when he had taught *Mishkatu'l-Masabih* (a collection of *hadis*) to his sister, he had deliberately left out the parts permitting remarriage of widows until, under Sayyid Ahmad's influence, he had in fact enjoined her to remarry. Similarly, when Shah ʿAbdu'r-Rahim Wilayati, a respected Sufi, became Sayyid Ahmad's disciple, he explained that he had not known how to read the canonical prayer or keep the fast until he had met him.[25]

Sayyid Ahmad's reformist teachings were set down in two works that, when printed on the new lithographic press of the day, soon achieved wide circulation. The *Siratu'l-Mustaqim* (the Straight Path) was compiled by Muhammad *Isma'il in 1819. Written initially in Persian, it was soon* translated into Urdu in order to reach a wider audience. The second work, the *Taqwiyatu'l-Iman* or the Strengthening of the Faith, was written directly in Urdu.[26] The two works stressed above all the centrality of *tauhid*, the transcendent unity of God, and denounced all those practices and beliefs that were held in any way to compromise that most fundamental of Islamic tenets. God alone was held to be omniscient and omnipotent; He alone, entitled to wor-

24. The concept of a "classical ideal" of Islam and of "scripturalist" movements that disavow it is developed in Clifford Geertz, *Islam Observed: Religious Development in Morocco and Indonesia* (New Haven, 1968).

25. Ẓuhūru'l-Ḥasan, *Arwāḥ-i Ṣalāṣah*, pp. 161-63.

26. Both of these works are available in innumerable editions, the first in the original Persian as well as in the more common Urdu translation; the latter in Urdu. Excerpts in English translation were published early in the history of the two works: "Taqwiyat ul-Iman," translated by Shahamat ʿAli (*Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 13 [1852], 310-72) and "Notice of the Peculiar Tenets Held by the Followers of Syed Ahmad, Taken Chiefly from the Sirat ul Mustaqim . . . ," translated by "J.R.C." (*Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1 [1832], 479-98).

ship and homage. There were, the followers of Sayyid Ahmad argued, three sources of threat to this belief: false sufism, Shiʿi doctrine and practice, and popular custom.

It is significant that Sayyid Ahmad's movement did not denounce sufism, as did the movements of the contemporary Wahhabis in Arabia and the Fara'izi in Bengal. Indeed, his position among his followers was primarily that of Sufi *shaikh* to his disciples. To emphasize, however, the centrality of the Law, he gave initiation not only in the traditional orders but in the *tariqat-i muhammadiyyah*, the way of the Prophet, which was characterized not by internal devotions but by external obedience to the Law.[27] Sayyid Ahmad thus opposed not sufism but what were held to be deviations from correct sufism. He emphasized that there was no intermediary between the believer and God, and condemned calling on "saints, apostles, imams, martyrs, angels, and fairies," naming children after them, or wearing their special symbols. He condemned the discipline of repeating the name of a saint as well as that of *tasawwur-i shaikh*. He criticized prostration at shrines and pilgrimages that entailed special dress, circumambulation, sacrificing animals, burning lights, and sanctifying water. He held that the common Fatihah ceremony, consisting of Qur'anic readings and distribution of food at shrines or graves, be performed simply, without lights and without restrictions

27. Annemarie Schimmel, in *Pain and Grace* (Leiden, 1976), p. 20 and *Classical Urdu Literature*, p. 170, has argued that this *tariqah* of Sayyid Ahmad continued that of the same name begun as a branch of the Naqshbandiyyah by Mir Nasir ʿAndalib in about 1734 and continued by his son Mir Dard. Sayyid Ahmad did have instruction from Shah ʿAbdu'l-Qadir who, as noted above, studied Urdu from Dard. But the degree of this connection is not wholly clear to me, and is not noted in other works on Sayyid Ahmad. In any case, there were important differences between the paths of Sayyid Ahmad and Dard. Thus Professor Schimmel describes one of the unique aspects of Mir Dard's teaching to be an extreme emphasis on the centrality of the *shaikh*. After *fana* in God, she argues, he understood the subsequent stage of spiritual progression to be *baqa* in the Prophet, and, beyond that, *baqa* in the *shaikh*, at which point the disciple had come full circle, having begun his meditations by identification with the *shaikh*. Sayyid Ahmad, by contrast, opposed even the practice of *tasawwur-i shaikh*. Compare Mohiuddin Ahmad, *Sayyid Ahmad Shahid*, p. 382, who speaks of the *tariqat-i muhammadiyyah* as "his [Sayyid Ahmad's] order."

as to the date or kind of food or condition of the participants. He condemned the consecration of ritual dishes offered as propitiation to the daughter of the Prophet and to saints, and the dedication of sacred animals to them. Underlying the reformist discussion was the insistence that all ceremonies connected with the dead be understood to have the purpose of *isal-i sawab*, the "transfer of merit" for the performance of a commendable deed to the deceased. The purpose was not to be propitiation of the dead or expectation of favors. Anything else, wrote Muhammad Ismaʿil—in a simile characteristically Indian—was "as putting the crown of a king on the head of [an untouchable] Chamar."[28]

A second group of abuses, Sayyid Ahmad held, were those that originated from Shiʿi influence. He particularly urged Muslims to give up the keeping of *taʿziyahs*, the replicas of the tombs of the martyrs of Karbala taken in procession during the mourning ceremony of Muharram. Muhammad Ismaʿil wrote, "A true believer should regard the breaking a Tazia by force to be as virtuous an action as destroying idols. If he cannot break them himself, let him order others to do so. If this even be out of his power, let him at least detest and abhor them with his whole heart and soul."[29] Sayyid Ahmad himself is said, no doubt with considerable exaggeration, to have torn down thousands of *imambaras*, the buildings that house the *taʿziyahs*.[30]

Opposition to Shiʿi influence had been central to the efforts of both Shah Waliyu'llah and his sons. But they had only written against the Shiʿah or used gentle persuasion. Thus Shah ʿAbdu'l-Qadir was said to be able to distinguish a Sunni from a Shiʿi intuitively and would always greet a Sunni with his right hand and a Shiʿi with his left. Known for his indirect and gentle ways of influencing people, he converted a Shiʿi family to Sunni beliefs because of the

28. Muḥammad Ismaʿil, tr. Shahamat ʿAli, "Taqwiyat ul-Iman," pp. 326-27.
29. Ibid., p. 492.
30. Ẓuhūru'l-Ḥasan, *Arwāḥ-i Ṣalāṣah*, p. 124.

respect he accorded them as *sayyid*.[31] The tactics of the younger group were markedly different.

Finally, Sayyid Ahmad denounced popular custom as a source of compromise to the doctrine of *tauhid*. He condemned expensive ceremonies associated with weddings, circumcisions, and burials, and the prohibition of widow remarriage as harmful not only to spiritual well-being but also to worldly well-being. Again, the approach to changing custom was practical, not intellectual. Most dramatic was the encouragement of widow remarriage. In imitation of Hindu practice and contrary to Islamic law, many upper-class Muslims had denied women the right to remarry and had isolated and degraded those women who survived their husbands. The reformers did not argue but acted. First, Muhammad Isma'il married off his own aged asthmatic sister to the ever-cooperative 'Abdu'l-Hayy. Muzaffar Husain Kandhlawi not only married his cousin's widow, thus putting a price of a thousand rupees on his head, but later married a Shi'i widow who wooed him with the promise that she would become Sunni if they wed. He cleverly smuggled her away during Muharram when the women of the town were out viewing *ta'ziyahs*.[32] The treatment of widows aside, the reformers rarely attributed deviations to Hindu influence, but rather blamed Muslims themselves. Only later did Muslim movements explicitly seek to create boundaries between themselves and their fellow countrymen. The specific issues defined by Sayyid Ahmad, however, were ones that would concern reformers for decades to come.

After he returned to Delhi in 1818, Sayyid Ahmad assembled around himself a group of followers and undertook his first extensive tour, lasting some six months in 1818-1819, through the countryside of the upper Doab. He visited Ghaziabad, Muradnager, Meerut, Sardhanah, Kandhlah, Phulat, Muzaffarnagar, Deoband, Gangoh, Nanautah, Thanah Bhawan, and Saharanpur, preaching his reformist message and winning allies to his cause. From there he traveled through Rohilkhand to Lucknow and

31. Ibid., pp. 54-55, 128-29.
32. Ibid., pp. 97-98, 199-201.

thence to Rae Bareli, where he stayed for an entire year. Although he took two tours into the area near his home during that time, he primarily meditated, refining what had now become his commitment: to undertake a military endeavor to overthrow the existing rule. In 1821, he resolved to undertake the pilgrimage to Mecca as a preliminary to jihad.

With his band of followers he set out to travel by land to Calcutta, whence they would embark by sea for the journey to the Hijaz. As he traveled he preached, offering initiation to those who accepted his beliefs, and, as he had done in his earlier tours, appointing *khalifahs* in each area to continue the instruction of initiates. One of the most important themes in his teaching was the very fact that the hajj, fallen into abeyance because of political disorder and Shiʿi influence, was in fact a requirement of the faith.[33] In the course of his journey the numbers with him swelled to several hundred, and when he reached Calcutta some six hundred were prepared to travel with him on pilgrimage. Arrived in Arabia, he is said to have administered an oath of jihad at Hudaibiyya, where the companions of the Prophet had vowed to fight against the Meccans. In 1823 he returned to Rae Bareli, where he spent two years teaching, collecting funds, and making his plans.

Sayyid Ahmad and his followers believed that he was at least the "renewer," the *mujaddid* of the faith for his century; at most, the promised Mahdi who would come at the end of time to destroy evil and initiate a new society. In the life of Sayyid Ahmad they saw parallels to the life of the Prophet, of whose family he was. Both were uneducated; both were subject to trances and dreams; both awoke people from forgetfulness of God's law. Sayyid Ahmad's two faithful lieutenants were likened to the Prophet's own companions: ʿAbdu'l-Hayy to the quiet and dignified Abu Bakr, and Muhammad Ismaʿil to the brave ʿUmar.[34] The

33. Ḥusain Aḥmad Madanī, *Naqsh-i Ḥayāt* (Deoband, 1953), II, 23.

34. Muḥammad Ikrām, *Mauj-i Kauṣar* (Lahore, 1968 reprint), p. 38; Murray T. Titus, *Islam in India and Pakistan* (Calcutta, 1959), p. 192. Compare the study of Marilyn Waldman in "West African Jihads," a paper

followers of this movement—like, to varying degrees, the followers of movements later in the century—felt themselves part of a special community with access to the true teaching of the faith. This sense of being special, of exclusiveness, gave meaning to people whose lives seemed subject to forces beyond their control. The commitment to this sect was a decisive one, signaled by a formal oath, involving abstention from rituals that had defined and given honor to family status, and ultimately entailing separation and danger.

Sayyid Ahmad's proposed jihad had as its model the new states carved out from the empire in the post-Mughal period, but his underlying purpose and many elements of his strategy were influenced by classical notions of holy war. As jihad required, he launched warfare from a Muslim area, the tribal areas of the frontier, and took as his opponent the Sikhs of the Punjab, who were blamed for interfering with Muslim religious life. Sayyid Ahmad was explicit about this choice, once remarking while on the frontier: "There were many who advised me to carry on jihad in India, promising to provide me with whatever was necessary by way of material, treasure and weapons. But I could not agree to this, for jihad must be in accordance with the *sunnah*. Mere rebellion was not intended."[35] The legal question was one that clearly taxed the minds of the reformers. Muhammad Isma'il, for example, wrote a work, the *Mansab-i Imamat*, given over to the question of which rulers should be tolerated by the 'ulama and the Muslim community. He concluded, as 'ulama had for centuries, that one should be loyal to any Muslim ruler except one who had become a *kafir*, bent on actually disgracing Islam. The reformers may well have differed among themselves as to the status of Hindustan since there was, after all, a nominal Muslim ruler. The Punjab, however, did not even

presented to the American Historical Association in New York, December 28, 1968. She showed the same pattern in contemporaneous reform movements there, where identification with the Prophet and his followers provided not only legitimacy but a guide to action.

35. Mujeeb, *Indian Muslims*, p. 395. Pages 391-95 include quotations from this work.

pay lip service to the emperor at Delhi, and was clearly easier to define as *daru'l-harb.*

In keeping with the necessity of fighting from a Muslim area, Sayyid Ahmad set out from north India in January of 1826 to begin what was to be a journey of some three thousand miles through Rajasthan, Sind, Baluchistan, and Afghanistan to the tribal territory where he hoped to fight. En route he sought followers and contributions. In November of 1826, his followers having won the allegiance of some of the local tribes, he attacked and defeated the Sikhs at Akora Khattak. In January of the following year he was declared *amiru'l-mu'minin,* a title assumed by the caliphs. But the local tribes had their own quarrels to prosecute, and disliked the reforms of the *mujahidin.* The disaffection of the Peshawari *sardar,* Yar Muhammad Khan Durrani, marked the beginning of difficulties for the fighters, even though Sayyid Ahmad was able to defeat him and establish himself in Peshawar in 1830. In the following year Sayyid Ahmad and the *mujahidin* were trapped at Balakot in the opening of the narrow Kaghan Valley. Sayyid Ahmad, Muhammad Isma'il, and perhaps six hundred others were killed. Some of the survivors cherished the idea that Sayyid Ahmad was still alive, for his body was never found. Some regrouped in distant Sittana and kept the embers of jihad alive until the 1860s, when the British, nervous after the Mutiny, ended their efforts forever. It was, indeed, after Balakot that two brothers from Patna, Wilayat 'Ali (1791-1853) and 'Inayat 'Ali (1794-1858), created an effective network for transferring men and supplies, primarily from Bengal, across upper India and to the frontier. After Balakot, however, the emphasis of the 'ulama shifted to other methods of reform.

The jihad had been an expression of post-Mughal state-building, in this case given meaning by the rich Islamic tradition of warrior-saints and the Mahdi. Sayyid Ahmad, a man of remarkable personal qualities, deeply religious, and personally affected by the social dislocations of the time, was well suited to leadership of such a revivalist movement. His movement grew out of the Delhi reform tradi-

tion, adding to it the permanent legacy of a more radical commitment to reforming custom among those who were, now that jihad had failed, resigned to live in a world not of their making.

The Dissemination of Reform

In the years before the jihad, Sayyid Ahmad and his followers in fact set a pattern for disseminating their teachings that lasted even after their military movement had ended. They used above all the scholarly network centered in Delhi, which provided them contacts with students and other ʿulama from a wide area. Through this network they were tied to members of important religious families of the rural towns or *qasbahs* of the upper Doab and even beyond. For the Mughals the *qasbahs* had been centers of imperial influence where leading families had settled as courtiers, religious leaders, and zamindars—the outposts of empire in the countryside. In the Doab, towns such as Ambahtah, Manglaur, Deoband, Kandhlah, Kairanah, Phulat, Nanautah, and Gangoh even today testify to their rich past not only as sites of mosques, *madrasahs*, palaces, and tombs built by notables, but by the continued presence of important religious families.

Kandhlah, for example, had long been the home of an important family of scholars who, from the late eighteenth century on, came to share the interests of the Delhi-based reformers. The first such was Ilahi Bakhsh (d. 1829) who, at the young age of fourteen, traveled to Delhi to become a student of Shah ʿAbdu'l-ʿAziz. He was to be very much the epitome of those associated with the early reformers. He wrote on the habits of the Prophet and on *hadis*; he had a mosque built in Kandhlah; and he made efforts to end customs like that of *ʿurs* in his home town.[36] Many from his family were to follow his lead in coming to Delhi; and from the *qasbahs* of the Doab and Rohilkhand, from the Punjab, Bihar, and Bengal, came many others.

36. Muḥammad Iḥtishāmu'l-Ḥasan Kāndhlawī, *Ḥālāt-i Mashā'ikh-i Kāndhlah*, pp. 50-56, 61-66, 105-12.

Not only did religious scholars come to Delhi from the countryside, but the reformers themselves traveled, carrying their message to ʿulama and common people alike. Sayyid Ahmad's tours were particularly influential. In some cases it was after his visit that sons of scholarly families would begin to go to Delhi for their education. He enrolled many followers during his tours. In 1819, for example, Wilayat ʿAli Sadiqpuri, mentioned above, was a student of Farangi Mahall in Lucknow. He heard Sayyid Ahmad, took initiation at his hand, and thus vowed to follow him. Three years later, when Sayyid Ahmad's procession stopped in Patna en route to perform the hajj, the rest of his distinguished scholarly family pledged their allegiance to him as well. Shah Muhammad Husain of that family was particularly influential in reviving congregational prayers in the mosques of the city, while the two brothers, Wilayat ʿAli and ʿInayat ʿAli, were to be among Sayyid Ahmad's most loyal followers.

The reformers preached widely, stimulated in part by the example of missionaries who were admitted to British India after 1813. The most effective preacher was Muhammad Ismaʿil, who was both fluent and fearless. He would go anywhere—unlike, for example, his beloved friend, ʿAbdu'l-Hayy, who spoke mostly in mosques. Even then, Ismaʿil often dominated, silencing ʿAbdu'l-Hayy's opponents with clever and winning remarks. In Lucknow, Ismaʿil attained great success by bravely preaching in the Shiʿi ʿIdgah where his fearlessness so testified to the validity of his faith that he won important converts. He liked to turn up at both Hindu and Muslim fairs, although Sayyid Ahmad ultimately persuaded him that attendance at Hindu fairs was, at best, of questionable value. Once he even went to the shrine of Hazrat Nizamu'd-Din Auliya (d. 1325) to exhort the devotees to purify their practices, and narrowly escaped with his life. Another time, he pretended to be a poor *faqir*, and gained entrance to the establishment of Moti, the famous courtesan of Khanam Bazar, whereupon he is said to have inspired all the inhabitants and their guests to repentance. He and others also carried on dis-

cussions in the audiences of respected ʿulama, where they would try to reduce to silence a Shiʿi or an impious Sufi. There were public debates with the Christian missionaries, as well.[37]

The reformers debated not only in public places but also in the more aristocratic settings of court and salon. The nobility often patronized religious debates, inviting the ʿulama to argue before them, encouraging them to write books, summoning them to preach at court. The reformers were even invited for discussions before some of the nobles of Lucknow where, on one notable occasion, Muhammad Ismaʿil was said to have persuaded a courtier that in denouncing any of the Prophet's companions he was following the practice of Muʿawiya, not that of the beloved ʿAli, who spoke well of all.[38] In Delhi not only the royal family, but courtiers, poets, and gentlemen all took part in the religious debates of the time. When the poet Ghalib (1796-1869) arrived in the capital in 1810 he found "the radical reforming trend of Shah Waliyu'llah raging."[39]

The ʿulama played a central part in the intellectual life of Delhi. Perhaps their most celebrated debate was that between Muhammad Ismaʿil and Fazl-i Haqq Khairabadi (1797-1861). They debated the question of *imkan-i nazir*: whether God could create another prophet of the status of Muhammad. Ismaʿil had argued in the *Taqwiyat* that He could: "Verily the power of this King of Kings is so great, that in a twinkling, solely by pronouncing the word 'BE,' he can, if he like, create scores of apostles, saints, genii, and angels of similar ranks to Gabriel and Mohammad."[40] His opponents seized on this to accuse the reformers of disrespect to the Prophet, an accusation against reformers that has lasted to the present, for, they said, it was beyond God's power to create another prophet, just as it was beyond his power to create his own peer. The reformers, ever

37. Ẓuhūru'l-Ḥasan, *Arwāḥ-i Salāṣah*, pp. 68-70, 74-76, 92-93, 101-102, 104-107.
38. Ibid., pp. 91-93, 108-10, 112-13.
39. Ralph Russell and Khurshidul Islam, *Ghalib: 1767-1869*, Vol. I, *Life and Letters* (London, 1969), p. 30.
40. Muḥammad Ismaʿil, tr. Shahamat ʿAli, "Taqwiyat ul-Iman," p. 399.

jealous of preserving God's power and unity, insisted He had that power, as He had all power, but chose not to exercise it. Even Ghalib was pulled into the debate by his friend Fazl-i Haqq, who asked him to denounce the reformers through poetry. He cleverly argued that God could create another world, or a hundred thousand worlds, and in each one there could be a final Prophet.[41] Later the debate turned ugly and Fazl-i Haqq used his official position as court deputy under the British to persuade the Shiʿi police chief of Delhi to forbid Muhammad Ismaʿil to speak in the Jamiʿ Masjid.[42] Scholarly debates did continue, however, and another poet, Hakim Mumin Khan Mumin (1800-1851), joined in. He celebrated ʿAbdu'l-ʿAziz in a Persian panegyric and later wrote stirring poems in Urdu in support of jihad.[43]

The reformers mixed in the company of courtiers and notables, but with a certain detachment. In the Sufi tradition they criticized irreligion, even of the king himself.[44] Perhaps because of experiences like Ismaʿil's with Fazl-i Haqq, they were particularly skeptical of those ʿulama who served the British. In fact, many ʿulama who filled the highest posts under the British were those little inclined to reform. Of Fazl-i Haqq, it was said, "he was often seen teaching *al-Ufk al-Mubīn* of Dāmād, a rather involved text on logic, while engaged in playing chess."[45] This, as much as the famous debate, suggests how different his interests and style were from that of the reformers. Similarly Sadru'd-Din Khan Azurdah (1789-1868), who in 1827 became *sadru's-sudur,* wrote a refutation of Ibn Taimiyyah, who opposed visits to saints' shrines.[46] The pious were always critical of religious leaders who served those in power,

41. Abū Yaḥyā Imām Khān, *Tarājim-i 'Ulamā'*, pp. 80-81. As Russell and Islam, *Ghalib,* I, 33-34, explain, however, Ghalib later modified his poem to conform to the views of Fazl-i Haqq, for he himself had no doctrinaire position on such a point.

42. A. S. Bazmee Ansari, "Faḍl-i Ḥaḳḳ," *EI*², II.

43. Schimmel, *Classical Urdu Literature,* p. 206.

44. Ẓuhūru'l-Ḥasan, *Arwāḥ-i Ṣalāṣah*, pp. 56-61.

45. Ansari, "Faḍl-i Ḥaḳḳ."

46. A. S. Bazmee Ansari, "Āzurda," *EI*², I.

but in this case some of those in government service also represented a different understanding of the religion. Moreover, the government they served was alien.

The reformers not only preached and debated, but were among the first to take advantage of the new printing presses of the day. Through the presses, they played an important role in developing Urdu as a prose language. As noted above, religious leaders had taken part in the creation of Urdu poetry in the eighteenth century; their contribution to the creation of Urdu prose was no less important. Urdu was very much the product of the cosmopolitan society of religious leaders, courtiers, and litterateurs. Shah Waliyu'llah sent his sons to the poet Mir Dard to learn his style of Urdu; then, a generation later, the poet Zauq (1789-1854) came to Shah ʿAbdu'l-ʿAziz to learn Urdu from him.[47] From these beginnings, Urdu was to become an increasingly clear and direct medium of communication.

The role of the reformers of the 1820s and 1830s in shaping the language in this direction was substantial. Their goal was to reach a popular audience, not limited to those accustomed to the subtleties of Persianate diction. They wrote scholarly works, to be sure,[48] but they also wrote many Urdu tracts on such subjects as the correct method of prayer, remarriage of widows, and the elimination of idolatrous practices.[49] Sayyid Ahmad's disciple, Sayyid ʿAbdu'llah of Serampur near Calcutta, printed Shah ʿAbdu'l-Qadir's translation of the Qur'an and ʿAbdu'l-ʿAziz's Qur'anic commentary as early as 1822. He, along with Badiyu'z-Zaman, a disciple of Wilayat ʿAli, was responsible for printing much of the literature of the movement.[50] In 1832 an observer in Calcutta wrote, "It is to be remarked, as a new feature in the history of efforts for the propagation of Mohammedanism, or for the reform of its corruptions,

47. Ikrām, *Rūd-i Kauṣar*, p. 589.

48. Thus of eleven major works of Muhammad Ismaʿil, six were in Arabic, three in Persian, and only two in Urdu. They are listed in A. S. Bazmee Ansari, "Ismāʿīl Shahīd," *EI²*, IV.

49. See Mohiuddin Ahmad, *Saiyid Ahmad Shahid*, p. 313, for a list of representative titles of the pamphlets of the reformers.

50. Ibid.; Schimmel, *Classical Urdu Literature*, p. 206.

how extensively the emissaries of this sect [that is, the Muslims influenced by Sayyid Ahmad] have availed themselves of the press to disseminate their tenets."[51] He went on to list seven books that had been printed locally and were available in the bazaars of the city. These works were designed to prove, as Muhammad Ismaʿil argued in the *Taqwiyatu'l-Iman*, that religious truths were not accessible to "great pious men alone," but that even "the contents of the Qur'an are very clear and plain."[52]

Bengal

All these methods of proselytization were evident in Bengal, where two reform movements arose, one independently, one influenced by the reformers of upper India.[53] In about 1820, Hajji Shariʿatu'llah (1781-1840) returned to Faridpur in East Bengal after some twenty years in the Hijaz, where he had gone as a young man to perform the pilgrimage and to study. After a brief stay at home, he performed a second pilgrimage, then in about 1821 he began his work of preaching and reform. The influences on him were many: the sense that his society, now ruled by aliens, was in jeopardy; the evident disparity between Bengali Islam and that of Arabia; and the example of the militant reform movement in the Arabia of ʿAbdu'l-Wahhab (1703-1792). This movement, like that of Sayyid Ahmad, was a scripturalist movement, committed to the rejection of popular beliefs and customs in favor of what was deemed to be the fundamental teaching of the faith. Both movements spoke to the needs of Muslims distressed by the condition of the world as they saw it.

The movement of Shariʿatu'llah was known as the Fara'izi

51. Muhammad Ismaʿil, tr. "J.R.C.," "Sirat ul Mustaqim," p. 494.
52. Muhammad Ismaʿil, tr. Shahamat ʿAli, "Taqwiyat ul-Iman," p. 317.
53. The following brief description of the events in Bengal is based largely on Muin-ud-Din Ahmad Khan, *A History of the Farā'iḍī Movement in Bengal* (Karachi, 1965). See also Abdul Bari, "The Reform Movement in Bengal," in *A History of the Freedom Movement: Being the Story of Muslim Struggle for the Freedom of Hind-o-Pakistan 1707-1947* (Karachi, 1957), for an extensive bibliography. See also A. Bausani, "Farā'iḍiyya," *EI*², II.

because of its insistence on the fundamental obligations of Islam (*farz*, pl. *fara'iz*: an obligatory duty). In this it was like the movement of Sayyid Ahmad. Both opposed the influence of the Shiʿah and of popular custom. The Fara'izi, however, were more like their contemporary Arabian reformers than the Delhi ones in their position on sufism. They felt that only a select few should be initiated into the Sufi orders at all, and that most people should be kept wholly ignorant of esoteric teachings. They eliminated the terms *pir* and *murid* for the Sufi leader and his disciple, calling them instead merely *ustad* and *shagird*, teacher and pupil. They eliminated the practice of the teacher grasping the hand of the initiate, a practice associated with belief in his physically passing on his powers. The Fara'izi were also like the Arabians in insisting that every Muslim be subject to the teachings of the law schools. The Delhi-based reformers, in contrast, had a wide latitude in jurisprudential principles, for some of them, at least, were fundamentalists who based their teachings directly on the sources of Qur'an and *hadis*. The Far'izi were thus more radical in reform of custom but more conservative in jurisprudential position.

Shariʿatu'llah was explicit in defining Bengal as *daru'l-harb*, and prohibited absolutely the community prayers recited on Friday and on the ʿId festival, citing the lack of a *misru'l-jamiʿ*, a city where a *qazi* or Muslim ruler resided. Even such a clear-cut position did not necessitate a declaration of jihad, and, in fact, the leaders of the movement never raised the possibility of jihad for their sect as a whole. Individual Bengalis did travel silently up the country to participate in the fighting on the frontier, but the sect as a whole in fact cooperated with the British to secure their own interests. Particularly under Shariʿatu'llah's son and successor Dudhu Miyan (1819-1862), the sect accepted the framework of British rule and encapsulated itself, as best it could, religiously and socially. Dudhu Miyan organized each district where the sect had members under a locally based *khalifah* who taught, levied subscriptions, and protected the interests of the members. The *khalifahs* and other elders were expected to arbitrate all differences among

fellow members who were forbidden to use the British courts. However, the sect did turn with substantial success to the British courts to defend their interests against the landlords, mostly Hindu, and against the new class of British indigo planters. Members of the sect comprised the poor Muslim peasantry, and only their common funds permitted them to bring suits against the wealthy. The Fara'izi were successful for a time in forging a deep sense of exclusiveness and high purpose among their members. After Dudhu Miyan's death the sect declined, but its influence in spreading Islamic teachings and in enhancing the self-consciousness of the Muslim peasantry had been substantial.

In West Bengal, a disciple of Sayyid Ahmad known as Titu Mir (1782-1831) had a brief career from 1827 to 1831 of leading a movement also based on a sense of social grievance. Here there were fewer Muslims than in the East, but Titu Mir tried to use similar techniques, such as withholding cesses used to support Hindu festivals like Durga Puja and disseminating a sense of common interest and grievance among the Muslim peasantry. He encouraged Muslims to treat each other as equals and to distinguish themselves from non-Muslims by their dress. In 1831 he and his followers desecrated the temple of a Hindu landlord who had been particularly oppressive. In the resultant conflict, British troops joined the landlord: Titu Mir was killed; and the movement was effectively suppressed.

Reformist preaching, however, continued throughout Bengal. Most important of the preachers was Maulana Karamat ʿAli Jaunpuri (d. 1873). An early convert to the beliefs of Sayyid Ahmad, he nonetheless strongly opposed jihad on the frontier. He spent most of his life preaching in Bengal where, it is said, at the time of his death there did not remain a single village without disciples of his. He wrote extensively in Urdu, with at least forty-six titles to his credit.[54] Other disciples of Sayyid Ahmad who were influential in Bengal included Maulawi Imanu'd-Din, who preached in Noakhali district, and Sufi Nur Muhammad,

54. A. Yusuf Ali, "Karāmat ʿAlī," *EI*², IV.

who worked primarily in Chittagong. ʿInayat ʿAli of the Sadiqpur family, although he supported the efforts on the frontier even after Balakot, worked extensively in East Bengal, while his brother, Wilayat ʿAli, worked in the Deccan. In Bengal, as was later the case elsewhere, debates among various groups of reformers and between them and what were here called the *sabiqi* or old-fashioned, contributed to a heightening of interest in religious matters.

The influence of the two reformist movements in Bengal was deep and lasting. Only here in India did the Muslim population grow in the nineteenth century through conversion.[55] But even more important than increased numbers was the change in the lives of those Muslims who participated in the movement of religious renewal that was taking place across the country. Bengal had been relatively isolated from the religious developments of upper India, but was now again drawn into contact with that area. The shared experience of religious reform was the foundation for continued close ties among Muslims across north India.[56]

Delhi College

Both ʿAbdu'l-ʿAziz and Shariʿatu'llah set a basic pattern of de facto cooperation with the British combined with dissemination of scripturalist legal norms in most aspects of social and religious life. In Delhi, Muhammad Ishaq, ʿAbdu'l-ʿAziz's successor, along with his younger brother Yaʿqub, continued that tradition, standing apart from the jihad and acting as leaders of the peaceful reformist movement. In 1841, whether because of their own spiritual desires or because of their discomfort at alien rule, both brothers emigrated to Mecca, leaving behind a dedicated group of students who continued their work in the coming decades. Among them were ʿAbdu'l-Ghani Naqshbandi (1819-1878), who would be Muhammad Ishaq's successor; Fazl-

55. T. W. Arnold, *The Preaching of Islam* (Westminster, 1896).
56. Muḥammad Ikrām, *Mauj-i Kauṣar*, p. 57.

u'r-Rahman Ganjmuradabadi (1793-1895), an outstanding *pir* of the post-Mutiny period; Sayyid Nazir Husain Muhaddis Dihlawi (d. 1902), a leader of a group of reformers who emerged as a distinctive sect, the Ahl-i Hadis; Imdadu'llah (1817-1899) who would later be *shaikh* to many of the reformist ʿulama; Ahmad ʿAli Saharanpurī, who would be known as a great scholar and supporter of religious education; and Sayyid Ahmad Khan (1817-1898), who was to be the political and educational leader of the loyalist Westernizers.[57]

The religious and political teaching of these students would diverge along a number of different lines, but they shared a common grounding in the dual experience of reform and of exposure to Western institutions. The latter influence was manifest in the missionary societies and the educational institutions of the new rulers. Contact with the missionaries provided the reformers with both an increased sense of urgency for their reformist message and institutional models of organization. Most important of the models they encountered, however, was the one embodied in the short-lived Delhi College, founded by the government in 1825 and closed after the Mutiny of 1857. It was this school that provided a model for ʿulama who later turned their efforts to strengthening the organization of religious education.

The college was established pursuant to the report of the General Committee on Public Instruction, which lamented the state of the private *madrasahs* of the city, "where time was spent on Koran and *fiqh*," and there was no regular system of attendance.[58] The goal of the college, by contrast, was the education of respectable people so that they might find suitable work. The school was launched with a British principal, and expanded with the substantial *waqf* endowment of Nawwab Iʿtimadu'd-Daulah of Oudh in 1828. There were two branches of the school: an English branch where English language and literature and modern European sciences were taught; and an Oriental branch in which not only Arabic, Persian, and Sanskrit were taught but geog-

57. Ibid., p. 194.
58. ʿAbdu'l-Ḥaqq, *Marḥūm Dihlī Kālej* (Delhi, 1945), p. 4.

raphy, history, mathematics, and science as well. There was an aura of great excitement among those associated with Delhi College. The dedication of staff and students alike was striking.[59] Among the teachers, Felix Boutros and the Austrian orientalist Aloys Sprenger in particular believed the school offered them nothing less than the opportunity of introducing students to a whole new world of scholarship.[60] Many Indians responded warmly to this atmosphere, as the history written by one of them indicates, for he entitled his book "The Late Delhi College," as if the school had been a respected person.[61]

The considerable success of the school, notably in encouraging interest in science, was attributed to the use of Urdu as the medium of instruction for modern as well as Oriental subjects, and the consequent translation of modern prose works into the language. The school, and its associate society, the Delhi Vernacular Society, paid for translations from English to Urdu at the rate of six annas to one rupee a page, and from other indigenous languages to Urdu at half that rate. They tried to set up rules of consistent usage—deciding, for example, which words should be transliterated and which should be assigned Urdu equivalents. They urged their translators first to read all previously translated books on a subject, and required translators to supply footnotes. The influence of these efforts is hard to calculate, but one can assume that they reinforced the already substantial trend toward the use of Urdu. They helped create a new idiom for Urdu, transferring whole bodies of knowledge into the language and creating a means of expressing it.[62]

59. C. F. Andrews in his biography *Zaka Ullah of Delhi* (Cambridge, 1929), p. 38, spoke of the college as generating a "Delhi Renaissance."

60. Schimmel, *Classical Urdu Literature*, p. 212.

61. ʿAbdu'l-Ḥaqq, *Marḥūm Dihlī Kālej*, p. 1: "I call the college *marhum* because it was a dear thing. . . ."

62. Ibid., pp. 19-31 describes the college's role in translations. Intiẓāmu'llāh, *Ghadar ke Chand ʿUlamā'* (Delhi, n.d.), p. 9, specifically credits the teacher Imam Bakhsh Sahba'i (d. 1857) with transferring the whole discipline of rhetoric, *balaghat*, from Persian to Urdu. Schimmel, *Classical Urdu Literature*, p. 224, notes that early Urdu prose, including that influenced by Imam Bakhsh, continued very Persianate in style. She

The number of Muslims at the college was consistently large, ranging from one-third to one-half of the total of three to five hundred.[63] An important group of them came because of the presence of the head Arabic teacher, Maulana Mamluk ʿAli of the upper Doab *qasbah* of Nanautah. When Sayyid Ahmad Khan catalogued the notables of Delhi, he wrote of him: "In both rational and traditional studies, his attainments are masterly . . . should one imagine that the whole earth be emptied of school books, it would be possible to reproduce them from the tablet of his mind. Although he serves worldly people [Sir Sayyid added in his defense], his own life is that of a *darwesh*."[64] He was a skilled teacher, who was never known to refuse to take on a student. He read whatever was translated from English into Urdu, and did translations into Urdu of classical Arabic works on mathematics, *hadis*, and history.

Mamluk ʿAli was closely associated with the Waliyu'llahi family, and came to Delhi explicitly to study from them. His own teacher was Maulana Rashidu'd-Din Khan, a student of Shah ʿAbdu'l-ʿAziz. Rashidu'd-Din was the first head of the Arabic department at the college, and Mamluk succeeded him in 1833.[65] Mamluk ʿAli's close connection to the family continued, for he accompanied Maulanas Ishaq and Yaʿqub to the Hijaz in 1842, and his closest friends were Maulana Muzaffar Husain Kandhlawi and Hajji Imdadu'llah.[66] He shared with them a commitment to such causes as widow remarriage, and actually married a widow from Manglaur himself, at the cost of a rupture in the

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attributes the "pompous" style of the first edition of Saiyid Aḥmad Khān's celebrated *Aṣāru'ṣ-Ṣanādīd* (1847) to Imam Bakhsh's influence, and notes that later editions were far more straightforward. Of the translations, apparently very few are still extant, thanks in part to destruction that took place during the Mutiny. Manāẓir Aḥsan Gīlānī (*Sawāniḥ-i Qāsimī*, Deoband, 1955, I, 11) notes that he, at least, has found none of their translations at all.

63. ʿAbdu'l-Ḥaqq, *Marḥūm Dihlī Kālej*, p. 54. The other government colleges, at Banaras, Agra, and Bareilly, had an even higher percentage of Muslims.

64. Sayyid Ahmad Khan, *Aṣāru'ṣ-Ṣanādīd*, p. 578.

65. Shaikh Muhammad Ikram and Ainslee T. Embree, *Muslim Civilization in India* (New York, 1964), p. 280.

66. Muḥammad Ayyūb Qādirī, *Maulānā Muḥammad Aḥsan Nānautawī* (Karachi, 1966), pp. 175, 178-79.

relations between Muslims of that town and those of his home town of Nanautah.[67]

Many of Mamluk ʿAli's family followed him to Delhi. The Muslims of Nanautah had had their ties to Delhi reinvigorated by a dramatic visit of Sayyid Ahmad in 1820, when he had challenged the Shiʿi leaders of the town.[68] Mamluk ʿAli's presence in Delhi made the ties of the family to the reformist center even stronger. Among those who went with him were Mamluk's own son, Muhammad Yaʿqub; his nephews Ahsan and Muhammad Mazhar Nanautawi; a distant nephew, Muhammad Qasim; and two more distant relatives, Zu'l-Faqar ʿAli and Fazlu'r-Rahman.[69] These members of his family, whose work was so important to the endeavors of the ʿulama in the post-Mutiny period had, through him, an entrée into government service as well as an introduction to Western institutions and techniques of education. Among Mamluk ʿAli's associates were also those who would be associated with the Westernizing Aligarh movement: Sayyid Ahmad Khan himself, Nazir Ahmad, Zaka'u'llah Khan, and Samiʿu'llah Khan.

There was an ambivalence in those days, even among this latter group, about being associated with the government. They feared loss of dignity from the slights of the rulers, perhaps even direct insult from them. They were also wary of the influence of the missionaries, who appeared to them to have direct government support. Nonetheless, many were drawn to the prestigious government schools and to the profitable jobs open to their graduates. They were emboldened in their willingness to cooperate with the government by the sense that in significant areas of their life they adhered to a newly rediscovered standard of obedience to the Law.

Three Men

Of those who were educated in Delhi in the 1840s, there were three who later made important contributions to the

67. Ibid., pp. 39-40.
68. Ibid., p. 21.
69. Ibid., pp. 177, 184.

reformist movement: Muhammad Qasim Nanautawi (1833-1877) and Rashid Ahmad Gangohi (1829-1905), who were to be instrumental in founding the academy at Deoband after the Mutiny; and Imdadu'llah (1817-1899), later a revered Sufi *pir* resident in Mecca and a major influence on many ʿulama. The early careers of these men epitomize the background of many ʿulama of this period as well as the character of the religious life of Delhi at mid-century. All three were natives of *qasbahs* of the upper Doab: Nanautah, Gangoh, and Thanah Bahwan, respectively. They spent brief periods in Delhi, then returned to the countryside to further their work.

Muhammad Qasim's family had long been connected with the Delhi ʿulama.[70] His family of Siddiqi *shaikhs* held some land, and, thanks to a paucity of heirs, was relatively well off. Qasim's father had gone to Delhi, but lacked interest in education; he married the daughter of a prosperous *wakil* of Saharanpur. Qasim himself completed his early education in the local school. Even as a child he knew Imdadu'llah, who came often to Nanautah because it was his mother's home. Imdadu'llah introduced both Qasim and his cousin Muhammad Yaʿqub to sufism and to the practical craft of bookbinding. Pious anecdotes recall Qasim's childhood. He refused to wear costly clothes on ʿId, for example, and was so modest that he would be mistaken for an ordinary laborer. He apparently had many dreams interpreted as signs of God's favor to him. But despite the happy picture of his childhood, there were certain tensions within the family, particularly derived from the conversion to Shiʿi beliefs of Tafazzul Husain, a contemporary of Qasim's grandfather, who was, in fact, killed in a family dispute. The family brought the issue before the British courts, which failed to require any punishment. The elders then feared for Qasim's life and sent him, as a child, to Deoband, "his Medina."

There he lived with relatives and studied from Maulawi

70. The account below is from Manāẓir Aḥsan Gīlānī, *Sawāniḥ-i Qāsimī*, especially pp. 13-18, 126, 145, 165, 171-73, 227-42, 262-63, 282-304.

Mahtab ʿAli and Shaikh Nihal Ahmad. He then joined his maternal grandfather in Saharanpur, and continued his study of Arabic with Maulawi Muhammad Anwar. When his grandfather died suddenly in 1842, he returned to Nanautah. The next year, when Mamluk ʿAli returned from hajj, he took his nephew Qasim, then only thirteen years old, and his own son Yaʿqub with him to Delhi in order to broaden their educational opportunities. There, Qasim met Rashid Ahmad, who had also come from Gangoh to study from Mamluk ʿAli. Qasim stayed in Delhi five years; Rashid Ahmad, four. Mamluk ʿAli was a superb teacher who carefully drilled his young students to understand thoroughly what they read. The two pupils made great progress, and an anecdote of their youthful pride reveals them confiding to each other their cleverness and superiority to their elders. Both studied *hadis* from Maulawi ʿAbdu'l-Ghani Naqshbandi, Muhammad Ishaq's successor, and from Maulana Ahmad ʿAli Saharanpuri. Both were probably private pupils rather than enrolled students at the Delhi College, but through Mamluk ʿAli they shared the ambiance of that institution.

His teachers in Delhi recognized Qasim's potential as a great religious leader. Imdadu'llah, who had formally become his spiritual guide, urged him, at the time he accorded him *baiʿat,* to leave off devotional exercises (*zikr* and *shaghl*), for he felt that his work was to be "that of the prophets, not that of the saints."[71] In fact, Qasim was a profound mystic, engaging in Sufi disciplines for six or seven hours at a time, living alone in humble circumstances and giving no thought to his clothes or wherewithal. He was not inclined to marry, and did so only because Imdadu'llah prevailed on him. He wanted to give away his property, both in order to be free of it, and because he felt that he had inherited it contrary to rules of the *shariʿat.* But even in these early years he played an active role in the reformist effort, particularly in the increasingly important work of publication. In 1850 he took employment in the Matbaʿ

71. Ibid., pp. 258-59.

Ahmadi, the pioneer printing house of Maulana Ahmad 'Ali that had been founded five years earlier to publish collections of *hadis* and the works of Shah Waliyu'llah and his sons. His early years in Delhi were thus very fruitful ones, introducing him to people he would long know and to institutional models and technical skills that would be of great value.

For Rashid Ahmad these years were much the same.[72] His family had been connected to the 'ulama of Delhi for some time. His father had studied from the family of Shah Waliyu'llah and had acquired spiritual training from Shah Ghulam 'Ali Mujaddidi Naqshbandi. A distinguished *'alim*, he had died a young man, leaving his seven-year-old son, Rashid Ahmad. The family, however, was imbued with reformist ideals, and influenced the child—as anecdotes recount—to perform *namaz*, to abhor pictures, and to be serious in study. His mother even ignored a vision of a saint who threatened that her son would die if she did not sacrifice perfume at his tomb. Like Qasim and like many boys of his background, Rashid Ahmad lived with various relatives, in his case studying in both Karnal and Rampur before going to Delhi. In Delhi, Qasim and Rashid Ahmad shared much the same company of distinguished scholars. Not only did they study attentively, but they also mixed with the society of 'ulama and government officials, at least one of whom, Mufti Sadru's-Sudur Azurdah, urged them to keep at their religious work and avoid the kind of "illegitimate" government service he himself held.

When Mamluk 'Ali died, Rashid Ahmad left Delhi and returned home to teach. He used the occasion of his wedding to the daughter of a pious soldier from a princely state to demonstrate his reformist zeal, for he threw dust at the singing girl who began to recite the traditional obscenities, and refused the substantial dowry offered him. He undertook briefly the only regular job he ever held, teaching the children of a famous notable of Saharanpur; after six months

72. The basic biography for Rashid Ahmad is Muḥammad 'Āshiq Ilāhī Mīraṭhī, *Tazkiratu'r-Rashīd* (Meerut, n.d.). For his early years see vol. I, especially pp. 17-58.

he gave it up, and subsequently, as a manifestation of piety, depended on whatever contributions of income happened to arrive. At this early age he not only preached the reformist message, but dramatically implemented it. At twenty-five, he put in order the family's financial matters by canceling all debts whose interest paid, over the years, had equaled the premium; he even refunded money paid above that level. To do this he sold his wife's jewels. He then tried to end various ceremonies held at the grave of his ancestor, Shah ʿAbdu'l-Quddus Gangohi (d. 1538). He led a disciplined life, extraordinarily conscientious in performance of his duties. He rapidly acquired substantial influence because of his exemplary life, his training as an *ʿalim*, his Sufi piety, and his impressive skills as a doctor.

Imdadu'llah, unlike his two associates, had studied little as a child, but, again at the instigation of Mamluk ʿAli, at age sixteen he went to Delhi. He studied some Persian there, but his real interest was in mysticism. For him the years in Delhi provided an opportunity to seek guidance from Sufis in the reformist tradition, particularly from Nasiru'd-Din Dihlawi, grandson of Shah Rafiʿu'd-Din Dihlawi and the successor of Sayyid Ahmad in the jihad. Imdadu'llah's own description of his mystic genealogy dramatically illustrates the importance of Sayyid Ahmad to those who came after him: "Externally, my initiation is in the Tariqat-i Naqshbandiyyah from Hazrat Nasiru'd-Din Sahib Dihlawi . . . but internally, it is without intermediary to the Prophet. I saw him shining with light on a high place and Sayyid Ahmad Shahid held his blessed hand and I, out of respect, stood afar. And Hazrat Sayyid Sahib took my hand and put it in his."[73] After Nasiru'd-Din's death, Imdadu'llah took as his *pir* Miyanji Nur Muhammad Jhanjhanawi, also a *khalifah* of Sayyid Ahmad, who permitted Imdad to take his own disciples directly.

Rashid Ahmad and Muhammad Qasim shared a common allegiance to Hajji Imdadu'llah (1815-1899) as their Sufi preceptor. He was their guide in every decision, their

73. Muḥammad Anwāru'l-Ḥasan Shērkōṭī, *Ḥayāt-i Imdād* (Karachi, 1965), p. 175.

model in his piety and deportment. From Delhi, Imdadu'llah returned to Thanah Bhawan: "Imdadu'llah had made over his entire considerable inherited wealth to his brother, and himself lived in a mosque. He had many visitors, and his sister-in-law would prepare food for them, no matter how many there were or at what hour they arrived. Once Imdadu'llah dreamed that the Prophet came to her and said, 'Why should you cook for his guests? They are ʿulama, hence my guests, and I will cook for them myself.' "[74] Imdadu'llah was to hold a unique position as guide of many of the most important ʿulama of north India. Rashid and Qasim were only the first of some seven or eight hundred learned men who shared *baiʿat* from him, and he was known as the *shaikh* of the ʿulama. Imdadu'llah himself was not an *ʿalim*, though in a play on words written identically in Urdu, Qasim was to say he was not an *ʿalim* but *ʿalamgir*, the possessor of the *ʿalam*, the world.[75]

For all three men the experience of Delhi provided a program of concerns and a repertoire of techniques of propaganda. It also provided a model of inspirational leadership, offered above all by Sayyid Ahmad Barelwi. In the words of Siddiq Hasan Khan, another of the reformist ʿulama: "there was no one so godly and perfect of spirit in the whole world in those days."[76] Particularly after the events of 1857, the reformers could not hope to imitate Sayyid Ahmad's military venture. But his zeal for the popular dissemination of the correct interpretation of the Law was his lasting legacy.

The Mutiny

In 1857, a mutiny of Indian army sepoys, combined with civil rebellion, spread across north India to challenge the hold of the British on the subcontinent. The mutineers objected to the removal of Indian leaders, to attempts to

74. Muḥammad Ḥusainu'r-Rashīd, ed., *Shamā'im-i Imdādiyyah* (Shahkot, n.d.), p. 11.
75. Muḥammad Ikrām, *Mauj-i Kauṣar*, p. 195.
76. Mohiuddin Ahmad, *Saiyid Ahmad Shahid*, p. 384.

reform indigenous custom, to the proselytization of Christianity, to economic policies, and to British contempt for their Indian subjects.[77] Other Indians remained quiet or actively supported the British. There was no single ideology: "No one conceived of India as an independent state. . . . Some would revive the Mughal Empire; others, the followers of Nana Saheb, dreamed of a new and powerful Maratha state; still others, from the Rani of Jhansi to the 'king of fourteen villages' in Mathura District, celebrated their own independence and prepared to fight against all comers."[78] Motives were complex, as in any large uprising. Some fought because they resented the British presence; some because they felt deprived of the economic benefits, such as canals, that had not been extended to them.[79] Sometimes a person opposed the British because a rival was loyal, or vice versa. Sometimes old enmities were simply acted out in a general period of disorder, as in the case of a raja who seized and kept the land of an important family of ʿulama.[80] Nonetheless, one can say that behind the complexities of the Mutiny lay a widespread feeling of discontent, of uncertainty about a period of change.

As does any crisis, the Mutiny throws the pattern of social relations into high relief. It clearly illustrates, for example, the limits of the influence of the ʿulama. In certain regions, such as Oudh, their role was minor compared to that of the landlords, who could mobilize money and troops. One hears of such religious figures as the "mysterious Faizabad moulvi" who traveled around carrying messages and inciting disorder, but his was, obviously, an ancillary role. Elsewhere, especially in the Doab, the ʿulama seem to have been more important, some perhaps even leading rebels, albeit briefly. A group of ʿulama in Delhi, many of them employees of the British, signed a *fatwa* in support of the rebels. The list of signatures was headed by none other

77. See Thomas R. Metcalf, *The Aftermath of Revolt* (Princeton, 1964).
78. Ibid., p. 61.
79. See Eric Stokes, "Rural Revolt in the Great Rebellion of 1857 in India: A Study of the Saharanpur and Muzaffarnagar Districts," *Historical Journal*, 12 (1969), 602-27.
80. Ḥusain Aḥmad Madanī, *Naqsh-i Ḥayāt*, II, 24-25.

than that of Maulana Fazl-i Haqq Khairabadi. Even for Muslims, however, the 'ulama were only one kind of leader, for there were landlords and tribal and family chiefs of great importance as well, and peoples' allegiances were diverse.

Deobandis, caught up in the nationalist movement after World War I, came to believe that the founders of their school, particularly Muhammad Qasim, Rashid Ahmad, and Imdadu'llah, had joined the rebels, organizing a counter-government and engaging in military revolt during September of 1857 in the *qasbah* of Thanah Bhawan. This account has been invariably accepted, yet this view of events at Thanah Bhawan, identifying the posts of each member and the course of the uprising, appears only in secondary sources written after about 1920.[81] Earlier biographies argue that the accusations of involvement were those of enemies, and that the ultimate release from jail of Rashid Ahmad, who spent six months confined, and the fact that Muhammad Qasim was never arrested, testify to the loyalty of both men.[82] Imdadu'llah had meanwhile migrated to Mecca, in itself no proof of disaffection. There had been, in fact, debate over the question of the legitimacy of fighting against the British, and it is known that one close associate of this group, Shaikh Muhammad Thanawi (1815-1880), a renowned scholar, held wholly aloof from the disorder in Thanah Bhawan on the grounds that jihad was only legitimate when there was reasonable hope of success. Elsewhere, Muhammad Ahsan Nanautawi who, after his education at Delhi College, had taken employment as head Persian teacher at the government's Bareilly College, made much the same argument. He spoke out against rebellion in the city's Masjid-i Nau Mahallah, challenging in partic-

81. See, for example, ibid., pp. 24-25ff.; Ẓuhūru'l-Ḥasan, *Arwāḥ-i Salāṣah*, ap. 202; Muḥammad Miyāṅ, *'Ulamā'-yi Hind kā Shāndār Māẓī*, IV (Delhi, 1960); and Sashi Bhusan Chaudhuri, *Civil Rebellion in the Indian Mutinies (1857-59)* (Calcutta, 1957). Compare Muḥammad 'Āshiq Ilāhī, *Taẕkiratu'r-Rashīd*, pp. 73-79 and Manāẓir Aḥsan Gīlānī, *Sawāniḥ-i Qāsimī*, II, 51-104.

82. See Manāẓir Aḥsan Gīlānī, *Sawāniḥ-i Qāsimī*, II, 125-37; and Muḥammad 'Āshiq Ilāhī, *Taẕkiratu'r-Rashīd*, pp. 73-80.

ular the position of one of his colleagues at the school whose publishing house was disseminating revolutionary material.[83]

It is possible that the nationalist accounts are correct, and that some of the ʿulama did play an important role in the Thanah Bhawan disorders. They argue that the ʿulama were outraged by the summary hanging by the British collector of a young Muslim unjustly accused of buying an elephant to aid the rebels in Delhi.[84] There certainly was fighting in Thanah Bhawan and an attack on the district headquarters of Shamli was noted in a British account as Islamic in motivation.[85] Hafiz Muhammad Zamin, one of the leading ʿulama of the town, was killed. But who led the fighting—and on which side he fought—all remains obscure. Even if ʿulama figured prominantly in this place, the overall role of the ʿulama in the revolt was at best fragmentary and divided.

Moreover, if some Muslims occasionally fought from the motivation of jihad, there is little evidence that sharp lines were therefore drawn between Hindu and Muslim participants. Saharanpur district, for example, found Muslim Gujar peasants fighting together with Hindu Jats and Rajputs, while Muslim Raos and Sayyids, the latter having profited from British land policy, held aloof. Even in Bareilly, where an independent government was established under Muhammad Khan, Nawwab of Najibabad, there were Muslims like Ahsan who opposed the fighting, and there were Hindus who staffed the revolutionary government. There were internal divisions among Muslims in Delhi, where many of the ʿulama had long regarded the king as unorthodox, and he himself barely trusted his own Rohilla general.[86] Still there was potential communal antagonism, for Bahadur Shah's proclamations from the capital em-

83. Muḥammad Ayyūb Qādirī, *Muḥammad Aḥsan Nānautawī*, pp. 50-51.
84. Ibid., p. 37 blames a Kayasth for unjustly implicating the young man.
85. Stokes, "Rural Revolt," p. 615.
86. Muḥammad Miyāṅ, *ʿUlamā'-yi Hind*, IV, 145.

phasized that while the new government would be Islamic, he was the king of all his people and he would not permit practices offensive to Hindus, like that of Muslims' eating beef.[87] The necessity to make such a statement is significant. Some rebels clearly did identify themselves primarily as Hindu or Muslim. However, they united in the common belief described by Fazl-i Haqq in his memoirs, written in exile in the Andamans: the English were planning to destroy the culture and civilization of India and so reduce all classes and communities to the same level.[88] The Mutiny had shown that such fear was fundamental, and it had also shown that Muslims did not identify primarily with their coreligionists. Moreover it had shown that their leadership was neither united nor politically decisive.

On all sides the aftermath of the fighting was to create a scar never erased from Indo-British relations. If the British took the Mutiny as a symptom of barbarity, the Indians did so no less. British revenge was extensive in the countryside—but it was worse in Delhi. The city had grown and prospered with the British peace, but now that peace was gone. The royal claims to the throne were abolished, and the old king himself exiled in disgrace to Burma. The entire population of the city was expelled for a time. The mosques of the city were occupied: the Jamiʿ Masjid for five years, the Fatehpuri Masjid for twenty. The Zinatu'l-Masajid in Darya Ganj was used as a kitchen until it was restored almost half a century later by Lord Curzon. In 1860 it was decided to clear a large area around the Red Fort, and though financial compensation was given, there was no recompense for losing a building like the Akbari Masjid, built by a Begum of Shah Jahan, and long a major center of the reformist effort. *Madrasahs*, including the Daru'l-Baqa, restored by Mufti Sadru's-Sudur Azurdah, were razed, as well. In the Kuchah Chelan *mahallah*, where Shah ʿAbdu'l-

87. Ainslee Embree, ed., *1857 in India: Mutiny or War of Independence?* (Boston, 1963), pp. 1-3.

88. Faẓl-i Ḥaqq, *Bāghī Hindūstān*, translation into Urdu by ʿAbdu'sh-Shāhid Shērwānī of *as-Sauratu'l-Hindiyyah*, (Bijnor, 1947), p. 143.

ʿAziz had preached and the great religious and intellectual families had long resided, the British shot perhaps fourteen hundred people.[89] Muslims were disproportionately blamed for their part in the Mutiny, for many British believed that Muslims had fought from political grievances, Hindus from economic; and the former motive was understood to be more invidious and more dangerous.[90]

Once finished, the Mutiny did not constitute a major theme in the thought of the ʿulama. Its cruel reality was in the background of all they did; its all-too-lucid demonstration of British strength defined their options. Sayyid Ahmad Khan, for whom relations to the British were all-important, in contrast, kept ever fresh the issue of the Mutiny, writing on the "loyalty" of countless Muslims and the need to build a better basis of relations between ruler and ruled. The ʿulama tended rather to eliminate the political dimension from their thought. They might take government jobs as needed. But they went out of their way to avoid offense to their rulers, and they sought to avoid conflict.

The ʿulama now tended, by and large, to leave their beloved but desolate Delhi behind in favor of the *qasbahs* in which many of them had their roots. The places they chose, such as Deoband, Saharanpur, Kandhlah, Gangoh, and Bareilly, were less touched by the British presence and were, increasingly, the centers for preserving Muslim cultural and religious life. In this work of preservation the ʿulama were heirs to the early nineteenth-century program of reform: its self-consciousness about religion, its repertoire of techniques of influence, and the inspiration of its charismatic leaders. On that foundation, they turned their attention to the establishment of educational institutions and the training of men to teach and guide Muslims of all

89. Percival Spear, *Twilight of the Mughals* (Cambridge, 1951), especially pp. 195-202.

90. Hardy, *Muslims of British India*, chapter 3, argues an evenhandedness in British policy after the Mutiny.

backgrounds and classes of society. Thus the pervasive concern of pious 'ulama to maintain Muslim culture and society was, in the late nineteenth century, to manifest itself in a new form, inward-looking and primarily concerned with the Islamic quality of individual lives.

III

The Madrasah at Deoband

> Is this not the school thanks to whom nameless Deoband has become *De'oband Sharif*, exalted Deoband, to the distant corners of the world? Is this not the school whose students have gone to every corner of Hindustan to teach prayer and fasting and the requirements of our religion?—Maulana Muhyi'd-Din, 1895[1]

The Setting and Organization of the School

The ʿulama shared in the general political quietude that followed the cataclysm of the Mutiny.[2] They were sobered by the terrible events they had seen, and persuaded that the British were invincible. Many, indeed, took service under the British, filling posts for which they were ideally suited by their literacy and their respectable status. Some kept up a semblance of earlier times by taking employment in the protected Muslim states of Hyderabad and Bhopal. But all such employment was ancillary to the popular educational work of the ʿulama.

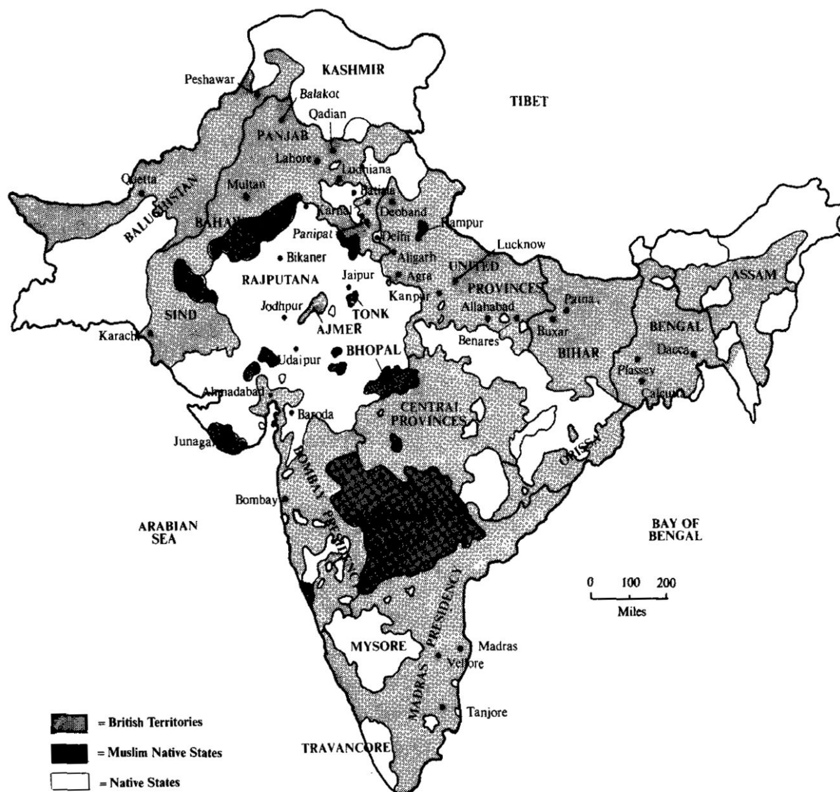
For most of the ʿulama the goal of their work was now to create, in any sphere available, a community both observant of detailed religious law and, to the extent possible, committed to a spiritual life as well. To do so was, in general terms, to return to the tradition of "the tongue and the pen" espoused by Shah ʿAbdu'l-ʿAziz. The ʿulama in Muslim history have tended to oscillate between participation

1. Muḥyi'd Dīn Ḵhān Murādābādī, *Taẕkirah-yi 1312: Waqā'iʿ-i Ḥālāt-i Madrasah-yi Islāmiyyah-yi Dē'ōband* (Delhi, 1312/1894-5), p. 43.
2. For a different view see, Muḥammad Miyān, *ʿUlamā'-yi Hind kā Shāndār Māẓī* (Delhi, 1381/1960) IV, 95-97. He argues that Rashid Ahmad pronounced India *daru'l-harb*. However, in early editions of Rashid Ahmad's *fatawa* that I have seen there are no such explicit statements.

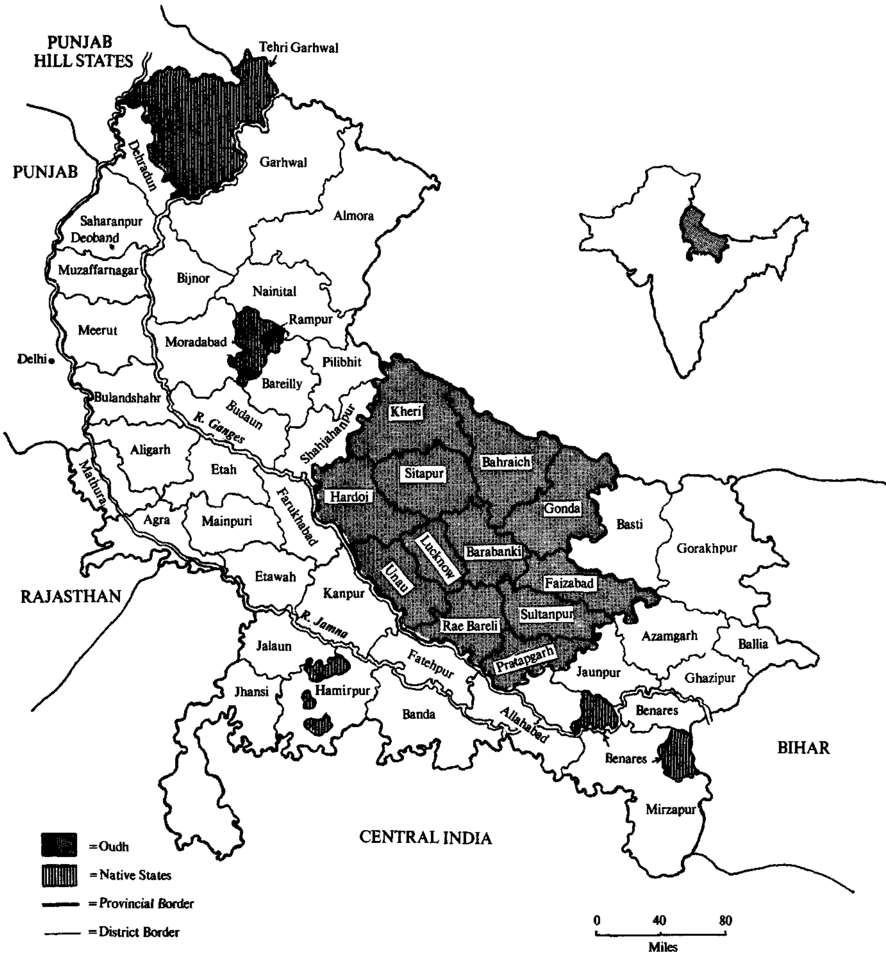
in the state and the exercise of independently based local leadership.[3] The north Indian ʿulama, in choosing the latter style, thus adopted a well-known strategy with historical precedent. Again echoing precedent, they made the *madrasah* the institutional basis of their work. Yet the new *madrasahs* were distinctive in their basis of support, their organizational style, and their goals. Their pattern was soon to be set by a school founded by Rashid Ahmad, Muhammad Qasim, and others in 1867 in a town called Deoband, shown in Map 2 in the context of British India and in Map 3 in its provincial context.

The town was typical of *qasbahs* scattered across north India. Its dominant families were, in this case, ʿUsmani and Siddiqi *shaikhs* whose influence had persisted from Mughal times, in part because of the strong base of local landed property they had maintained by their practice of marrying among themselves.[4] The Muslim architecture of the town reflected their presence, and even today domes and minarets, visible from afar in the flat countryside, draw one through winding brick-walled lanes to the old buildings: the palace of Shaikh Lutfu'llah ʿUsmani, an official of Akbar's reign; the caravansary, built by the leading *shaikh* families in concert; the seventeenth-century *khanaqah* of Hazratu'l-Hajj Ibrahim; the fort built during Akbar's reign; and the six beautiful mosques built at various times by the kings of Delhi. Most celebrated of these mosques were the Masjid-i Chattah, where the great Sufi Hazrat Baba Faridu'd-Din Ganj-i Shakar was said to have meditated, and the Masjid-i Khanaqah built by Aurangzeb. The town was characterized by "high mosques, famous tombs, gardens and trees, a fine climate and sweet water, and a busy marketplace."[5] It had been close to the imperial capital, just ninety miles northeast of Delhi on Sher Shah's royal road. Its leading official and scholarly families had participated

3. See Muḥammad Ṭayyib Qāsimī, *Āzādī-yi Hindūstān kā Khāmōsh Rahnumā* (Deoband, 1957), p. 5.
4. See above, Chapter I, note 28.
5. Sayyid Maḥbūb Rizwī, *Tārīkh-i Dē'ōband* (Deoband, n.d.), p. 39. The quotation is from an Arabic work by Maulānā Ẕu'l-Faqār ʿAlī.



2. British India



3. The North-Western Provinces and Oudh (The United Provinces, 1904)

in Mughal rule, and the court had patronized them and the town.

With Mughal decline, however, the town had suffered. In the eighteenth century it was an easy prey to Rohilla and Sikh depradations; and in the Mutiny it had suffered again: thirty-four men of the town were hanged, and many were given substantial jail sentences. In the period of post-Mutiny repression, three neighboring villages were burned to the ground and the holdings of many landed families were confiscated. Deoband thus shared the fate of many *qasbahs* during the period of late Mughal and early British rule. The decline of the *qasbah* left its mark not only on the material situation of many Muslim families but also on their outlook; they feared for the fate of their class and culture.[6] This point of view persisted even when, in the case of Deoband, the peace and public works of the late nineteenth century contributed to a revival. Deoband prospered from the canals, post and telegraph services and, most importantly, the railroads of the period. In 1868, the year after the school was founded, the Northwest Railway was completed, linking the town to cities throughout north India.[7] It had become a *tahsil* headquarters in 1834, and in 1868 was declared a municipality. Its population in this period was a substantial twenty thousand, somewhat more than half of whom were Muslim. The Hindu and Muslim communities lived separately, their respective areas defined by the long bazaar that ran north and south—their only apparent meeting place.[8]

Through all its vicissitudes, Deoband remained a center of Muslim culture and religion. In the pre-Mutiny period, many of its leading families had responded to the reformist movement of Sayyid Ahmad Barelwi. Shaikh Nihal Ahmad, for example, had entertained Sayyid Ahmad several times.[9]

6. Oral comments by C. A. Bayly delivered at the University of California, Berkeley, June 9, 1976.

7. Maḥbūb Riẓwī, *Tārīkh-i Dē'ōband*, p. 23.

8. H. T. Nevill, *Saharanpur: A Gazetteer* (Allahabad, 1903), p. 214. Since 1865 the population had averaged 20,000. In 1901 there were 11,825 Muslims and 7,958 Hindus.

9. Muḥammad Miyāṅ, *'Ulamā'-yi Hind*, pp. 67-68.

Maulana Rafiʿu'd-Din's father and uncles had been present on the frontier, and three of his uncles had died at Balakot.[10] The cultural ambiance of the town and the presence of people disposed to scripturalist reform made the town all the more attractive as a site for the founding of a school. Moreover, many of the ʿulama of near-by *qasbahs* such as Nanautah, Gangoh, and Ambahtah had kin ties there as well. Muhammad Qasim had lived with relatives in Deoband as a student and as a refugee after the Mutiny. Both he and his cousin, Muhammad Yaʿqub, had married into a family of the town.[11]

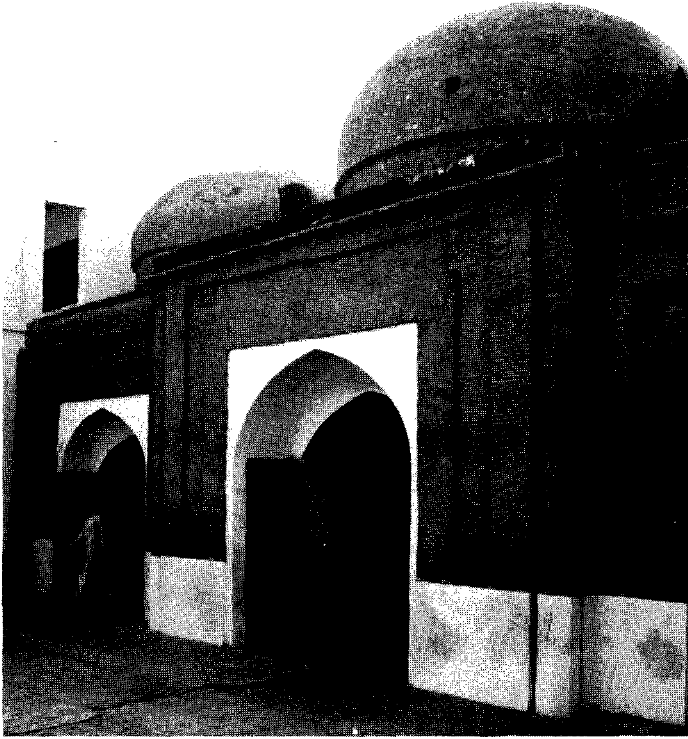
In choosing Deoband, however, the founders did not cite these considerations or the amenities of the town as motives. Rather, to them, the decision had had divine sanction. Both Shaikh Ahmad Sarhindi in the seventeenth century and Sayyid Ahmad Barelwi in the early nineteenth were said to have commented that an "odor of learning," *bu-yi ʿilm*, came from the very ground of the town. Maulana Rafiʿu'd-Din dreamed of seeing the Kaʿbah located in Deoband's garden; of Hazrat ʿAli founding a school whose pupils he later recognized as Deoband's; and of the Prophet himself giving milk to students there. Such dreams not only endowed the location of the school with sanctity, but gave the founders a self-fulfilling confidence in their mission. It was said that all received simultaneous inspiration actually to found the school there.[12]

The *madrasah* began modestly in the old Chattah Masjid under a spreading pomegranate tree that still stands. The first teacher and the first pupil, in a coincidence deemed auspicious, were both named Mahmud: Mulla Mahmud, the teacher, and Mahmud Hasan, the pupil, who was later to become the school's most famous teacher. Despite the timeless atmosphere surrounding this cherished vignette of its inauguration, the school from its inception was unlike

10. Ẓuhūru'l-Ḥasan Kāsōlī, *Arwāḥ-i Ṣalāṣah* (Saharanpur, 1370/1950-1), pp. 325-26.

11. Manāẓir Aḥsan Gīlānī, *Sawāniḥi Qāsimī* (Deoband, 1375/1955), I, 498-99.

12. Anwāru'l-Ḥasan Hāshimī, *Mubashshirāt-i Dāru'l-ʿUlūm* (Deoband, 1375/1955-6), pp. 13-14, 23.



2. The old Chattah Masjid, where the instruction of the Daru'l-ʿUlum began

earlier *madrasahs*. Its founders, emulating the British bureaucratic style for educational institutions, in fact eschewed the informal pattern of education that the scene under the pomegranate conjures up. The school was conceived of as a distinct institution, not relegated to a wing of a mosque or home and dependent on the parent institution. As soon as possible, it acquired classrooms and a central library. It was run by a professional staff, and its students were admitted for a fixed course of study and required to take examinations for which prizes were awarded at a yearly convocation. Gradually an informal system of affiliated colleges emerged. Many of the colleges were ul-

timately staffed by the school's own graduates, and their students were examined by visiting Deobandis. Financially, the school was wholly dependent on public contributions, mostly in the form of annual pledges, not on fixed holdings of *waqf* or pious endowments contributed by noble patrons. The school was, in fact, so unusual that the annual printed report, itself an innovation, made continuing efforts to explain the organization of the novel system.

In older schools, like the famous Farangi Mahall in Lucknow, family members taught students in their own homes or in a corner of a mosque. There was no central library, no course required of each student, no series of examinations. A student would seek out a teacher and receive a certificate, a *sanad*, listing the books he had read, then move on to another teacher or return home. The ʿulama in such a setting depended primarily on revenue from their endowments and on the largesse of princes whose courts they graced and for whom they trained government servants. Such ʿulama were part of the larger structure of a Muslim state.

The Deobandi ʿulama, in contrast, could not depend on a court to provide a framework of patronage or to take responsibility for Muslim law and education. They themselves would serve the daily legal and spiritual needs of their fellow Muslims, training ʿulama in schools modeled on a variety of British institutions whose effectiveness they had witnessed. The founders of Deoband knew such institutions well. Many of them, including three Deputy Inspectors of the Education Department, were government servants; some had attended such schools as the Delhi College; and all of them confronted with concern the influential missionary societies. In dealing with these institutions, they learned their methods and chose to compete with them on equivalent terms. Two characteristics of the new institution were particularly striking: the participation of people with no kin ties and the system of popular financing.

One of the leading founders, Maulana Muhammad Qasim, enunciated eight fundamental principles dealing with these

two institutional characteristics.[13] The definition of a rationale for relations between those associated with the school particularly called for attention, since the school was not in the hands of a single family, subject to the understood and accepted norms of kin behavior. Its staff consisted of personnel with specific responsibility as teachers, administrators, and councilors. The dozen members of the teaching staff were ranked by learning, with the Arabic faculty given precedence in pay and prestige over the Persian teachers. The administration included three figures: the *sarparast*, or rector, who served as patron and guide to the institution; the *muhtamim*, or chancellor, who was the chief administrative officer; and the *sadr mudarris*, the chief teacher or principal, who was responsible for instruction. In 1892 a fourth administrator, the *mufti*, was added to supervise the dispensation of judicial opinions on behalf of the school. The consultative council was composed of the administrators and seven additional members.

The rules called on all to subordinate personal interests in striving for common goals. Members were to demonstrate openness and tolerance in dealing with each other, engaging in mutual consultation not on the basis of position but on that of the value of their ideas. The principles were as follows:

> The councilors of the *madrasah* should always keep in mind its well-being. There should be no rigidity of views, and for this reason it is important that they never hesitate to express an opinion and that listeners hear it with an open mind. So . . . if we understand another's idea [to be better], even if it is against us, we will accept it wholly. . . . For this same reason it is necessary that the *muhtamim* always seek advice of councilors, whether those who are the permanent councilors of the *madrasah* or others who possess wisdom and understanding and are well-wishers of the school. . . . Let no individual be unhappy if on a

13. The principles, translated below, are listed in Muḥammad Ṭayyib Qāsimī, *Dāru'l-'Ulūm De'oband kī Ṣad Sālah Zindagī* (Deoband, 1968), pp. 17-18.

> certain occasion he is not asked for advice. . . . If, however, the *muhtamim* asks no one, all the councilors should object.
>
> It is essential that the teachers of the *madrasah* be in accord and, unlike the worldly ʿulama, not be selfish and intolerant of others.
>
> Instruction should be that already agreed on, or later agreed on by consultation. . . .

The last principle was particularly significant, asking the teachers to forego individual inclinations in the interest of a common program.

Rafiʿu'd-Din, *muhtamim* from 1872 to 1889, further formalized Muhammad Qasim's guidelines for the institution by giving precedence to the council over staff and administration. He insisted that grievances be presented directly to the council. Moreover, he urged that the power of the *muhtamim* be limited by curtailing the amount of money available for use at his discretion. In 1887 he wrote, "All decisions are made by the consultative council. Even I, though the *muhtamim*, present here in the school for twenty years, will be removed if they see fit."[14] By having the council so central, the school was freed of both instability and personal whim. No one person, by virtue of either his administrative position or his seniority within the family, was to dominate the school.

A second cluster of principles dealt with the new system of financing. The system arose in part because the founders had no option but to find an alternative to the increasingly insecure princely grants. Muslim princes of states such as Hyderabad, Bhopal, and Rampur did, to be sure, patronize learning and extend their bounty across the border to their fellows in British India. Large landlords in the United Provinces did dispense some of their wealth for religious causes. But such contributions could never be as substantial as those of the days of Mughal rule, nor could they be as certain in a period of economic, social, and administrative flux. Nor

14. Ibid., p. 19.

were the ʿulama willing to accept British grants-in-aid, for such help was precarious and carried the taint of its non-Muslim source. Instead they created a network of donors who formed a base not only for financial support but for dissemination of their teachings.

Most of their income was derived from popular contributions pledged annually by their many supporters. The system was complex. It required keeping careful records, and depended on the new facilities of postal service, money orders, and even the printing press. Thanks to the last, they were able to publish widely in the annual proceedings the list of donors, who thus received recognition for their generosity. The donors were listed in the order of the size of their gift, but even the humblest contributor was included. The Deobandis also solicited single gifts in both cash and kind. Especially in the early days of the school people donated books, food for the students, and household items to furnish the school. Groups of people organized collections of hides of animals left from the ʿId sacrifice, selling them and sending the proceeds to the school. People were encouraged to designate their contributions as *zakat*, the obligatory alms that in other eras were collected by the state. The resultant income was managed with such care and such frugality that by 1890 an average of only forty-two rupees a year had been spent on each student: "What jewels for cowries," the proceedings declared.[15]

Five of Muhammad Qasim's eight principles dealt with this new financial arrangement. They stressed the obligation of all associated with the school to encourage donations of cash and food. They also pointed out the spiritual advantage of poverty in fostering the unity sought in the principles described above.

> First, the workers of the *madrasah* should, as best they can, keep in view the increase of donations; and should encourage others to share the same concern. . . .
>
> The well-wishers of the *madrasah* should always make

15. Dāru'l-ʿUlūm Dē'ōband, *Rū-dād-i Sālānah, 1309* (Deoband, 1891/2), p. 11.

> efforts to secure the provision of food for the students; indeed they should try to increase the food.
>
> As long as the *madrasah* has no fixed sources of income, it will, God willing, operate as desired. And if it gain any fixed income, like *jagir* holdings, factories, trading interests, or pledges from nobles, then the *madrasah* will lose the fear and hope that inspire submission to God and will lose His hidden help. Disputes will begin among the workers. In matters of income and buildings . . . let there be a sort of deprivation.
>
> The participation of government and the wealthy is harmful.
>
> The contributions of those who expect no fame from their gifts are a source of blessing. The sincerity of such contributors is a source of stability.

In fact, many wealthy people were among the donors, and many no doubt did expect and receive recognition in return. Still the system of popular support was effective, both financially and symbolically, and became a model for new religious schools. Other schools, like Farangi Mahall, which clung to support from landed wealth, have in part for this reason disappeared.

The formal organization of the school was supplemented by associational ties of origin, educational experience, and Sufi order. Such ties were not incompatible with the formal system. Informal patronage and apprenticeship were characteristic of both the Mughal bureaucracy and the British at least until the end of the nineteenth century. Hence the formal organization of posts did not wholly reveal lines of influence. The two dominant figures in the school's first decades were old friends, Muhammad Qasim and Rashid Ahmad. Muhammad Qasim did hold the important post of *sarparast* until his death in 1879. It is said that he avoided an active administrative role for fear of tainting the school's reputation because of his participation in the Mutiny.[16] For

16. Manāẓir Aḥsan Gīlānī, *Sawāniḥ-i Qāsimī,* I, 266.

the first three years of the school's operation, he did not even come to Deoband but stayed at his printing plant in Meerut. He affected the school not through direct control but by personal influence. Rafiʿu'd-Din, the *muhtamim*, said, "There was such closeness between Muhammad Qasim and myself that whatever was in his heart, I knew. . . . I did what was revealed to him."[17] Rashid Ahmad did not initially hold any formal post at all, but was absent in Gangoh occupied as Sufi *shaikh*, teacher of *hadis*, and jurist. However, he was so revered that his opinions on organizing and shaping the school were followed.

A special bond existed among many of the school's personnel because of common allegiance to a Sufi order, particularly for the many who were disciples of Imdadu'llah. In general, allegiance to the Chishtī order predominated at the school. Moreover, most of these ʿulama were *shaikh* in family, and many were closely related to each other. The two brothers, Muhammad Yaʿqub Nanautawi, the first principal (1867-1886), and Zu'l-Faqar ʿAli, Deputy Inspector in the Education Department and a member of the council for forty years, were cousins of Muhammad Munir Nanautawi who served as *muhtamim* in 1894-1895. Mahtab ʿAli, a resident of Deoband and a member of the council was also their cousin. Another council member, Shaikh Nihal Ahmad, a *ra'is* and scholar of Deoband descended from the Mughal *diwan* Shaikh Lutfu'llah, was related to their family by marriage. His sister was married to Muhammad Qasim, and he himself married Qasim's elder sister in order to set an example of widow remarriage.[18] Fazl-i Haqq, a member of the council and briefly *muhtamim*, was a cousin of Sayyid ʿAbid Husain, a revered elder of Deoband and the first *muhtamim*. In a society in which family and clan were important, such relationships among members of a common enterprise were typical. At Deoband, however, they were to give way to greater diversity in geographic and social origin, and to ties based not on kin but on per-

17. Ẓuhūru'l-Ḥasan, *Arwāḥ-i Ṣalāṣah*, pp. 239-40.
18. Muḥammad Miyāṅ, *Ulamā -yi Hind*, pp. 67-68.

sonal achievement. Such a development was implicit in the organization of the school.

The System of Instruction

The goal of the school was to train well-educated ʿulama who would be dedicated to reformed Islam. Such ʿulama would become prayer leaders, writers, preachers, and teachers, and thus disseminate their learning, in turn. To this end the school set formal requirements for admission and matriculation. Local students were admitted to study Persian or Qur'an, but the students of Arabic, roughly three-quarters of the whole, were required to have already studied Persian to the level of the *Gulistan*, to have completed the Qur'an, and to pass an examination.[19] Only half of those examined were admitted. There were seventy-eight students in the first year, rapidly increasing to a constant two or three hundred for the rest of the century.

Students were expected to study a fixed and comprehensive body of learning in the course of a program of studies originally scheduled for ten years, later reduced to six. They were not to come informally, sit at the feet of a particular teacher, then move on to another master and another center of learning. Rather, in this one place, the school claimed, students would be trained in the specialties of the three great intellectual centers of north India: in *manqulat*, the studies of Qur'an and *hadis*, the specialty of Delhi; and in *maʿqulat*, the rational studies of law, logic, and philosophy, the specialty of the two eastern cities of Lucknow and Khairabad.[20] The school taught basically the *dars-i nizami*, the curriculum evolved at Farangi Mahall in the eighteenth century. The Deobandis, however, reversed the emphasis on "rational" studies in favor of an emphasis on *hadis*, which was to be the basis of their popular teaching. They greatly expanded the offerings of the *nizami* curric-

19. Muḥammad Ayyūb Qādirī, *Maulānā Muḥammad Aḥsan Nānautawī* (Karachi, 1966), pp. 200-202.
20. Maḥbūb Riẓwī, *Dāru'l-ʿUlūm Dē'ōband kī Taʿlīmī Khuṣūṣiyyāt* (Deoband, n.d.), pp. 94-95.

ulum, which required only one text of selections from *hadis*. Instead they included in their entirety the six classical collections of the precedents of the Prophet. They deemed *hadis*, the basis of correct practice and belief, the crowning subject. The most influential teacher at the school was the *shaikhu'l-hadis*; and only good students were encouraged to study the subject. "Once a follower asked Rashid Ahmad to inaugurate a student's study of Tirmizi . . . for the student's understanding was deficient. Rashid Ahmad answered: 'When that is the case teach a student *fiqh* or Urdu or Persian [but not *hadis*].' "[21] The Deobandis' second specialty, *fiqh*, was of similar importance for popular teaching, since they stressed correct performance of ritual and ceremonial duties rather than the study of jurisprudence.

Indeed, there was actual opposition, led by Rashid Ahmad, to teaching the rational sciences of logic, philosophy, and jurisprudence at all. These subjects were "rational" in the sense that they represented the exercise of men's minds on the material provided by the revealed sources. As such he felt that they were trivial in comparison to the basic texts, and that the only merit in studying them was preparation for their refutation.[22] In taking this position, he represented a long tradition of Sufi thought that had opposed the study of philosophy, influenced by Greek thought, in particular.[23] Muhammad Qasim, also in sympathy with this position, felt that students should study, if anything, the currently more threatening "new philosophy" of the West, not that derived from the Greeks. Many of the staff and council were cautious, however, and wanted students to read the books of logic and philosophy to ensure their getting jobs. Despite Rashid Ahmad's indignant response—"Would you clean latrines to get a job?"—the books that had initially been eliminated from the curriculum did gradually creep back.[24]

21. Muḥammad ʿĀshiq Ilāhī Mīraṭhī, *Taẕkiratu'r-Rashīd* (Meerut, n.d.), I, 94-95.
22. Maḥbūb Rizwī, *Dē'ōband kī Taʿlīmī Khuṣūṣiyyāt*, p. 153.
23. Annemarie Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1975), pp. 18-19.
24. Manāẓir Aḥsan Gīlānī, *Sawāniḥ-i Qāsimī*, I, 291-98.

There were no spokesmen for including English or Western subjects. Muhammad Qasim insisted that the school was not opposed to such study, but simply wanted to avoid duplication of government efforts.[25] Students could, he further insisted, continue in government schools after completing their studies at Deoband, but even when the curriculum was reduced to six years, few continued beyond that long course. Thus, with no new subjects and with philosophy gradually restored, the curriculum was not dramatically innovative. It was, however, to become famous for its emphasis on *hadis*, a subject that provided material for popular teaching and influence.

Some techniques of instruction differed from those of other *madrasahs*. Indeed, many thought the school to be a continuation of the old Delhi College, not only because of the continuity of personnel and the modern organization of the school, but also because of the style of teaching.[26] The technique of Arabic instruction, for example, was the British one of translation into Urdu and from Urdu into Arabic. Later the exercise of monthly compositions written in Arabic was added in order to improve fluency and command of the language.[27] Most important, the school continued the use of Urdu, not Persian, as medium of instruction, and it thus shared in the general trend of the times toward the development of the modern vernaculars. Students came, even within the first years of the school's existence, from places as distant as Afghanistan and Chittagong, Patna and Madras, but all were to return with a common language in Urdu.[28] Even those who were from north India often spoke a dialect in their homes, and now acquired a standard form of the language. Like the Westernizing college at Aligarh, Deoband was instrumental in establishing Urdu as a language of communication among

25. Dāru'l-ʿUlūm Dē'ōband, *Rū-dād-i Sālānah, 1290* (Deoband, 1873/4), p. 16.

26. Thus it is described in Nevill, *Saharanpur*, p. 214.

27. Dāru'l-ʿUlūm Dē'ōband, *Naql-i Kitāb-i Taḥrīrī-yi Jalsahā-yi Ahl-i Mashwarah* (Deoband ms., ca. 1894/5), p. 132; and Manāẓir Aḥsan Gīlānī, *Sawāniḥ-ı Qāsimī*, I, 290.

28. Maḥbūb Riẓwī, *Dē'ōband kī Taʿlīmī Khuṣūṣıyyāt*, p. 10.

the Muslims of India. Such a change was obviously central to enhanced bonds among the ʿulama and between them and their followers.

An abortive innovation on the part of the school was the inclusion of training in crafts and trades. There was hope that students, thus trained, could support themselves in villages and small towns and, simultaneously, share the benefits of their religious training with their neighbors. This was expected, no doubt, to further the influence of the ʿulama, but the plan came to naught because the students deemed such work beneath their dignity as religious scholars. There was also talk of teaching surveying and cartography in order to provide students with skills for jobs in the expanded public works department of the government.[29] But even this plan did not materialize. The preference for intellectual work and its concomitant status was too strong. Only two kinds of vocational training had any place at the school: calligraphy and *tibb*, the system of medicine derived primarily from the theories of the classical Greeks. Both studies were considered suitable activities for the ʿulama, related, respectively, to the religious activities of copying manuscripts and healing one's followers. In 1873 a skilled calligrapher joined the staff to train students for work at the increasingly important lithographic presses.[30] Aside from its practical value, calligraphy in Islam was regarded as a manifestation of spirituality, particularly cultivated by those who were Sufis.[31] As for *tibb*, some, like Rashid Ahmad, opposed its inclusion, seeing it as a distraction from more important matters.[32] The school made it a part of its curriculum only at the end of the century. Both these subjects were popular, for they extended the scope of influence of the ʿulama. However, it was primarily

29. Shaikh Muḥammad Ikrām, *Mauj-i Kauṡar*, 4th ed. (Lahore, 1968), p. 209.

30. Manāẓir Aḥsan Gīlānī, *Sawāniḥ-i Qāsimī*, I, 1-4, 32.

31. Martin Lings and Yasin Hamid Safadi, *The Qur'an: Catalogue of an Exhibition of Qur'an Manuscripts at the British Library 3 April-15 August 1976*. (London, 1976), pp. 14-15.

32. Manāẓir Aḥsan Gīlānī, *Sawāniḥ-i Qāsimī*, I, 309-10.

the core religious sciences, unchanged in substance, that the school taught.

A great resource in this teaching was the school's library. At the time of the school's foundation the old system of copyists was dying out and the new presses had barely begun. The school, however, by soliciting contributions of manuscripts either as gifts or loans, and listing each year's acquisitions in the annual proceedings, acquired a superb collection of Persian and Arabic manuscripts. The ʿulama turned simultaneously to the new presses of the period, asking them to contribute copies of each book they published. In response, not only famous Muslim publishers like the Matbaʿ-i Mujtabaʾi in Meerut, the Matbaʿ-i Siddiqi in Delhi, and the Nizami press in Kanpur responded, but the famous Hindu Kayasth publisher of Lucknow, Newal Kishore, hastened to aid the school as well, for he was interested in preserving Arabic and Persian and encouraging the use of Urdu. Similarly, the Hindu Thakur Rao sent the school his periodical, the *Safir-i Budhana*. Within a few years after the school's founding, a dozen newspapers, including ones from Bombay and Madras, were being sent to the school.[33] Among contributors of books to the library were G. W. Leitner, the influential Arabic scholar in the Punjab, and many nobles and traders. The result was a carefully kept library of thousands of volumes.

Students were tested on the results of their study. Examinations were an innovation in Arabic *madrasahs*, and hence extensively described in the school's annual reports. Even one of the school's own teachers, the saintly Muhammad Yaʿqub, did not see the point of the exams. He recorded scores, to be sure, but on the basis of his own intuition.[34] The rest of the staff apparently subscribed to the system, administering oral examinations during a student's first two years and written ones during the subsequent four. They developed an ethos of pride in the difficulty of the exams, for there were no optional questions, only five re-

33. Dāru'l-ʿUlūm Dēʾōband, *Rū-dād-i Sālānāh 1313* (1895/6), p. 38.
34. Ẓuhūru'l-Ḥasan, *Arwāḥ-i Ṣalāṣah*, p. 319.

quired ones on each book, with each answer accorded twenty points. The students were supervised to prevent cheating, and identified their exam by number only to ensure objectivity on the part of the examiners. The school was not organized by classes, but by books, so that if a student failed one book he would repeat that but not the others. The students, in fact, did well in their exams and few failed.[35]

At an annual convocation, prizes were awarded to those with the highest grades. Here, too, there was a lingering inclination to recognize birth instead of achievement, as one student recalled: "Maulana ʿAla'u'd-Din studied with me and had his ceremony of completion at the same time. Because he was Muhammad Yaʿqub's son, people wanted him to have precedence over me in the ceremony, even though his marks were lower than mine. Rashid Ahmad refused."[36] At the convocation *sanads* were distributed describing the books each student had completed during the year, and commenting on the character, capacity, and skill of the student, as well. Those who had completed the entire course and were considered truly outstanding were sometimes awarded a *dastar*, a turban, which was wound on their head by the *sarparast*. The granting of turbans took place on only four occasions, at irregular intervals, and was finally given up after 1909. Those who received turbans were considered to possess both brilliance and exemplary personal qualities, including mastery of cultured language.[37]

As the criteria for distinction indicate, the school sought to shape the character as well as the intellect of the students. A regimen for their personal lives was instituted. They were required to promise that they would be devoted to their studies and obedient to their teachers. Should they nonetheless miss classes, they were deprived of food; and if they

35. Maḥbūb Riẓwī, *Tārīkh-i Dē'ōband* (Deoband, n.d.), p. 116, and *Dē'ōband kī Taʿlīmī Khuṣūṣiyyāt*, p. 12. Also Dārul-ʿUlūm Dē'ōband, *Rū-dād-i Sālānāh 1285* (1868/9), p. 8. *Rū-dād-i Sālānāh 1305* (1887/8) reports that 88 percent passed their exams.

36. Ẓuhūru'l-Ḥasan, *Arwāḥ-i Salāsah*, p. 320.

37. Dāru'l-ʿUlūm Dē'ōband, *Rū-dād-i Sālānah 1290* (1873/4), pp. 15-23.

generally failed to work, they were simply expelled.[38] A British government official who toured the school in 1875 reported that teachers treated their students with severity, but he was impressed by the explanation that the staff deemed it beneficial to train students while young to have a sense of work.[39] Except for the Friday holiday and one month's vacation each year, the students did indeed work continually.

They were expected to live respectably but modestly. The school provided not only books and instruction free of charge, but a collection of necessities to each boy, as well: four suits of clothes each year; two pairs of shoes; a cotton quilt; money for laundry; oil and matches for light; and medicine and care when sick. At the end of the century the school established a boarding house; students had previously lodged in homes and mosques, and received food from individuals or from a group of residents of a *mahallah.* In the boarding house, presumably modeled on those newly established at Aligarh and the government schools, their daily life was put under the close supervision of the staff. In that setting, moreover, students formed close bonds with each other. Such bonds, formed on the basis of common experience rather than on kin and locality, prepared the students for mutual cooperation and participation not only in religious activities but in government, voluntary associations, and politics.[40]

The faculty was, of course, the chief influence on the students. They were as a group dedicated to their work. Almost all of the leading teachers were offered positions in princely states or government service, but stayed at the school in return for small salaries of ten or fifteen rupees each month. In 1872, a year of few contributions, the teachers simply reduced their salaries, and advanced students voluntarily took on the burden of aiding them with les-

38. Ibid., *1287* (1871/2), pp. 6, 7.

39. Maḥbūb Riẓwī *Tārīkh-i Dē'ōband,* p. 113.

40. For the foremost example of how school organization forged new social bonds in this period, see David S. Lelyveld, *Aligarh's First Generation: Muslim Solidarity in British India* (Princeton, 1978).

sons.[41] Not all the teachers were of equal skill and those entrusted with the rational sciences tended to be less distinguished—not surprisingly, given the emphasis of the school. Logic was taught for many years by an Afghan, Maulana Ghulam Rasul, whose language the students found incomprehensible.[42] But there were always a few outstanding teachers. Among them in the early years was Rashid Ahmad, who taught *hadis* to students in Gangoh.

> He was the true successor of Shah Waliyu'llah and people came from places like Bengal, Madras, and Punjab to study from him. He would begin his teaching of *hadis* with Tirmizi and impress on each student the interpretation and meaning of the work in simple words. He was very patient, and often repeated his explanations. For example, he would take a simple word like *ʿattarah*, perfumer's wife, which I recall him defining three times for an Afghan student, each time in simpler language. He always taught after ablution and required the same of his students. If they got tired he would amuse them with jokes and anecdotes until their stomachs hurt. Then, refreshed, they would be able to go on. He would tell a story so seriously that others laughed the more. Then he would become formal again, maintaining that respect and awe necessary for a teacher. His teaching was unique in that he spoke in accordance with each student's capacity. . . . His memory was so extraordinary that he could cite the page of a relevant *hadis* in the *sahih* collections. . . . His students became his lovers, but he considered himself nothing.[43]

After Muhammad Qasim's death he became *sarparast* of both Deoband and its sister school, the Mazahiru'l-ʿUlum

41. Dāru'l-ʿUlūm Dē'ōband, *Rū-dād-i Sālānāh 1289* (1872/3).

42. Sayyid ʿAbdu'l-Ḥayy, *Dihlī aur us kē Aṭrāf: Ēk Safarnāmah aur Rōznāmah Unnīswīṅ Ṣadī kē Ākhir Mēṅ* (Lucknow, 1958), pp. 142-43, records the complaints about the teaching of *maʿqulat* made by Maulana Mashiyyatu'llah Bijnauri, then a student, later a member of the council.

43. Muḥammad ʿĀshiq Ilāhī Mīraṭhī, *Tazkiratu'r-Rashīd* (Meerut, n.d.), pp. 85-93, paraphrased.

in Saharanpur. Like the other great elders of the school, despite his eminence, he was known for his kindness to the students, and was not above chiding those he felt did not treat the students generously.

A second great teacher long associated with the school was Maulana Mahmud Hasan. He had sought out Muhammad Qasim in the printing houses of Meerut and Delhi in order to be one of the few to undergo his demanding teaching of *hadis*. When Mahmud Hasan completed his education in 1873 he joined the staff of the school, and for the next forty years was a dominating influence in its teaching and administration. He was a man of extraordinary energy, teaching ten lessons each day, writing, and caring for Muhammad Qasim in his final illness. He was devoted to the school and resisted all invitations to leave it. His fame was especially great in *hadis*, and, his biographer notes, in the course of his career he taught over a thousand students from such distant places as Kabul, Qandahar, Balkh, Bukhara, Mecca, Medina, and Yemen. Among them were Anwar Shah Kashmiri, Shabbir Ahmad ʿUsmani, and Hafiz Muhammad Ahmad, the leaders of the third generation of ʿulama at the school.[44]

For the students the years at the school were intense, providing them not only with intellectual skills, but shaping their personalities and relationships. Husain Ahmad Madani, a student at the school at the end of the century, wrote a description of his experiences:

> I took up residence with my brothers in a room near the home of Maulana Mahmud Hasan. My brothers asked him to initiate my studies as a blessing; and he, assembling a group of ʿulama, directed Maulana Khalil Ahmad to begin my instruction. I was then in my twelfth year, but I was very small. And because a boy so small, from such a distance, was unusual, I was treated with great

44. Asghar Ḥusain, *Ḥayāt-i Shaikhu'l-Hind* (Deoband, 1920), especially pp. 11-13, 22.

kindness. I would go to my teachers' houses to help with writing and accounts and received great kindness from the wife of Mahmud Hasan in particular.

But whatever small freedom I had at home was now gone. My eldest brother beat me often, and never showed me even the occasional kindness my father had. My brother taught me Persian and I also studied from Maulana Mahmud after hours. I rapidly advanced beyond those in my classes.

I never had much enthusiasm for study and would not review my books. I did well in the beginning books, on which there was only an oral exam, but did not do so well in the later written one. . . . The night before the exam I would study the whole book, drinking tea and having snacks whenever I felt sleepy, for I always needed much sleep and I especially felt sleepy when reading. After my first failure, I did better, and I often attained distinguished marks. The exams were very hard in comparison with those of the government schools where there was a choice. Deoband was unique among the Arabic schools in enforcing such a high standard, supervising exams to see that a student had no help. . . . Unfortunately the education in many of the other schools was defective. When students from here entered other institutions or studied English they were always most distinguished.

Although I never liked work, gradually my intellectual inclination and balance of character grew. At first my interest was logic and philosophy, then literature, and finally *hadis*.[45]

At the school, Husain Ahmad also received his first spiritual training. Both he and his eldest brother were disciples of Rashid Ahmad; his other brother, of Mahmud Hasan. In later years all three would return to the school from Medina

45. Ḥusain Aḥmad Madanī, *Naqsh-i Ḥayāt* (Deoband, 1953), II, 44-48, paraphrased.

when they came to India in search of brides or in connection with other family business, and would always seek advice from their Sufi *shaikhs* and even undertake further study.

It is clear from Husain Ahmad's experience that the school preserved at its core the close relation between teacher and student that had characterized the less formal schools of the past. Husain Ahmad's well-being was of concern to his teachers and he, in turn, rendered them such services as help with accounts. Yet the school also offered a discipline and organization that earlier schools had not. It was the combination of closeness and discipline that shaped the interests of students like Husain Ahmad in the direction of those dominant at the school, and that forged their personalities to resemble those of their teachers. Husain Ahmad went on to be a pillar of the school, a distinguished scholar, and a leading figure in nationalist politics. In ʿulama like him the school fulfilled its goal of preserving the learned tradition and providing a structure of religious leadership for Muslims without the support of the state. The accompanying table, prepared by the school, summarizes its first century of achievements.

From a report prepared by the school:

A Hundred Years of Darululoom, Deoband
Dept. of Tanzeem Abnae Qadeem, Darululoom, Deoband, 1967.

Province-wise number of graduates produced during the century (1283 to 1382 A.H.)

A. India (Total 3795)			
U.P.	1896	West Bengal	151
Assam and Manipur	265	Bihar and Orissa	780
Madras	30	Travancore	4
Kerala	42	Andhra	52
Mysore	6	M.P.	28
E. Punjab	196	Delhi	12
Maharashtra	39	Gujrat [sic]	138
Rajasthan	43	Jammu and Kashmir	110
Nepal	3		
B. Pakistan (Total 3191)			
W. Pakistan	1519	E. Pakistan	1672

A Hundred Years of Darululoom, Deoband (*cont.*)

C. Foreign Countries	(Total 431)		
Afghanistan	109	Russia (including Siberia)	70
China	44	Burma	144
Malaysia	28	Indonesia	1
Iraq	2	Kwait [sic]	2
Iran	11	Ceylon	2
S. Africa	14	Saudi Arabia	2
Siam	1	Yemen	1

Types of various services rendered by the graduates of Darululoom, during the 100 years (1283 to 1382 A.H.), according to efficiency

Spiritual guides	536	Teachers	5888
Writers	1164	Muftis	1784
Debators	1540	Journalists	684
Orators and Missionaries	4288	Tabib (Doctors)	288

784 served the religion through industry and trade. They started 8934 Maktabs and madrasas

Total income from 1283 to 1382 A.H.	Rs.	1,08,31,566/13/2
Total expenditure	Rs.	1,08,46,946/11/3
Total expenditure on buildings	Rs.	11,00,895/13/6
Number of graduates		7,417
Expenses per graduate	Rs.	1,314/-/-
Number of *fatwas* issued		2,69,215
Number of books in the library in 1967		82,350

Two Controversies

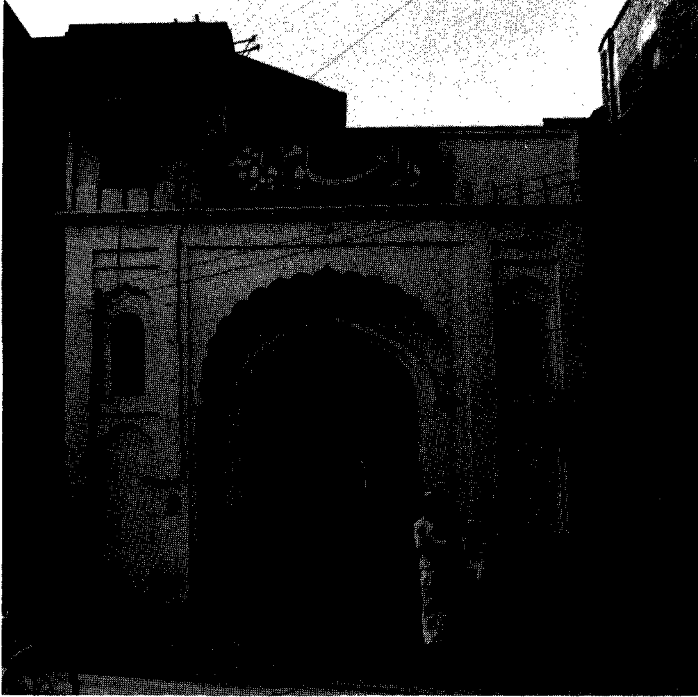
Despite such success on the part of the school, there were people who opposed its style of organization. As a result, two major crises arose in the initial decades of the school's existence. The first, in 1876, concerned the issue of erecting separate buildings for the school; the second, in 1895, concerned opposition to the personnel of the school's administration. Both were, in general, resolved in favor of those who supported the original bureaucratic conception of the institution.

At issue in the first quarrel was the question of the school's existence as a distinct institution. It did initially operate in mosques and rented buildings. But the founders—or most

of them—held to the idea that the school should have a building of its own. The idea was a new one, and even Muhammad Qasim felt at first that a fine building might encourage pride.[46] He was ultimately persuaded of the value of a separate building by the insistence of his teacher Maulana Ahmad 'Ali Saharanpuri that it would be conducive to the independence and efficient running of the school. Muhammad Qasim himself recognized the practical problems of lodging students in mosques "when there were hundreds of them, not just an occasional few." The *qaum* or "race" of students, he noted, was a free one, and there would be endless complaints of broken vessels, lost lanterns, and other such problems.[47]

Practical consideration aside, there was a symbolic motive in establishing separate buildings for the school. With the Mughal decline there were no princes to construct the grand tombs, city mosques, ceremonial gateways, and forts that had been the material statement on the physical landscape of the existence of Muslim culture and society. In their stead, through the efforts of the 'ulama and other pious people, *madrasahs* and mosques became not only the loci of the organization of Muslim religious life but also the concrete evidence of the Muslim presence. Separate *madrasahs* had heretofore not been characteristic of Muslim architecture in India, perhaps because the 'ulama and their law schools had not been central in organizing Muslim communal life. Now schools like Deoband began to serve that function and to symbolize Muslim culture. The early buildings at Deoband reflected this role; they were domed and arched in the style of imperial structures. Early in this century, for example, the school used money donated by the Amir of Afghanistan to construct a grand ceremonial outer gate that particularly evoked an imperial motif.[48]

46. Muḥammad Ṭayyib Qāsimī, *Dāru'l 'Ulūm Dē'ōband kī Ṣad Sālah Zindagī*, p. 92.
47. Ẓuhūru'l-Ḥasan, *Arwāḥ-i Salāṣah*, pp. 248-52.
48. I am indebted to Renata Holod of the University of Pennsylvania for comments on Mughal architecture that prompted this interpretation.



3. The "Gate of Imdad," the main gate of the Daru'l-'Ulum

The leading opponent of constructing the first building was Sayyid 'Abid Husain, the first *muhtamim* and a man of such great influence that one associate observed that even the sultan of the Turks could not have controlled Deoband without his aid; and another suspected that even the *jinn* obeyed him.[49] He preferred an informal associational style of education, with no formal buildings. He argued that a separate building would be too expensive, and urged instead the building of additional cells, *hujrahs*, in the Jami' Masjid. In 1871, when he returned from pilgrimage, he took up the supervision of the building of that mosque instead of his previous post of *muhtamim*. He used this position to build *hujrahs*, despite the decision of the council

49. Manāẓir Aḥsan Gīlānī, *Sawāniḥ-i Qāsimī*, II, 253.

in favor of a proper building.[50] He thus differed with the council not only on a matter of substance but on the legitimacy of their authority to make binding decisions on all those associated with the school.

A contemporaneous account claimed that Hajji ʿAbid had the support of the townspeople in this dispute. The nature of this support is difficult to analyze because, as the account noted, Muhammad Qasim's stature was such that "even though peoples' faces changed, they said nothing."[51] Presumably Hajji ʿAbid's support was based on his deep personal influence, not on the issue itself. Those in opposition, however, were united by a position of principle, not by kin or personal ties. The entire administration supported the cause of a new building. Rafiʿu'd-Din even dreamed of divine indications of the precise spot where it should be built.[52]

Finally, in 1876, Muhammad Qasim announced that there would be a new building, without indicating whether it would be separate or part of the Jamiʿ Masjid. He hoped that once the announcement was made Hajji ʿAbid would accept its being separate. Muhammad Qasim set the date for the foundation stone to be laid after a Friday congregational prayer at which he would preach. At the end of his sermon he announced that the school had purchased the field in front of the old palace and that the new building would be built there.[53] Hajji ʿAbid cried out in shock. Muhammad Qasim, insisting that the decision was a correct one, urged him to join the throng that was then moving to the site to lay the foundation stone. But Hajji Sahib left, enraged, and retired to the Chattah Masjid. Muhammad Qasim followed him there, touched his feet with his hands, and said to him, "You are our elder; and we, your younger. You cannot leave us; nor we, you."[54] Both wept. Hajji Abid,

50. Ibid., I, 32-34.
51. Muḥammad Ṭayyib Qāsimī, *Dēʾōband kī Ṣad Sālah Zindagī*, p. 92.
52. Anwāru'l-Ḥasan Hāshimī, *Mubashshırāt-ı Dāru'l-ʿUlūm*, p. 23.
53. Ibrāhīm Fākhrī, "Dāru'l-ʿUlūm Dēʾōband," *Āj Kal* (Delhi, June 1969), p. 40.
54. Manāẓir Aḥsan Gīlānī, *Sawāniḥ-i Qāsimī*, I, 228.

moved by Muhammad Qasim's act of personal humility and by the inevitability of the new building, if not by the decision of the council, agreed to attend the ceremony. Three distinguished elders then laid the foundation stone: Hazrat Miyanji Munne Shah, a revered *sayyid* and elder; Maulana Ahmad ʿAli, the famed *hadis* scholar of Saharanpur; and Hajji ʿAbid himself as representative of the council. The decision made and the work begun, "everyone's heart felt a strange joy," a historian of the event concluded.[55]

This first building was completed within five years. Like many later ones, it was financed by a special group of donors, in this case one organized in Hyderabad.[56] The mosque was the special contribution of a wealthy trader; the hostel,

4. The gate to the first classroom building, the Bab-i Qasim, named for Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanautawi, seen from the inside

55. Ẕuhūru'l-Ḥasan, *Arwāḥ-i Ṡalāṡah*, p. 252.
56. Manāẕir Aḥsan Gīlānī, *Sawāniḥ-i Qāsimī*, I, 326.

completed in 1898, was built through the support of the princes of Hyderabad and Bhopal and the *nawwab* of Chhatari. Hajji ʿAbid and the people of the town came to accept and take pride in these buildings, but there were other occasions on which Hajji ʿAbid differed with other members of the school.[57] The annual reports account for his occasional withdrawal from the school by his preoccupation with his many followers. In fact, he long failed to appreciate the formal, modern format of the school and its extra-local character.

These issues reappeared in the dispute of 1895, a crisis that lasted longer and was of potentially greater danger to the school. The opponents in this case were leaders of the town whose attempts to gain control of the school were

5. Naudarah, the first classroom building, completed in 1877

57. Ẕuhūru'l-Ḥasan, *Arwāḥ-i Ṣalāṣah*, p. 380. Here is noted a second occasion when ʿAbid Husain withdrew from the school but maintained affable relations with its personnel.

perhaps not unexpected. Muhammad Qasim had early set the rule that the councillors should be ʿulama and not "respectable people," *arbab-i wajahat*, in order to ensure that the religious quality of the school would be preserved and that the school itself would not merely be an institution of the town, subject to its local problems and constraints.

In the 1890s, however, the school seemed vulnerable to attempts at change. It had lost much of its original leadership. Muhammad Qasim and Muhammad Yaʿqub had died. Rafiʿu'd-Din had left for the Hijaz, where he spent the last two years of his life. Maulana Sayyid Ahmad Dihlawi, the leading Arabic teacher and briefly the *muhtamim*, had been displeased at some aspects of the school's administration and had taken a position in Bhopal. In 1892, Hajji ʿAbid Husain, again unwilling to accept a decision of the council, resigned from his post as *muhtamim*. He refused on this occasion to reduce the pay of a recalcitrant teacher who was felt to compromise the school by resorting to government courts. He went on to argue in vain that most of the dozen teachers at the school should be fired, and only two or three of the very good ones kept. Mahmud Hasan, who was by this time clearly the school's best teacher, supported the continuation of a proper staff and simply insisted that if anyone went it would be he.[58] New crises built on this one.

The council next appointed Maulana Fazl-i Haqq Nanautawi, an original member of the council and ʿAbid Husain's sometime aide, as the new *muhtamim*. He was discovered shortly after his appointment to have been guilty of a minor embezzlement of some seventy rupees. Some on the council wanted to ignore his peccadilloes in the interest of preventing a confrontation with dissident townsmen. However, Rashid Ahmad, as member of the council and *sarparast*, prevailed in his opinion that Fazl-i Haqq be asked to resign. He answered the fears of the more cautious by insisting that "the *madrasah* was made for God's pleasure. As long as the work here is in accordance with his pleasure,

58. ʿAbdu'l-Ḥayy, *Dihlī aur us kē Aṭrāf*, pp. 98-99, 114.

we will be able to continue."[59] He handled the resignation tactfully and offered Fazl-i Haqq badly needed alternate employment. But the removal provided the dissidents with an opening. They began a campaign of letters objecting to Fazl-i Haqq's removal. Rashid Ahmad answered them by consistently explaining that he was answerable only to the contributors, an assertion of the nonlocal character of the school.[60]

Once Fazl-i Haqq had resigned, the council appointed the venerable Maulana Munir Nanautawi of Muhammad Qasim's family to take his place. They also added two new members to the council: Muhammad Ahsan Nanautawi, the teacher and publisher who was also a member of the family, and Hajji Shaikh Zuhuru'd-Din De'obandi, a favored disciple of Muhammad Qasim.[61] Despite the presence of such distinguished elders, the dissidents continued to speak of the school's decline and bad management. Not surprisingly, active among the critics were relatives of Fazl-i Haqq, prominent citizens of the town, who chafed at his disgrace.

The opposition crystallized in the formation of "The Reform Committee of the Arabic Madrasa of Deoband," which sent out five hundred copies of a complaint against the school inviting supporters to be present at a meeting.[62] It charged that the "waqf" of Deoband had become the private property of the council members, who included two brothers as members and four of their sons as teachers at

59. Ḥusain Aḥmad Madanī, *Naqsh-i Ḥayāt*, II, 99-100.

60. Ibid., II, 101-102.

61. See Muḥammad Ṭayyib Qāsimī, *Dē'ōband kī Ṣad Sālah Zindagī*, for the tenure of members of all administrative and teaching positions at the school.

62. The fullest report on the meeting is Muḥyi'd-Din, *Taẕkirah-yi 1312*. The volume included the statements of both sides. The compiler, a *ra'is* of Moradabad, entitled himself "the servant of the 'ulama," and offered the volume for the benefit of his fellow Muslims. He called Deoband the "mother of *madrasahs*," and praised it for spreading religious knowledge throughout Hindustan. A companion of Muhammad Qasim, he also had a son enrolled at the school at the time of the dispute. He was appointed to the council at the conclusion of the quarrels.

the school.[63] The pamphlet argued that by the standard of either the *shari'at* or of the government such nepotism was inappropriate. They reminded their readers of the importance Muhammad Qasim had attached to the cooperation of the people of the town, for whom they claimed to be the spokesmen, and insisted that they had no personal antagonism to the school. The statement had twenty-six signatures, headed by three members of the "municipality," that is, men who had attained influence through the local government institutions inaugurated by the British. Two were pleaders (*wakil*), one a former revenue official, another a district revenue official. One identified himself as a *maulawi*, three as *hafiz* who had memorized the Qur'an, and four as *hajji*. Eight began their names with *shaikh*. The group was thus, presumably, drawn from the most influential of the town's residents, led by men who filled the local councils set up by the British.

Among those who attended their meeting were a dozen men from Delhi, Meerut, and Muzaffarnagar who were staunch defenders of the school. They, in the end, dominated the meeting. They accused the critics of seeking their own personal goals against the welfare of the school and of engaging in such despicable tactics as going from *mahallah* to *mahallah* to encourage the townsmen to stop their contributions for the students. They also accused them of spreading reports against the school in the newspapers—as, indeed, one extant item in a Meerut newspaper confirms. In it was reported a sermon given in the Jami' Masjid by Munshi 'Abdu'r-Razzaq, a member of the municipality and signatory of the circular, who claimed that Hajji 'Abid had severed his connection with the school and asked that the government intervene in the interests of reform.[64] The

63. Ibid., p. 15. The brothers were Zu'l-Faqar 'Ali and Fazlu'r-Rahman, who were *khalazad bha'i* or cousins. Mahmud Hasan was the former's son, and his brother taught briefly at Deoband at a different time. The brother of 'Azizu'r-Rahman, the school's first *mufti*, taught at the school on a voluntary basis.

64. Government of India, *Selections from the Vernacular Newspapers Published in the Punjab, North Western Provinces, Oudh, and the Central Provinces*, 1894, p. 513.

defenders accused the critics of circulating a false announcement in Saharanpur that Rashid Ahmad had resigned and that contributions should now be sent to ʿAbdu'r-Razzaq as the new *muhtamim.* When this failed, the critics had distributed an announcement entitled "For the Attention of the Government," a scurrilous attack that claimed that the school educated students for religious warfare and drew students from the frontier particularly for this purpose.

The school's defenders answered these charges of resignations, nepotism, and disloyalty. They were quick to emphasize the influence of Rashid Ahmad and said of ʿAbid Husain, as Muhammad Qasim had said twenty years earlier, "He cannot leave us; nor we, him."[65] Muhyi'd-Din Muradabadi, an important supporter of the school, argued that the familial links among the school's members were a virtue, and stressed that members were "united and the same sort of people." He emphasized that appointments were made by the whole council, and that the qualifications of a teacher like Mahmud Hasan, the son of a council member, were outstanding. He cited the important precedent of the Prophet, who did not hesitate to appoint his own relatives.

Maulana Zu'l-Faqar ʿAli in particular addressed himself to the charge of disloyalty. He declared that as a "salt-eater" of the government, he personally took responsibility for the school's loyalty. The British district collector was invited to the school to confirm its integrity. He did come, and offered an Urdu speech in its praise.[66] A retired Hindu government servant, Janab Babu Raja Lal, was asked to investigate the school. He worked for several months, making inquiries in Nanautah, Rampur, and elsewhere. In conclusion he denied the critics' claims, and in particular praised the fine students and Zu'l-Faqar ʿAli, a man who, he pointed

65. Muḥyi'd-Dīn, *Taẕkırah-yi 1312*, pp. 36-37 and 11. They pointed to two issues that particularly revealed Rashid Ahmad's influence: his opposition to the appointment of an official to supervise the collection of pledges and of an inspector of the branch *madrasahs*; and his opposition to the introduction of medical studies.

66. Ibid., p. 43.

out, had been honored at the Queen's darbar with chair and robe of honor. Local newspapers reported these two presumably objective investigations and concluded that the charges of the "malcontents" had been finally laid to rest.[67]

Meanwhile, supporters of the school hastened to testify to their confidence in the school's administration. Their letters reveal the wide range of support the school now had. The association formed in Hyderabad to raise funds, consisting of princely employees, a publisher of religious books, and a religious teacher, used this occasion to declare its support for the school's administration and to send an additional contribution. Fifteen contributors from Bijnor sent a petition of support. A head *maulawi* in a government school in Banda wrote an appreciation of the school. High officials from the state of Bhopal, including a *wakil* at the high court and a city judge (*munsif*) who was from Deoband, added their support. Forty-seven contributors wrote from the *qasbah* Tanda, in Oudh, where most of them were posted in connection with government service.[68] Other letters came from a *wakil* in Jaunpur and the deputy collector of Eta.

This serious a dispute could not be resolved by a simple personal act like that of Muhammad Qasim's in 1875. Nor, moreover, did the council members propose arbitration or compromise with their opponents. They unilaterally rallied support for themselves. In addition to the testimonials from the impartial Hindu and British officials as well as from the loyal donors, they summoned four of the most influential figures associated with the school to render a final opinion. They were Rashid Ahmad, *sarparast*; the Nawwab of Chhatari, landlord and philanthropist; Shaikh Basharat ʿAli, a former deputy collector; and Maulawi Muhammad Ismaʿil, the successor of the revered Maulana Muzaffar Husain Kandhlawi. The great *sarparast*, the influential landholder and benefactor, and the representatives of the gov-

67. Government of India, *Selections*, 1895. The *Mihr-i Nimruz* of Bijnor on February 21, 1895, pp. 113-14 and the *Akbar-i ʿAlam* of Meerut on March 5, 1895, p. 138; both were enthusiastic in their defense of the school.

68. Muhyi'd-Dīn, *Tażkirah-yi 1312*, p. 31.

ernment bureaucracy and Sufi piety, respectively, together inspected the school's finances and records and asserted emphatically that all was in excellent order.

Then Rashid Ahmad, with the agreement of the council, expanded its membership. The six new members were all from outside Deoband and all were known for their learning.[69] The "respectable people" of the city who had sought places were thus defeated. The council also appointed a new *muhtamim* to replace Maulana Munir Nanautawi. The proceedings reported that he had resigned because of his brother Ahsan's death, but, in fact, he had never been a strong administrator. Maulana Hafiz Ahmad, Muhammad Qasim's son, took his place, there to remain for forty years. He was, at times, a figure of controversy because of his unwillingness to jeopardize the school's well-being by political involvement, but he was, unquestionably, a strong and effective administrator. Moreover, his position as the son of the founder of the school was of great importance in establishing his claim to authority.

When the controversy was resolved, the school held its annual prize distribution and convocation, for the first time, not in the Jami' Masjid of the town but in the school itself. The people of the town were invited on the day before the ceremonies for special speeches. Zu'l-Faqar 'Ali and Hajji 'Abid himself presided. And the ceremonies closed with prayers for the wealth and spiritual well-being of the people of the town of Deoband.[70]

69. Two of the new members were involved in religious education: Maulana Amir Ahmad Hasan Amrohawi, a beloved disciple of Muhammad Qasim and a teacher at an affiliated school, the Madrasah-yi Islamiyyah; and Maulana Qazi Muhyi'd-Din, a *ra'is* and an outspoken supporter of the school during its troubles and director of a religious school in Moradabad. Two, although trained in religion, were in the service of estates: Maulana Muhammad 'Abdu'l-Haqq Purqazi, a *wakīl* in Rotlam; and Maulawi Shah Ahmad Sa'd, a *ra'is* of Ambahtah employed in Malirkotlah. Two were associates of Rashid Ahmad; Maulana Mazhar Husain Gangohi and Maulawi Hakim Muhammad Isma'il Gangohi, the latter resident in Bombay.

70. Muḥammad Ṭayyib Qāsimī, *Dē'ōband kī Ṣad Sālah Zindagī*, pp. 102-103.

The dispute had been more ideological than personal. There were, to be sure, a cluster of relatives on each side. And personal ties certainly played a part in shaping the loyalties of some. One supporter of the administration, for example, simply wrote, "What can I say, [Rashid Ahmad] is my *murshid* (Sufi preceptor) and guide."[71] But such ties did not wholly account for people's allegiances, and some participants explicitly denied its importance. An official from Bhopal mocked the dissidents for sending their announcement to Fazl-i Haqq's brother, "because they assumed that he would be in opposition. . . . He is not such a man."[72] Place of origin did not define the two sides, since many residents of the town supported the administration. Nor did social differences, since both groups were composed of respectable people, largely *shaikh*, many of them associated with government and educated in religious studies.

Each side was, however, united by a specific position. The opponents of the administration were not committed to the school's bureaucratic organization and its concommitant broad network of support. Ironically, they, who accused the administration of nepotism, in fact wanted to make the school parochial by putting its control in the hands of townsmen rather than in those of the far-flung contributors and councilors. Most wanted a share in a successful enterprise without understanding the basis of its success.[73] Some few, like Hajji ʿAbid with his proposal to eliminate most of the staff, felt that a modest, old-fashioned school was sufficient for the town.

The dissidents, moreover, seem not to have subscribed to the scripturalist reform that defined the teachings of the school.[74] A former revenue official, sometime *tahsildar* in

71. Muḥyi'd-Dīn, *Tazkirah-yi 1312*, p. 22.
72. Ibid., p. 24.
73. Ibid., p. 12. According to Muhyi'd-Din, the council had restored the salary of the recalcitrant teacher in 1892. The townsmen then concluded that the council was susceptible to pressure. At that point fifty of them had made requests for membership.
74. One supporter claimed that they actually subscribed to the rival religious orientations of the day. He wrote a "Mahabharata," whose high-

Deoband wrote, "I got the announcement [of the meeting]; I suppose, because I am of their *qaum*. I am; and I am well acquainted with all the gentlemen and *shaikhs* of Deoband. And I don't know who the people are who signed it! Look at them—"Deputy," "Babu," "Municipality,"—not such as are involved in the work of God and the Prophet. Let them give their age, occupation, and whether they fast and pray. I recognized the first two names. I think one of them is some relation of mine. The other carried a *ta'ziyah* in the Muharram celebration."[75] Even Hajji 'Abid, however beloved, was less committed to reform than the other Deobandis. Although he had been influenced by Imdadu'llah to give up practices of extreme mortification and to be faithful to his religious duties,[76] he never took the active stance of some of the others. His resignation on this occasion, for example, was motivated by his lack of interest in the reformist cause of adherence to the judicial opinions of the 'ulama instead of the use of government courts.

Those who supported the administration favored a form of organization that deemphasized purely local ties in favor of the separate unity and identity of the whole group of Deobandis, whatever their geographic origin. At the same time, they fostered a style of Islam that preferred universal practices and beliefs to local cults and customs. In so doing, they were inspired by a belief in continuing divine sanction to their work,[77] as revealed by visions and confirmed by

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light was an Urdu verse, translated as follows:

> One will call following the four *imams* ill
> Another toward the leaders of *bid'at* incline will
> Another imitates *nechari* heart and soul
> Another thinks that worldly things are all.
> [Ibid., pp. 36-37.]

75. Ibid., p. 28.

76. Manāẓir Aḥsan Gīlānī, *Sawāniḥ-i Qāsimī*, I, 239.

77. Thus, at the time of the crisis of 1895 Rashid Ahmad reported that he had three times received the same illumination that the *madrasah* would prosper in the hands of Hafiz Ahmad. Moreover, during a meeting to discuss the crisis, Rashid Ahmad had been inspired with the knowledge that the opponents would fail. Anwāru'l-Ḥasan, *Mubashshirāt-i Dāru'l-'Ulūm*, p. 18. Similarly, when Nawwab Mahmud 'Ali Khan of Chhatari was leaving Mecca, he was instructed by Hajji Imdadu'llah not to oppose

their concrete achievements.[78] Against such success the opposition could make little headway.

The Spread of Deobandi Madrasahs

The success of the school was measured not only by events at the mother school but by the spread of Deobandi teachings through similar schools. The ʿulama of Deoband early tried to establish a system of branch schools that, following the pattern of British universities with their affiliating colleges, were to be subject to control of both curriculum and administration. The ʿulama were familiar with examples of such institutions set up in India pursuant to the Wood Dispatch of 1854, and they, in turn, set up a somewhat similar system of education. They founded many schools, particularly in the Doab and Rohilkhand, with the common goal of the propagation of reformed religious knowledge and the training of young men for professional religious careers. The schools often submitted their records to Deoband for inspection, sought its approval of major decisions, and received its ʿulama as both external examiners and distinguished visitors. They were never formally and fully integrated into a single educational system, largely because personal ties were so effective in maintaining contacts. A proposal to appoint an inspector of schools in the British style was considered from time to time, but simply deemed unnecessary. The locations of Deobandi schools established by about 1880 are shown on Map 4.

In their first dozen years or so, the Deobandi proceedings included discussions of many of these schools, ranging in administration from one at Thanah Bhawan, whose staff for a time was even paid from Deoband, to one at Lucknow

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Rashid Ahmad. He was astonished, since at that point there was no thought of his going to Deoband, let alone of any controversy. Shortly thereafter the great dispute in which he was to play an important role did indeed break out. Ashraf ʿAlī Thānawī, *Karāmāt-i Imdādiyyah* (Deoband, n.d.), p. 72.

78. Muḥammad Ṭayyib Qāsimī, *Dē'ōband kī Ṣad Sālah Zindagī*, p. 25.

4. Schools with Ties to Deoband by 1880

that was "like Deoband."[79] Many of these smaller schools were the work of a single patron in cooperation with a Deoband graduate. As such they often proved ephemeral. The school at Thanah Bhawan, for example, was the special project of Hafiz ʿAbdu'r-Razzaq, who contributed thirty rupees each month to pay the salaries of the staff of three. By 1877 the school boasted an enrollment of twenty-nine Arab students, thirty-nine Persian students, and fifteen students of Qur'an, and hoped, therefore, that it would reestablish the town's sometime reputation for learning. Shortly thereafter, however, the school was reported to be in decline.[80] Among other schools was one founded in Kairana, district Muzaffarnagar, by Hajji Shihabu'd-Din, recently returned from Mecca, and the other chief teacher, a graduate of Deoband.[81] In Galaothi, in district Bulandshahar, Munshi Sayyid Mihrban ʿAli, a wealthy patron of various good works, sponsored a school staffed by Deobandi graduates.[82] Maulana Fakhru'l-Hasan Gangohi, a disciple of Rashid Ahmad, established a school in Nagina in Bijnor. Some of the distinguished *pirzadagan* of Ambahtah, successors to great Sufi saints, supported a large school founded there in 1877.[83] Other early schools included ones in Danpur, Roorkee, and Khurjah, and in the larger cities of Meerut and Muzaffarnagar.[84]

Some of the schools had administrations modeled on the mother school. Muhammad Qasim himself laid the foundation of the Madrasah-yi Shahi in Moradabad, and set its principles of organization.[85] The school, like Deoband, prided itself on having no property or fixed income, and it cher-

79. Dāru'l-ʿUlūm Dē'ōband, *Rū-dād-i Sālānah 1297* (1879/80), p. 64.
80. Ibid., *1291* (1874/5), pp. 55-56; *1293* (1876/7), pp. 69-70.
81. Ibid., *1294* (1877/8), p. 60.
82. Ibid., *1293* (1876/7), p. 36; *1294* (1877/8), p. 62; *1297* (1879/80), p. 62.
83. Ibid., *1293* (1876/7), p. 36; *1294* (1877/8), p. 62.
84. Ibid., *1293* (1876/7), p. 36; *1294* (1877/8), p. 38; *1297* (1879/80), p. 63.
85. Muḥammad Miyāṅ, *ʿUlamā'-yi Hind*, p. 71. Maulana Ghalib ʿAli included it with the schools founded at Deoband and Saharanpur as those inspired by *ilhamat*.

ished the fact that its first contributor had been a poor water carrier.[86] Its staff included Maulana Sayyid Hasan Amrohawi, Muhammad Qasim's dearest student.[87] It also included the former chief teacher of a *madrasah* in Delhi and the former *qazi* of the princely state of Bhopal. Another successful school was that of the town of Amrohah, founded when Sayyid Hasan Amrohawi, with the blessings of Hajji Imdadu'llah, left his post in Moradabad to shift there. He reorganized the Arabic *madrasah* in the town's chief mosque, broadened its teaching, expanded its enrollment, and created an administration with councils composed of sympathetic members of the town and distinguished ʿulama.[88]

The largest and most successful of the schools linked to Deoband was the Mazahir-i ʿUlum in Saharanpur, which in size and influence was to be second only to Deoband itself in the entire subcontinent.[89] Founded only six months after Deoband, it explicitly modeled itself on the nearby school. Saharanpur was only twenty miles from Deoband, but the town was sufficiently large and sufficiently interested in religious causes to sustain its own institution.[90] Its

86. *al-Balāgh, Taʿlīmī Nambar* (Bombay, December-January 1374/1954-5), pp. 234-37. Hereafter cited as *al-Balāgh.*

87. Muftī ʿAzīzu'r-Raḥmān, *Tazkirah-yi Mushā'ikh-ı Dē'ōband* (Bijnor, 1958), pp. 310-13.

88. *al-Balāgh*, pp. 238-43. Sayyid Hasan was followed by a disciple of Rashid Ahmad, then by his own son. The school has been associated with the Tabligh movement of Muhammad Ilyas, (see note 105 below); and has been instrumental in the spread of reform, particularly by the dispensation of *fatawa*. There are currently some three hundred students, most living in boarding houses.

89. Sources for the history of the Saharanpur school include its own printed proceedings. Available to me at the school were those for the years 1286-1288 (1869-1872); 1293-1296 (1876-1879); 1298-1299 (1880-1882); 1317 (1899/1900); 1318 (1900/1); and 1320 (1902/3). Also useful are a history written about 1917 by the current *shaikhu'l-hadis*, Muḥammad Zakariyā, *Tārīkh-i Maẓāhir* (Saharanpur, 1973); and the issue of *al-Balāgh* cited above, pp. 234-37. I visited the school in April 1970 and interviewed the school's venerable director, Maulana Asadu'llah, and a teacher, Maulana ʿAbdu'l-Malik, a B.Sc. in chemistry. The latter particularly stressed the similarity among Deobandi schools: "Deoband is the elder brother and we are the younger."

90. The Saharanpur school did not seek to compete with Deoband and, at its foundation, set the formal rule that no student could transfer from Deoband without permission from that school.

residents, in fact, not only supported this school, but in the 1860s and 1870s constructed an ʿIdgah and a Jamiʿ Masjid as well. The founders were close associates of those at Deoband. Maulana Ahmad ʿAli Saharanpuri, the great *hadis* scholar and publisher who had taught many of the Deobandis in Delhi, was the first *sarparast*. Maulana Muhammad Mazhar Nanautawi, a student at Delhi College before the Mutiny and a *khalifah* of Rashid Ahmad,[91] left government service to be the school's first *hadis* teacher, later its principal.[92] The personnel of the two schools were linked by family, by common experience, and by continuing cooperation.[93]

Leading Deobandis contributed to the funds of the school, presided at prize distributions, and gave examinations. They used the examinations, in particular, as an opportunity to influence this and other schools. In 1880, for example, Rashid Ahmad as examiner singled out for reproof a class that did badly in *hadis* because too much time had been spent on rational studies like philosophy. He enjoined the *muhtamim* to see that students devoted themselves to *hadis* and *fiqh*, for their study "was the goal of founding these *madrasahs* and nothing else."[94] Shortly thereafter, upon the death of Maulana Ahmad ʿAli,[95] Rashid Ahmad became *sarparast* of the school. He had great influence on staff appointments at the Deobandi schools. In 1869, for example, at his direction, his disciple Maulana Khalil Ahmad Ambahtawi, a relative of the Nanautah family and a student of both Deoband and the Mazahir, left his post at Deoband

91. ʿAzīzu'r-Raḥmān, *Tazkirah-yi Mushā'ikh-i Dē'ōband*, p. 163. He was older than Rashid Ahmad, but Hajji Imdadu'llah, from whom he sought initiation, referred him to either Muhammad Qasim or Rashid Ahmad. He turned to Muhammad Qasim, who in turn directed him to go to Rashid Ahmad. See also Ẓuhūru'l-Ḥasan, *Arwāḥ-i Ṣalāṣah*, p. 325.

92. Muḥammad Ayyūb Qādirī, *Muḥammad Aḥsan Nānautawī*, p. 154.

93. Manāẓir Aḥsan Gīlānī, *Sawāniḥ-i Qāsimī*, II, 254. For example, Maulana Zuhuru'l-Haqq, son of Maulana Fazlu'l-Haqq, a member of Deoband's council, taught at the Mazahir.

94. Muḥammad Zakariyā, *Tārīkh-i Maẓāhir*, pp. 46-47.

95. Dāru'l-ʿUlūm Dē'ōband, *Naql-i Kitāb*, describing events of 1314 (1896/7), pp. 1-2.

to become principal at the Mazahir. His place at Deoband was then taken by Maulana ʿAbdu'l-ʿAli of the Madrasah-yi Shahi in Moradabad. Such shifts illustrate the close connections among all these schools.[96]

The administrative framework of the Mazahir-i ʿUlum was basically like that of Deoband. It had a professional staff, operated as a distinct institution with such buildings as a boarding house and library, and offered a fixed curriculum upon which students were tested and rewarded.[97] The school was supported by popular contributions from the same kind of people as those who supported Deoband, largely those engaged in government service, trade, religious occupations, and landholding.[98] There was support outside the city, for reports of annual meetings soon described the attendance of donors from the countryside. However, the responsibility of people of the city for the school was central, more marked here, in fact, than in Deoband. To finance the costs of the annual meeting, for example, a levy of two paisa was exacted on each Muslim house.[99] The main channel for solicitation was the *baradari* or kin groupings of the city, particularly those of the *shaikhs*, who often contributed jointly on occasions like weddings. In return for the town's support there was a special emphasis on teaching local boys, whose admission was *pro forma*. Another indication of the parochial base of the school was its more consistent adherence to family connections in making appointments. On at least half a dozen occasions in the first thirty years of the school's history, replacements of personnel were family members: when the chief teacher died his son replaced him; when the treasurer died the job passed to his son-in-law; when a teacher was ill, he asked

96. Ẓuhūru'l-Ḥasan, *Arwāḥ-i Ṣalāṣah*, pp. 492-94.
97. Muḥammad Zakariyā, *Tārīkh-i Maẓāhir*, p. 111.
98. Ibid., pp. 15-17. Of forty-six who gave in the first year, about a third were in government and princely service; a third in trade; somewhat less than a fourth, men with religious titles; and a handful identified only as respectable people. Only four were from outside the city, among them the illustrious benefactor Shaikh Ilahi Baksh, a merchant of Meerut. Soon to join the rolls was Nawwab Mahmud ʿAli Khan of Chhatari, the patron of many religious schools.
99. Ibid., p. 52.

that his son be appointed in his stead; at Maulana Zu'l-Faqar 'Ali's death, it seemed obvious that his son Mahmudu'l-Hasan take his place.[100] No doubt here, as at Deoband, such considerations could be an additional strength if personal achievement was also weighed in selecting personnel.

In 1902 a dispute broke out that indicated some characteristics of the relations among the personnel and between them and the people of Saharanpur. The dispute, like the one at Deoband, was basically one between the religious dignitaries who formed the school's council and certain notables of the city. Here, however, in keeping with the closer links of the school to the city, some members of the governing council joined the opponents. Moreover, the method of resolution was one of compromise, achieved by the impartial intervention of an arbitration committee—in contrast to the Deobandi settlement, which had been unilaterally achieved by a show of strength by the council. The opponents of the administration at Saharanpur initiated the dispute by calling for the expulsion of Khalil Ahmad, the new principal, and of Rashid Ahmad, the *sarparast*.[101] A rump meeting of the council actually voted to expel Khalil Ahmad from the school.[102] He followed the direction of his *shaikh*, Rashid Ahmad, and resolutely stayed on. The opponents then went to local officials to raise, once again, the red herring that Rashid Ahmad was a rebel. Supporters of the administration complained to the same officials that the opponents were disturbing the peace. In the end, both sides agreed to an arbitration committee composed of three local Muslim officials: the deputy magistrate, an honorary magistrate, and an inspector. The collector himself gave his final approval to the settlement.

The committee concluded that the charge of the opponents was invalid and that Khalil Ahmad had been wrongly

100. Ibid., pp. 57, 80-81, 98, 112, 134.

101. Muḥammad 'Āshiq Ilāhī Mīraṭhī, *Tazkiratu'l-Khalīl* (Saharanpur, n.d.) pp. 40-42, 201-11.

102. It appears from the supplement to the proceedings of 1320/1902-3 that the five people who so voted simply left the school once the crisis was resolved.

expelled from the school. His position now vindicated, he was to stay on at the school some thirty-one years, a pillar of its administration and teaching. However, the committee did agree to request the resignation of Rashid Ahmad, an old man in his final year of life. In his stead they placed a triumvirate of his most devoted associates: Maulana Zu'l-Faqar ʿAli, Deputy Inspector of Schools and a founder of Deoband; Maulana Ashraf ʿAli Thanawi, a graduate of Deoband and *khalifah* of Rashid Ahmad; and Maulana ʿAbdu'r-Rahim Raipuri, also a *khalifah* and a Naqshbandi *pir* himself. These three were to have ultimate responsibility for the school, and the *muhtamim* was to act only with their written permission. The opponents and other civic leaders were also given some responsibility in making general administrative decisions and in fund raising. The Saharanpur school, as evident in the source of financing, the familial basis of employment, and now the method and context of the settlement, did have more of a local character than Deoband.

There were other crises in the early history of the Mazahir-i ʿUlum: expulsion of a teacher who spent his time participating in the very ceremonies that the reformers opposed; disruption by unruly students who protested the prize distribution; defection of a Bengali student who set up as a holy man and harassed the school; and demands of a group of audacious students at the end of the century who wanted student participation in running the school. They ultimately left, and thus "cleansed" the school.[103]

The school, however, flourished, teaching a hundred and fifty to two hundred students each year, of whom between a third and a half studied Arabic, the rest, Persian and Qur'an.[104] The school clearly benefited from its formal organization of staff, finances, and administration, supplemented by its strong local base of support. In part because of its more parochial style, it did not play the role in politics that Deoband did. Instead, the characteristic movement of the school in this century was not political but proselyti-

103. Muḥammad Zakariyā, *Tārīkh-i Maẕāhir*, pp. 6, 56, 94-95.
104. Muḥammad ʿĀshiq Ilāhī, *Taẕkiratu'l-Khalīl*, pp. 250-51.

cal.[105] The Mazahir also came to be considered less intellectual and more Sufi in orientation than Deoband. Nonetheless, whatever differences in religious and administrative emphasis, the school defined itself as Deobandi.

The number of such schools continued to grow. The locations of many of the Deobandi schools founded between roughly 1880 and 1900 are shown on Map 5. One reason for the spread of these schools, evident in the history of the Mazahir, was the cooperation among graduates of Deoband. Such cooperation was responsible, for example, for the foundation of the Madrasah-yi Aminiyyah in Delhi at the end of the century.[106] The founder, Maulana Aminu'd-Din, was able to enlist the services of many of his fellow students at the school in joining the staff and in soliciting support. Maulana Anwar Shah Kashmiri, later the principal of Deoband, left a government post in Bijnor to serve as the first principal of the new school. Maulana Kifayatu'llah resigned a teaching post at the Madrasah-yi ʿAinu'l-ʿIlm in Shahjahanpur to become the school's *mufti* and teacher of *hadis*. Maulana Ziya'u'l-Haqq, yet another graduate of the school, joined the staff as second teacher, and stayed on for some fifty-eight years until his death. The staffs of Deoband, of the Mazahir-i ʿUlum, and, thanks to Maulana Habibu'r-Rahman, of the Madrasah-yi ʿAliyah of Fatehpur, all helped the school in its early years. Maulana Manfaʿat ʿAli, then a teacher at Deoband, made a particularly important contribution by using his influence to win the support of traders of Delhi who were able to provide the school with both funds and administrative aid.[107] Thus

105. For this movement see M. Anwarul Haq, *The Faith Movement of Mawlana Muhammad Ilyas* (London, 1972).

106. *al-Balāgh*, pp. 97, 101-107, 170-71, 173-74, 201, 210, 281-96.

107. The school continued to be a center for fostering close links among the schools. In 1904 Kifayatu'llah initiated a Movement for the Union of Madrasahs and arranged for his students to receive their turbans at the great *dastarbandi* ceremony at Deoband in 1328/1909-10. The teachers of the school were also active in political movements. The first office of the Jamiʿat-i ʿUlama-yi Hind was at the school. But "never forgetting their fundamental purpose, they trained many students who in turn founded *madrasahs* from Swat to Rangoon." The school suffered severely at the time of Partition and currently has eight teachers and runs a children's *maktab*. *al-Balāgh*, p. 210.

5. Additional schools with Ties to Deoband by the End of the Century

the bonds of common schooling and school of thought joined those of kin and Sufi brotherhood to define relations among these ʿulama.

These bonds encompassed ʿulama from many diverse regions. As the table (p. 110-11), prepared for the centennial celebration of the school, indicates, the students from Deoband came from a widespread area. Most striking were the number from distant Bengal, fully as many as from the United Provinces itself. The same diversity of geographic origin was apparent at the Saharanpur school. In 1886, twenty years after its founding, the school counted one hundred and sixty who had completed the full Arabic course, of whom about one-quarter were from Saharanpur and the nearby area; a total of one-third from the United Provinces; another third from the Punjab; and almost a third from Bengal.[108] Among the most distinguished ʿulama trained in Saharanpur were people from places as distant as Aurangabad, Surat, Peshawar, and Aden.[109]

There were problems in teaching students of such diversity. "The Afghans," the Deobandi proceedings reported, were "quick-tempered and angry." In 1879, the school issued a general proclamation that any rowdy student—and Afghans were meant—would be expelled from the school. Indeed, at one point there were complaints of Afghans shooting in the railway station,[110] and at another the *tahsildar* of Deoband forbad all Afghans to come within his jurisdiction.[111] Opponents of the school cited the presence of the *wilayatis* as evidence of political designs, but in fact their presence was mainly a source of embarrassment. Ultimately, of course, the regional diversity of the student body was a great strength in spreading the reformist work of the school. Students from Bengal, the frontier, or Madras arrived with little religious training and, often, scant knowledge of Urdu. Such teachers as Khalil Ahmad in

108. Muḥammad Zakariyā, *Tārīkh-i Maẓāhir*, p. 49.

109. Muḥammad ʿĀshiq Ilāhī, *Tazkiratu'l-Khalīl*, pp. 230-31.

110. Government of India, *Selections*, 1895, p. 178. The paper cited is the *Anis-i Hind* of March 30.

111. Dāru'l-ʿUlūm Dē'ōband, *Naql-i Kitāb*, pp. 35-50.

Saharanpur were noted for their great concern for such students, and he personally supervised the instruction of Bengalis "whose pronunciation was not clear."[112] When such students left, they carried with them a commitment to reformed religious practices, knowledge of a common language, and bonds of affection and common purpose with their teachers and fellow students.

The ʿulama and their schools were Deobandi. Increasingly, the name of Deoband came to represent a distinct style, a *maslak*, of Indian Islam. By roughly 1880 there were over a dozen schools that identified themselves as Deobandi; by the end of the century, at least three times that many, some in places as distant as Chittagong, Madras, and Peshawar. By the celebration of the school's centennial in 1967, there were said to be 8,934 Deobandi schools. The Saharanpur annual report of 1904 called these schools the deputies, the *na'ib*, of the Prophet, and Maulana Mahmudu'l-Hasan justified such a statement: "In Hindustan previously knowledge was so scarce . . . that one could scarcely find someone to read the funeral prayers. And today knowledge is so widespread that every city, nay every *qasbah*, indeed probably every village, has its own *maulawi* there."[113] Such schools came to be the characteristic institution of all the major groups of Muslim thinkers in the late nineteenth century.

The ʿulama in India had long been involved in education, but that education was gradually shifting in its organization, goals, and even content. The ʿulama no longer instructed an entire educated class of princes, bureaucrats, and literati. They no longer held a monopoly on education, but shared the field with government and private institutions that offered an alternate syllabus. They did, however, find a new popular basis of support, and assimilated to their own ends the modern organizational style of the new

112. Muḥammad ʿĀshiq Ilāhī, *Tazkiratu'l-Khalīl*, p. 231. Many would have been of the Urdu-speaking Bengali *ashraf*, who distinguish themselves from humble Muslims by the use of Urdu and by the claim of foreign descent. They thus knew Urdu, but presumably not the standard Urdu of upper India.

113. Muḥammad Zakariyā, *Tārīkh-i Maẓāhir*, p. 119.

educational institutions. In so doing they adhered to a single goal: the rigorous training in religious classics of ʿulama who would spread instruction in Islamic norms and beliefs. By shaping standards of piety and belief for substantial numbers of Muslims, these ʿulama wielded an influence significant and persistent.

IV

The Style of Religious Leadership, I: *Muftis* and *Shaikhs*

> Muhammad Ya'qub was not only learned in the revealed and rational sciences, but he was a sojourner on the mystic path. . . . He was not only a doctor for spiritual ills, but for bodily ills as well. All in his family, young and old, considered him their elder. Indeed, not only his family, but the entire city accepted the influence of his dignity and majesty. . . . He was a man of great perfections and a recipient of revelations. He had hundreds of disciples and pupils.[1]

THE 'ulama as such had no formal role in the British imperial state, but they found wide scope for guiding Muslims in civil and religious matters. They acted both as *muftis* to determine appropriate legal precedents and as Sufi *shaikhs* to offer spiritual guidance to chosen disciples. Some provided charms and amulets; some undertook medical cures in the *yunani* tradition. In addition, as 'ulama have always done, they fulfilled certain public roles defined by the Islamic tradition, notably as preachers and leaders of congregational prayer, as debators with opponents, and as teachers of the young. The Deobandis were notably successful in playing this multifaceted role. Indeed, given the evidence of their numbers and effectiveness, many simply concluded that the town of Deoband had a population of cooperative *jinn*. Muhammad Qasim was judged by his followers to be among the highest order of men, close to the angels. Some ranked Rashid Ahmad as both the *qutb* of the

1. Ḥakīm Amīr Aḥmad Nanautawī, Introduction to *Maktūbāt-i Ya qūbī wa Bayāẓ-i Ya qūbī* by Muḥammad Ya'qūb Nānautawī (Thanah Bhawan, n.d.), p. 13.

age—the great *shaikh* around whom the world revolved—and as the *mujaddid* as well, the renewer who in every century calls people back to the Law.[2]

The effectiveness of the Deobandis was judged to rest in their synthesis of the two main streams of the Islamic tradition, that of intellectual learning and that of spiritual experience. They themselves understood this unity of *shari at* (the Law) and *tariqat* (the Path) to be firmly within the bonds of Islamic orthodoxy, for they took the Law and the Path to be not opposed but complementary. They thus placed themselves in a line of thought—traceable most clearly to al-Ghazali (d. 1111)—that argued inevitable conflict over particular issues but not over the basic legitimacy of both styles of religious knowledge and practice. A religious person could emphasize either the Law or the Path, but he should understand both dimensions to be inherent in the religion.

The junction of the many aspects of the faith was not easy. "Among the ʿulama I have a bad name," once lamented Muhammad Qasim, "and among the Sufis I have the stain of *maulawiyyat*."[3] The leading Deobandis differed, in fact, in the skills they emphasized. Muhammad Yaʿqub was known as "our *majzub*," often so absorbed in spiritual matters that he appeared to blaspheme.[4] Rashid Ahmad, though a jurist, teacher of *hadis*, and a *shaikh*, was particularly distinguished as an administrator. Muhammad Qasim, who preferred not to deal with legal matters or lead prayers, was the greatest preacher and debater of this early group. ʿAbid Husain, of all the early Deobandis, was most the "holy man," distributing charms and amulets. The goal for all, however, was to follow both Law and Path.

The Deobandis were not alone in offering this style of composite leadership. Indeed it had been, as noted above, the norm for the great religious leaders in centuries past.

2. Ẓuhūru'l-Ḥasan Kāsōlī, ed., *Arwāḥ-i Ṣalāṣah* (Saharanpur, 1950), p. 240. Muḥammad ʿĀshiq Ilāhī Mīraṭhī, *Tażkiratu'r-Rashīd* (Meerut, n.d.), II, 18, 162-65.

3. Ẓuhūru'l-Ḥasan, *Arwāḥ-i Ṣalāṣah*, pp. 230-31. See also Manāẓir Aḥsan Gīlānī, *Sawāniḥ-i Qāsimī* (Deoband, 1955), I, 340.

4. Ẓuhūru'l-Ḥasan, *Arwāḥ-i Ṣalāṣah*, pp. 314-15.

In this period, in particular, the composite style was self-conscious and widespread, both among the ʿulama and, as in the case of the Chishti Nizamiyyah *shaikhs* of the Punjab, among some of those associated with the medieval shrines, as well. Both the Farangi Mahallis and the Barelwis made similar claims to espousing a "middle way."

What was unique about the Deobandis—beyond their successful institutional innovations—was the extent to which they insisted on a responsible, reformist interpretation of the faith on the part of their followers. It was not enough for a person who followed a Deobandi to turn to him—as he might to a *pir* or a *sajjadah nishin*—for intercession or miraculous intervention. The follower was expected to abandon suspect customs, to fulfill all religious obligations, and to submit himself to guidance in all aspects of his life. The Deobandis in their teachings encouraged comprehensiveness: they sought to teach all the Islamic sciences and to represent all the Sufi orders. They said that in this they followed Shah Waliyu'llah. Their move to consolidation was similar to his, but, unlike his, theirs emphasized popular reform of custom, not intellectual synthesis. Their followers judged the Deobandi *maslak* (or "way" of Sufi teaching) to be one that truly had as its foundation and goal obedience to the religious Law and, on that account, to be a program for their daily lives and a preparation for the receipt of God's grace—a solution to their problems of both world and of soul. The creation of individually responsible Muslims was at once a solution to personal concerns and to the continuation of the culture whatever political vicissitudes ensued.

Shariʿat

Legal Guidance: Ifta and Taqlid

The Deobandis thought of their fundamental role as that of *mufti*, giving advisory opinions on the Law. No single concern was more central to them than this quest for correct belief and practice in the light of the classical texts.

Like most Sunni Muslims, they followed a *mazhab* or school of law (here the Hanafi), each understood to be based on four sources: the Qur'an, the *sunnat* or practice of the Prophet as conveyed in *hadis*, analogical reasoning or *qiyas*, and consensus of the learned or *ijma'*.[5] In the formulations and commentaries on the law books of each school were to be found precedent and parallel for any decision a Muslim might make. By following a law school, the Deobandis represented the jurisprudential position of *taqlid* or conformity. This position distinguished them from some other groups of the period. A rival group of reformers, for example, the Ahl-i Hadis, were known as the *ghair-muqallid*, the nonconformists, because they eschewed *taqlid* in favor of the direct use of Qur'an and *hadis*. Similarly, the modernist writers, often apologetic in tone, denied not only the validity of the law schools but the *hadis* of the Prophet as well, so that they could speak of a readily adaptable "spirit of Islam" ascertained by their own reasoning about the faith. In contrast, Rashid Ahmad taught his followers to accept the word of 'ulama who based themselves firmly on the legal texts.

The Deobandis taught general adherence not only to the law schools, but to the Hanafi school alone. On some minor matters, like saying *bismi'llah*, in the name of God, before each chapter of the Qur'an when read in prayer, they were prepared to accept the practice of another school.[6] On another issue, one of concern to the 'ulama, Rashid Ahmad stretched a point to deem acceptable the Shafi'i decision that permitted recompense for teaching Qur'an and *hadis*. He defined the Shafi'i position as *fatwa*; the Hanafi position, more difficult to practice, he characterized as piety or *taqwa*.[7] In general, however, the Deobandis condemned interscholastic eclecticism, for, as Maulana Muhammad Ya'qub Nanautawi argued, it encouraged one to choose the easiest decision on each issue.[8] By insisting on the cen-

5. See Joseph Schacht, *The Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence* (Oxford, 1950).

6. Rashīd Aḥmad Gangōhī, *Fatāwā-yi Rashīdiyyah* (Moradabad, 1906), I, 39, 170.

7. Ibid., p. 9.

8. Muḥammad Ya'qūb, *Maktūbāt-i Ya'qūbī*, p. 6.

trality of a single classic law school, the Deobandis could most effectively set a common and certain standard for Muslims.

The Deobandis studied the fundamental sources of Qur'an and *hadis*; the texts of Abu Hanifa; and later compilations, commentaries, and compendia of decisions based on his work. In their interpretations, it was these later sources, the judgment of the *salaf*, their ancestors, that they followed. They in no case cited the public good or expediency to expand the limits of what was admissible.[9] All this is not to say, however, that they simply parroted responses to legal queries, nor that they found answers mechanically. As discussed above in relation to the text the *Hidayah*, students learned a variety of opinions on each point of law. Generally speaking, moreover, Islamic law offers a series of norms and a delineation of moral qualities that together define parameters within which the believer may act. In Hanafi thought, as an early Deobandi, Muhammad Ya'qub Nanautawi, explained, one ought to seek the essential meaning or *haqiqat* of an act in order to determine its propriety. He chose as example the custom of visiting graves. The Prophet had originally forbidden the practice until the new Muslims had forgotten their pre-Islamic behavior at graves; then he had permitted it, seeing in the practice a way of "rendering hearts gentle" and inspiring believers to think of eternity. Later, when false practices crept in, the 'ulama again forbad going to graves. The issue, then, was not visiting graves per se, but the context that had to be assessed.[10] Muhammad Qasim maintained that within the Law there were two kinds of injunctions: first, those whose inner meaning and outer form were revealed, as in the directions concerning *namaz*; second, those whose inner meaning was revealed but their outer form left to the be-

9. Muhammad Khalid Mas'ud, "Trends in the Interpretation of Islamic Law as Reflected in the Fatawa' Literature of Deoband School: A Study of the Attitudes of the 'Ulama' of Deoband to Certain Social Problems and Inventions" (M.A. Thesis, Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University, 1969), p. 80.

10. Muḥammad Ya'qūb, *Maktūbāt-i Ya'qūbī*, pp. 64-65, 86-87.

liever's discretion, for example in jihad.[11] The former could be followed readily; the latter, again, required discernment of the inner meaning. The Deobandis thus practiced *ijtihad*, individual reasoning, within the tradition of the school of law.[12] In so doing they exemplified to their followers the characteristic Islamic experience of humbly approximating, but never wholly fulfilling, the legal ideal.[13]

The early Deobandis in particular did not feel the need to lay bare the framework of their analysis in answers to their followers. Rashid Ahmad rarely cited works of *fiqh*, but on matters of controversy he would provide relevant citations of *hadis* or Qur'an. Often he gave his opinion without explanation.[14] In part this reflected the emphasis that the Deobandis placed on the position known as *taqlid-i shakhsi*: that each Muslim follow a single *'alim*, trusting him completely as his definitive guide to the Law. The Ahl-i Hadis opposed the Deobandis on this position on the grounds that optional matters should not be made required. The Deobandis answered that there were important precedents for making such a requirement in a time of *fitnah* or disorder like the present.[15] They explicitly taught their followers to adhere to the teachings of their chosen *'alim* above those of the Sufi of a particular order; and they warned the *'alim* of the seriousness of his possible errors because "they caused harm to other people."[16] Such a position clearly bolstered the position of the 'ulama. Rashid Ahmad taught his followers that they should follow the teachings of Shah 'Abdu'l-'Aziz and of Shah Muhammad

11. Manāẓir Aḥsan Gīlānī, *Sawāniḥ-i Qāsimī*, II, 26.

12. Muhammad Khalid Mas'ud, "Trends in the Interpretation of Islamic Law," especially pp. 26-27, 79.

13. Ira M. Lapidus, "Adulthood in Islam: Religious Maturity in the Islamic Tradition," *Daedalus*, Vol. 105, *Adulthood* (Spring 1976), 93-108.

14. Muhammad Khalid Mas'ud, "Trends in the Interpretation of Islamic Law," p. 71. Later Deobandis, no doubt as a result of controversy with other Muslims, provided extensive quotation from *fiqh* to bolster their positions.

15. Rashīd Aḥmad, *Fatāwā-yi Rashīdiyyah*, II, 9, 5, 95-98. They noted, for example, the standardization of the Qur'an to the language of the Quraish when its varied texts caused disputes.

16. Ibid., I, 5, 20.

Ishaq, "the teacher of all the 'ulama of Hindustan." "Do not quote *hadis* and *fiqh*, for from their study both the elite and common people of our day are deficient."[17] The *fatawa* themselves often instructed the questioner to "ask any *'alim*" or "learn from the *ahl-i haqq*."

A difference of opinion over the central role accorded to the 'ulama was one element in the debate between the Deobandis and the so-called modernists led by Sayyid Ahmad Khan. Muhammad Qasim and Sayyid Ahmad exchanged a series of letters on their respective jurisprudential positions published as the *Tasfiyatu'l-'Aqa'id*, the Cleansing of Beliefs.[18] In his letters Muhammad Qasim set forth the classical arguments in favor of *taqlid*, arguments honed to perfection over the centuries and enlivened by his spirited and self-confident tone. His premise in accepting the validity of the law schools was the assertion, self-evident to him, that the world had dramatically declined from the time of the Prophet and that there were simply no people alive today who were as skilled as had been the *imams* of the classical schools. To consult the learned of today, he suggested, would be like consulting a quack instead of a skilled doctor; to consider them learned would be like calling a monkey who had fallen into a pan of indigo a peacock. The 'ulama should study the classical legal compendia as the foundation of their interpretation.

Muhammad Qasim criticized Sayyid Ahmad because he did not adhere to this position. Thus he objected to the latter's use of *ijtihad* because he did not exercise it on the basis of the four accepted sources. He accused him of basing his interpretation on the premise that the "Word of God" and the "Work of God"—Sayyid Ahmad's own phrases—had to be identical. Thus, claimed Muhammad Qasim, he "stretched the Word of God to correspond to

17. Dāru'l-'Ulūm Dē'ōband, *Naql-i Kitāb-i Taḥrīrī-yi Jalsahā-yi Ahl-i Mashwarah*, entry for 1892 (?), pp. 93-95.

18. Muḥammad Qāsim Nānautawī and Sayyid Aḥmad Khān, *Taṣfiyatu'l-'Aqā'id* (Deoband, n.d.). Sections of this pamphlet have been translated by Peter Hardy in Aziz Ahmad and Gustav von Grunebaum, *Muslim Self-Statement in the Indo-Pakistan Subcontinent* (Wiesbaden, 1970), pp. 60-76.

his own vague reason."[19] Muhammad Qasim also objected to Sayyid Ahmad's attempts to introduce certain criteria of distinction among the injunctions of Qur'an and *hadis*, criteria such as the division of injunctions into worldly and religious ones. Muhammad Qasim not only deemed these criteria irrelevant in a comprehensive religion, but, returning to the context of the *shari'at*, he further argued that the only important distinctions were of what was required and suggested, approved and disapproved, distinctions already made and not subject to reconsideration. Thus he not only denied Sayyid Ahmad's point, but refused even to enter his frame of thought.

Similarly, when Sayyid Ahmad ingeniously insisted that obedience to the lawyers compromised the authority of the Prophet (*shirk fi'n-nubuwat*), Muhammad Qasim again refused to be distracted by novel distinctions, and refuted his argument by restating it in the terms of the *shari'at*, pointing out that the only relevant issue was the difference in degree of authority between the Prophet and the 'ulama, for both were alike in holding their authority on sufferance from God.

He concurred with Sayyid Ahmad to the extent that he agreed that the obligation to obey the Prophet was clearer, and that scholars and saints must prove their claim. But, he continued, that proof, though only supposition, was nonetheless proof. As one is able to judge the nature of friends and enemies, so one can judge whether a person is a great scholar or deficient, whether a person is obedient to God or follows his own desires. Those who are qualified are entrusted with eliciting the Law and citing sources, and although obedience to them is less mandatory than obedience to the Qur'an and *sunnat*, it is, nonetheless, required. Muhammad Qasim concluded with his reformist theme that *shirk*, polytheism, is committed not by following the 'ulama but by following false custom.

Throughout, Muhammad Qasim asserted the classic position that man cannot fathom the ways of God; man could

19. Muḥammad Qāsim and Sayyid Ahmad Khān, *Tasfiyatu'l 'Aqā'id*, p. 7.

not say, for example, that acts God enjoined were intrinsically good, those He forbad were bad, for all depended on the context provided them in the word of God. Muhammad Qasim insisted on man's dependence on God, and to Sayyid Ahmad's implication that man's acts were free, he asserted the Ash'arite theological position that man's acts derive from God, and are no more free than the pen in one's hand. Through fifteen elaborately argued points, Muhammad Qasim's arguments, Hanafi in law and Ash'ari in theology, were ones long familiar in Islam, and ones he used to bolster the authority of 'ulama like himself who knew the legal tradition. Implicit in Sayyid Ahmad's intellectual position, by contrast, was a diminution of the authority of such 'ulama.

The Deobandi intellectual and institutional style, despite opposition, proved popular. The Deobandis rapidly assumed a position of great authority through their pronouncement of *fatawa*. During the first decades of the school's existence, Muhammad Ya'qub and Rashid Ahmad were particularly distinguished as jurists. In 1893, when the burden of dealing with *fatawa* "from all over Hindustan" had become very heavy, the school moved to establish a separate *daru'l-ifta*, initially under the direction of Mufti 'Azizu'r-Rahman Naqshbandi Mujaddidi. Setting as their goal the creation of a collection of *fatawa* as definitive as the famous compilation of the Emperor Aurangzeb, the school maintained from 1911 a register of all its *fatawa* and regularly published volumes of decisions.[20] At the conclusion of its first century, the school counted a total of 269,215 *fatawa* that had been issued, and prided itself on having replied to the bulk of the questions on the very day they were received.[21]

In part, the motive for emphasizing the importance of the *fatawa* was an attempt to circumvent the British courts with their hybrid Anglo-Muhammedan law. Hence, in the area of Deoband itself, the 'ulama went far beyond the

20. Dāru'l-'Ulūm Dē'ōband, *Naql-i Kitāb*, pp. 83, 104.

21. Muḥammad Rafī, *Dāru'l-'Ulūm Dē'ōband kī Sair aur uskī Mukhtaṣar Tārīkh* (Delhi, 1916), p. 6.

issuance of *fatawa* that had no binding quality to set up a separate court under the control of Maulana Muhammad Qasim.[22] The Muslims of the town made a pact that in any matter involving two Muslims the issue would not be taken to the government court, but rather to their own court set up in the Chattah Masjid. There, it was claimed, matters that would have taken years were solved in minutes. The religious law was preserved. And respectable Muslims and their religion were saved from potential insult, for, in the government court, as one *'alim* discovered, "sometimes he could present the issue as it appeared in *fiqh* and the official would return the book and say we have no need for it."[23] Such offenses to people sensitive of their dignity were acutely felt. But the plan to circumvent the courts was only successful to a limited extent. Many Muslims preferred the British courts with their greater authority, and perhaps, possibilities for manipulation;[24] and local officials from Saharanpur brought pressure on the Deobandis to suspend their quasi-governmental proceedings.[25] The 'ulama continued, however, to discourage their followers from using the courts,[26] and through the advisory *fatawa* did guide many individual Muslims, even officials in their governmental duties.[27] Through the issuance of *fatawa*, more than through any other single means, the 'ulama of the school gained currency for their reformist beliefs.

The Fatawa: Their Domain and Reformist Content

The printed collections of *fatawa* of the late nineteenth century suggest that the influence of the 'ulama was primarily limited to matters of belief, ritual, and relations to other religious groups. Other *fatawa*, perhaps not printed

22. Muḥammad Ṭayyib Qāsimī, *Āzādī-yi Hindūstān kā Khāmōsh Rahnumā* (Deoband, 1957), p. 34.
23. Dāru'l-'Ulūm Dē'ōband, *Naql-i Kitāb*, p. 83.
24. Bernard Cohn, "From Indian Status to British Contract," *Journal of Economic History* 21 (December 1961), 613-18.
25. This is based on oral comments by current Deobandis. Nineteenth-century district records appear to be unavailable.
26. Muḥammad Ya'qūb, *Maktūbāt-i Ya'qūbī*, p. 122: "It is foolish to go to the Cutchery and get embroiled in the turmoil of legal cases."
27. Dāru'l-'Ulūm Dē'ōband, *Naql-i Kitāb*, p. 83.

because they applied to individual cases alone, were given on matters of family law and property. But, generally speaking, the *fatawa* reflect the fact that religious leaders had, willy-nilly, restricted the realm in which they gave guidance. The leaders and their followers did still hold the ideal of a community guided in all aspects of the Law. But, for the time, the ʿulama ignored such issues as those related to court procedure, conduct of state, and issues cognizable under British law. Rather they focused on belief and ritual, *ʿaqa'id* and *ʿibadat*, which they explored with remarkable depth and range. Indeed, in that sense the *fatawa* reflect not a narrowing of concerns but an expansion, for they treated issues earlier *fatawa* had not even considered.[28] Above all, they weighed customs and beliefs related to sufism, examining them and other issues in order to identify *bidʿat*, reprehensible innovation that was the antithesis of Prophetic tradition. They defined *bidʿat* specifically as any practice regarded as *ʿibadat* (ritual) that in fact was not reported from the tradition. Their concern with *bidʿat* was thus limited to a narrow but highly valued domain.[29] It was this choice of focus, coupled with a concern for identifying a scripturalist standard, that gave the Deobandi *fatawa* their special characteristics.

The collection of the *fatawa* of Rashid Ahmad Gangohi reveal the issues of religious concern that troubled the pious followers of these ʿulama. Any categorization of the topics covered in his pronouncements is necessarily crude, for a single *fatwa* could often illustrate at once a variety of issues concerning belief, practice, jurisprudential principles, and attitudes toward other religious groups.[30] However, approximately one-third of the *fatawa* did in fact deal with issues related to sufism: its importance; the primacy of the *shariʿat*; the role of the *shaikh*; and the legitimacy of prac-

28. A useful comparison could be made with the subjects covered in *Fatāwā-yi ʿĀlamgīrī*. For bibliography see A. S. Bazmee Ansari, "Fatāwā-yi ʿĀlamgīrī," *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2nd edition [hereafter *EI*²], vol. III.
29. Muhammad Khalid Masʿud, "Trends in the Interpretation of Islamic Law," p. 1.
30. This calculation is based on more than 300 *fatawa* in the first volume.

tices such as saying *zikr* aloud, *tasawwur-i shaikh* (conceiving of the image of the *shaikh*), pilgrimages to saints' graves, the celebration of *urs* (the death anniversary of the saints), and the recitation of the Fatihah. The Deobandis, in contrast to the contemporary Arabian Wahabbis and the Bengali Fara'izis, never sought to eliminate sufism, but rather to integrate it into an obedient religious life.

Many of the *fatawa* dealt with the basic required rituals of the faith. A full one-fifth of the whole were devoted to the correct performance of the canonical prayer, the most important and frequent of the Islamic religious duties. These *fatawa* dealt with such problems as the correct time of prayer, the manner of ablution, and the procedure of both requisite *namaz* and special prayers. They, too, reflected reformist concerns. For example, they forbad the funeral prayer to be read in either mosque or graveyard, and prohibited ceremonies on fixed days after a death.[31] Many of the *fatawa* on *namaz* treated differences in details of performance with the Ahl-i Hadis.[32] A handful of *fatawa* covered other ritual obligations such as fasting and hajj. About an equal number were concerned with the proper care and techniques of reading the Qur'an. The bulk of the remaining *fatawa* dealt with relations to other groups, including the Ahl-i Hadis, the so-called *bid'ati* Muslims, the Shi'ah, the Hindus, and the British rulers. The existence of such *fatawa* suggest the active religious debate characteristic of this period.

The *fatawa* clearly place the Deobandis in the reformist tradition of the pre-Mutiny reformers. Like them, they consistently sought to strip away local customs that unduly elevated the status of saints and prophets. The theoretical justification for this orientation was again an emphasis on *tauhid*, the singularity of God. The *fatawa*, like others of the Deobandis' writings, took up certain theological issues that had been long debated in the intellectual circles of

31. Rashīd Aḥmad, *Fatāwā-yi Rashīdiyyah,* I, 68, 107, 112, 135, 130. As explained on pp. 79, 107, and 139, the Fatihah could be read as a prayer, but not as a reading in the manner of the Shafi'i school and the followers of *hadis*. Rashid Ahmad recommended avoiding the practice completely.
32. Ibid., pp. 66, 133.

Delhi.[33] On the issue of *imkan-i nazir,* for example, they affirmed God's ability to create another world should he so desire; and on *imkan-i kizb,* His ability even to lie.[34] On the Prophet, they insisted that he did not share God's knowledge of the unknown (*ghaib*). Rashid Ahmad deemed this so important that he forbad his followers to accept as *imam* at prayer anyone who denied it.[35] He argued that the Prophet was superior to all else in creation, but was still a servant of God like all other men. "All creation is in relation to God as the potter to the pot," he wrote, "those of little understanding object to this and thus reduce the glory of God."[36] The Deobandis believed that they had a special understanding of the nature of God. This belief gave them a certain élan, a sense of uniqueness. This sense was enhanced, as we discuss below, by the fact that their position drew attacks from opponents who held their interpretation to be disrespectful to the Prophet and even to God himself.

The Deobandis became known for opposition to certain customs and practices, but, as in the case of the pre-Mutiny reformers, there was scope for disagreement among them. They tended to oppose the celebration of the Prophet's birthday, *mauludu'n-nabi,* for example, on the grounds that it encouraged the belief that a dead person was actually present; that it elevated the importance of a fixed day; and that it resembled practices of the Hindus. Under Rashid Ahmad's aegis, a group jointly signed a *fatwa* opposing the observance.[37] They published descriptions of dreams of the Prophet himself denying the legitimacy of a practice that was presumably in his honor.[38] The urgency of the Deobandis in questioning the celebration was the greater because its observance was spreading in the late nineteenth

33. Ibid., pp. 10, 21, 24, 35.
34. Ibid., pp. 46, 7, 188.
35. Ibid., II, 47-48; I, 83 argues that the Prophet's knowledge that A'isha was free of blame on a particular occasion was derived from revelation, not independent knowledge.
36. Ibid., I, 52.
37. Ibid., pp. 50, 89; 14.
38. Sayyid 'Abdu'l-Ḥayy, *Dihlī aur us kē Aṭrāf* (Lucknow, 1958), pp. 147-48.

century, fostered by other groups of ʿulama.[39] Nonetheless, Muhammad Qasim sanctioned participation for the elite who could observe the occasion without succumbing to its objectionable features.[40] Hajji Imdadu'llah actually joined in the elaborate celebration of the *maulud* in Mecca, although he approved of Rashid Ahmad's refusal to participate either at home or in the Hijaz.[41] However, all felt they shared an understanding of the correct attitude to the practice, and tended to conform publicly to opposition to the custom.

The *fatawa* in general reflected three underlying principles: to revive lapsed practices such as undertaking the hajj and permitting widows to remarry; second, to avoid fixed holidays like the *maulud* of the Prophet, the *ʿurs* of the saints, the fast of the twenty-fourth of Rajab, and the elaborate celebration of ʿId; and, third, to prevent optional practices being made obligatory—for example, the reading of certain passages in supererogatory prayers or the distribution of sweets upon the completion of the reading of the Qur'an.[42] On this foundation the reformers built, point upon point, to convey to their followers the conviction that they conformed to the *sunnat*.

This conviction was central to the Deobandis' perception of themselves and their followers as a separate group among the Sunni Muslims. They did not, however, think of themselves as a sect, but as a leaven that could reach others. This reflected fidelity to the spirit of a Law that was characterized by norm and precedent, and hence open to different interpretations. It also reflected the classic Muslim belief that however strange behavior of a Muslim might seem, its motive could, in the end, be judged only by God.

39. See the article "Mawlid," in *The Shorter Encyclopedia of Islam*, ed. H.A.R. Gibb and J. H. Kramers (Leiden, 1961), pp. 365-68, for description of the celebration in Mecca.

40. Manāẓir Aḥsan Gīlānī, *Sawāniḥ-i Qāsimī*, II, 66, 88, 111, 276-78.

41. Ẓuhūru'l-Ḥasan, *Arwāḥ-i Ṣalāṣah*, p. 303.

42. Rashīd Aḥmad, *Fatāwā-yi Rashīdiyyah*, III, 79; I, 10, 21, 24, 29-30, 35, 43-44.

The Deobandis tolerated differences among themselves;[43] and, while they criticized practices of others, they did not, for that, deny that they were Muslims. This tolerance was, at a social level, a dimension of the *akhlaq* or civility characteristic of respectable people.

The concerns of the Deobandis, however, made them particularly critical of the Shiʿah. There they drew the line. They held the Shiʿah to deny the singularity of God, the humanity of the Prophet, and the finality of revelation. Sunnis were told to remain aloof from their Muharram celebrations and to avoid prayer with them.[44] The Deobandis also criticized the two emerging groups of rival Sunnis, the Ahl-i Hadis and the Barelwis, but did not explicitly exclude them from common prayer.[45] They were judged to deviate only in practice, not belief.[46] Rashid Ahmad's *fatawa* were more critical of the Ahl-i Hadis than of other ʿulama, perhaps because they came so close to the Deobandis in their common commitment to reform. He treated them as Shafiʿi, thus denying their claim to be followers of *hadis*, and he accused them of being selfish and fomenting unnecessary disputes by popularizing a jurisprudential position appropriate only for trained ʿulama.[47]

The Deobandis, like other Muslims, were also increasingly conscious of their differences from other communities. The pre-Mutiny reformers had been concerned exclusively with the inner problems of the Muslim community, but in the climate of conflict and competition of the late nineteenth century, reformers defined themselves against

43. This, of course, was true in the case of the observance of *maulud*, as described above. See also Manāẓir Aḥsan Gīlānī, *Sawāniḥ-i Qāsimī*, II, 30-31, where Muhammad Qasim argues that his followers should not meditate in graveyards even though it was legitimate for him to do so himself.

44. Rashīd Aḥmad, *Fatāwā-yi Rashīdiyyah*, I, 29, 46, 49. They also forbad the use of the phrase *ba haqq-i rasul* (for the sake of the Prophet), used by the Shiʿah and understood by the Deobandis to imply compulsion; see I, 43.

45. Ibid., pp. 66, 76, 81, 90, 100, 133, 142.

46. A point often made by Muhammad Qasim. See Manāẓir Aḥsan Gīlānī, *Sawāniḥ-i Qāsimī*, passim.

47. Rashīd Aḥmad, *Fatāwā-yi Rashīdiyyah*, I, 6, 66, 106, 133.

non-Muslims as well. Rashid Ahmad, particularly from the 1880s, issued *fatawa* that discouraged social and business intercourse with Hindus, forbad attendance at Arya Samaj lectures (unless one were skilled in debate), and deemed illegitimate the appearance of being Hindu, whether in dress, hair style, or the use of brass instead of copper vessels.[48] He and other ʿulama explicitly objected to customs such as *sama*ʾ (musical sessions to induce ecstasy), recitation of the Fatihah, *ʿurs*, pilgrimage, and elaborate weddings and funerals on the basis of their similarity to Hindu festivals.[49]

The ʿulama, as is evident in Rashid Ahmad's *fatawa*, were also deeply concerned with showing that their standard of correct belief and practice defined them as a group not only separate from but morally superior to the British. Their concern was not with British culture in general but with British law as it affected them and British decorum as they observed it. In both, they found the foreign standards to fall far short. In law, Rashid Ahmad commented "that it was not surprising that the government had established laws contrary to the *sharʿ*."[50] On that basis Rashid Ahmad permitted one questioner to lie in order to conform to a standard of truth above that of British law.[51] In a similar vein, he justified the escape of a man who had been unfairly imprisoned by the government. He condemned British financial institutions for contravening the norms of the *shariʿat*, and asked his followers not to use them. He accused the missionaries of stooping to such corrupt practices as bribery, and, joined by eighteen other ʿulama, he asked Muslims to withdraw their daughters from a missionary school in Saharanpur.[52] He believed the British to traffic in offensive and polluting products such as medicine and biscuits, even dyes, all of which were reputed to have admixtures of alcohol. He forbad the use of their foul-smelling

48. Ibid., III, 47-48.
49. Ibid., I, 24, 25, 36, 89, 91, 111, 180, 230.
50. Ibid., p. 38.
51. Ibid., p. 25.
52. Ibid., II, 11-13.

matches in mosques. Clearly many products associated with the British seemed tainted and polluted. Little wonder that Rashid Ahmad, following Shah 'Abdu'l-'Aziz, urged his followers not to dress like Englishmen, at least not in India, where Muslims had their own style of dress.[53] The Deobandi *fatawa* encouraged an attitude of moral and spiritual self-confidence vis-à-vis the rulers that was in marked contrast to the apparent desire of many of the English-educated Muslims to win the approval of the rulers on their own terms.

The Deobandis coupled their moral disapproval of the British with a realism in their relations with them and their culture. The inventions and technology of the British were never condemned unless—as in the case of the items above—some sinful item or practice was intrinsic to them. A survey of later Deobandi *fatawa* on such inventions as the camera, telegraph, toothbrush, and phonograph, as well as on various financial institutions, has shown this approach to be characteristic of Deobandi legal thought.[54] As for relations with the British, the *fatawa* reiterated Shah 'Abdu'l-'Aziz's guarded approval of learning and teaching English and of taking employment under a Christian.[55] Further, Rashid Ahmad sanctioned turning to the government for aid in disputes with Hindus. "Do not fight and die [to reclaim the site of a mosque]," he wrote, "but turn to the government."[56] The Deobandis, as described above, used the services of officials in supporting their management of the school. They made sure that they conformed in every way to a posture of loyalty. Rashid Ahmad, for this reason, refused to accept a grant of 5,000 rupees a year from the Shah of Afghanistan for fear that a political link might be suspected.[57] And the school celebrated ceremonial occasions like coronations with appropriate pomp, and observed times

53. See Shāh 'Abdu'l-'Azīz, *Fatāwā-yi 'Azīzī* (Delhi, 1311 A.H.), I, 199.
54. Muhammad Khalid Mas'ud, "Trends in the Interpretation of Islamic Law," especially pp. 61-62.
55. Rashīd Aḥmad, *Fatāwā-yi Rashīdiyyah*, I, 76, 81, 90.
56. Ibid., III, 20.
57. Muḥammad 'Āshiq Ilāhī, *Tazkiratu'r-Rashīd*, II, 172-73.

of crises, like Queen Victoria's last illness, with fitting prayers and messages. But they cherished no illusions about the basis of British rule, and attributed it solely to a desire for gain. "Look how foreigners have taken this rich country and drawn money from it," wrote Muhammad Qasim. He urged Muslims to cultivate their own cherished education. "Through knowledge you know the real Ruler and His will."[58] The Deobandis had no option but to accept the worldly rulers they had, but they did not accept the rulers' view that their motives were selfless and their culture superior.

The Deobandis thus, through their emphasis on a correct and purified Islam, fostered a sense of confidence and moral worth among themselves and their followers. Its basis was a commitment, almost legendary, to fulfilling the requirements of the faith at any cost.[59] Their attention to the details of everyday activity and the resultant bonds it fostered among them are evident in a description of the marriage of the daughter of Rashid Ahmad:

> In family matters, Rashid Ahmad wanted to revive the dying *sunnat*. His daughter's wedding was simple and based on the example of that of the Prophet's daughter, Fatimah. In the section of Gangoh known as the city, lived a certain Maulawi Siraju'd-Din, a Deputy Magistrate in the Government Canal Department and a very pious, religious man. He was related to Rashid Ahmad several generations back, and both he and his wife were disciples of Hazrat Sayyid Sahib [i.e. Sayyid Ahmad Barelwi] and very obedient to the *sunnat*. Even though he was a government official, he had never once taken a pie of bribery. He made it known that he would like to establish a betrothal for his son, Hafiz Muhammad Ibrahim, who had actually studied from Rashid Ahmad.
>
> Over the course of several months, Rashid Ahmad consulted with his family and awaited the all important de-

58. Dāru'l-'Ulūm Dĕ'ōband, *Rū-dād-i Sālānah 1294* (1877-1878), p. 12.
59. Muḥammad 'Āshiq Ilāhī, *Taẕkiratu'r-Rashīd*, II, 11.

cision of Hajji Imdadu'llah. Once that arrived, he announced that the marriage would take place immediately. His wife preferred to delay the wedding to make preparations, but since Safiyyah was sixteen, the age at which Fatimah had married, delay was not possible. The marriage was performed at the end of the Friday prayer with a [modest] marriage portion of Rs. 150. The groom simply came to the house to take her home. There were no jewels, boxes, beds, and chairs to take; no music was playing. The groom's parents approved completely; and the boy himself had even had a dream in which Rashid Ahmad was standing before a guava tree, plucked a fruit, and handed it to him. . . . Rashid Ahmad invited to the wedding his fellow ʿulama, for he minimized his relations with his *dunyawi baradari*, his worldly relatives, in favor of those with whom he would spend eternity.[60]

Those who participated in reform shared a special unity, as indicated by Rashid Ahmad's choice of guests, and indeed, of son-in-law, for the wedding of his daughter. To use marriage, the most important institution of family solidarity, to strengthen links among the reformers suggests the depth of their bonds. As in the organization of the school, family ties remained important, but they were supplemented and in some cases superseded by ties of common purpose and belief.

The importance of these beliefs, even at the expense of family concerns, is strikingly exemplified by the report that Maulana ʿAbdu'r-Rahim Raipuri rejoiced at his son's death because he would have an opportunity to encourage widow remarriage.[61] At a collective—and less dramatic—level, the Deobandis encouraged Muslims of various localities to sign pacts among themselves to avoid extravagance in funerals and marriages and dress, thus accepting the norms of the reformers instead of the status considerations that typically enhanced the position of their families.[62] A commitment

60. Ibid., pp. 221-24, 277.
61. Muḥammad ʿĀshiq Ilāhī Mīraṭhī, *Taẕkiratu'l-Khalīl* (Saharanpur, n.d.), p. 257.
62. Manāẓir Aḥsan Gīlānī, *Sawāniḥ-i Qāsimī*, I, 50-51; II, 42.

to reform helped define a sense of community, a sense enhanced by the deep bonds and shared spiritual quests of the 'ulama and their followers in the context of the Sufi orders.

Tariqat

The 'Alim as Shaikh: Institutional Characteristics of Deobandi Sufism

The Deobandi 'ulama were devoted not only to Hanafi law but to Sufi doctrine and discipline, as well. Sufism provided both meaning to religious experience and the most intense of personal ties. Students at the school often became disciples of their teachers, a practice remarkable because previously many of the 'ulama had sought initiation only from their own relatives.[63] This deepened the bonds among the Deobandis and extended them to their followers, who respected their spirituality.

The 'ulama of the *madrasahs* represented a Sufi leadership separate from the most characteristic institution of later sufism, the guardianship of the tombs of the medieval saints. Indeed, Deobandi opposition to certain Sufi customs, notably that of *'urs* and pilgrimage, directly challenged the centrality of the tombs and the networks of support for them. The Deobandis offered an alternate spiritual leadership, geared to individual instruction rather than to mediation, stripped of what they deemed to be deviant custom. They were among the leading Sufis of the day. At the school the post of *sarparast* in particular was staffed by revered and influential Sufis: Muhammad Qasim, Rashid Ahmad, Mahmud Hasan, and Ashraf 'Ali Thanawi, the last of whom has been widely considered the preeminent Sufi of modern India. Other distinguished Sufis were as-

63. For an example of this practice, see the biographical notices of Muḥammad 'Ināyatu'llāh's *Tażkirah-yi 'Ulamā'-yi Farangī Maḥall* (Lucknow, n.d.), where in each generation one member of this distinguished family would serve as *shaikh* to many of his relatives. See Ḥusain Aḥmad Madanī, *Naqsh-i Ḥayāt* (Deoband, 1953) I, 76 for an example of protest when a person broke the pattern of initiation within a family.

sociated with Deoband's sister school, the Mazahir-i ʿUlum in Saharanpur: ʿAbdu'r-Rahim Raipuri, ʿAbdu'l-Qadir Raipuri, and, most recently, Muhammad Zakariya.

One important dimension of Deobandi influence as Sufis rested in their position as heirs to the legitimacy of all the major Sufi orders. They were not *shaikhs* of a single order, but as their history records, they were "Chishti in *suluk* (the method of training) but united all the *silsilahs*."[64] The practice of multiple initiation had been a long-standing practice, but apparently only for some of the spiritual elite. Thus Shaikh Ahmad Sarhindi received Qadiri as well as Naqshbandi initiation; and Shah ʿAbdu'l-Quddus (d. 1537), Rashid Ahmad's great forebear, received initiation in the four major orders of Chishti, Qadiri, Suhrawardi, and Firdausi. In the nineteenth century the practice of multiple initiation from a single *shaikh* became widespread throughout the Islamic world. Hajji Imdadu'llah, for example, initiated his disciples in all the major orders then current in India, namely, Chishti Sabiri and Chishti Nizami, Qadiri, Naqshbandi and Naqshbandi Mujaddidi, Suhrawardi, and Quddusi.[65]

In the early centuries in India, each order had been known for a distinct style of behavior, a particular stance toward the government, and characteristic practices and disciplines. By the nineteenth century such differences were not clear. Multiple initiation further weakened the separate character of each order, but strengthened the position of the individual religious leader, who thus became the recipient of the blessings of not one, but many chains of succession linking him through great Muslims of the past back to the Prophet himself. It also enhanced the range of techniques on which he could draw to teach his various disciples. Such eclecticism was considered wholly legitimate, for the disciplines of the orders were regarded merely as means, with no importance in themselves. A single *shaikh* might teach one disciple methods of *zikr*, repetition of the name of God, derived from the Qadiri order and characterized

64. Muḥammad Ṭayyib Qāsimī, *Dāru'l-ʿUlūm Dē'ōband kī Ṣad Sālah Zindagī* (Deoband, 1968), p. 24.

65. Muḥammad ʿĀshiq Ilāhī, *Tazkiratu'r-Rashīd*, II, 105-11.

by strong rhythmic gestures and intonations; he might teach another the method of the Naqshbandi order, silent and immobile recitation. He might compose poems, as mnemonic devices, of the genealogies of saints in different orders. The result of multiple allegiances could be either this kind of eclecticism or it could be actual synthesis. Thus, when a disciple asked to learn Naqshbandi *suluk*, Rashid Ahmad responded that "he taught the final instruction in which all the *silsilahs* merge."[66]

The Deobandis were clearly influenced by Naqshbandi practice, particularly in considering the technique of silent *zikr* as more valuable than spoken. Rashid Ahmad's relation to his disciples was described, moreover, as being in the style of Naqshbandi saints, emphasizing the attachment between *shaikh* and individual disciple (*tawajjuh*) and not that between the *shaikh* and the whole body of disciples.[67] At a level more basic than that of disciplines, the whole orientation of the Deobandis toward reform and obedience to the *sunnat* was one preeminently associated with the Naqshbandis. The Deobandis had ties to many leading Sufis of that order, particularly to Shah ʿAbdu'l-Ghani Dihlawi, their common teacher of *hadis* in Delhi and later an emigrant to Medina. Maulana Rafiʿu'd-Din, an early administrator at the school, was one of his disciples.

Most of the early leaders of the school, however, were disciples of Hajji Imdadu'llah, and emphasis was typically placed on allegiance to him, not to a specific order. One disciple, Mulla Qasim, described his initiation at the hand of Muhammad Yaʿqub as "initiation in the Imdadiyyah family, which was primarily connected with the Chishti Sabiri and Qadiri orders."[68] The disciples of Imdadu'llah were generally called Chishti and, in fact, represented the leadership of the Chishti Sabiri order in the late nineteenth century.[69] They stressed that initiatory chain, and felt close

66. Ḥusain Aḥmad Madanī, *Naqsh-i Ḥayāt*, I, 106.
67. Ibid., II, 87.
68. Muḥammad Yaʿqūb, *Maktūbāt-i Yaʿqūbī*, p. 24.
69. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami, "Čishtiyya," *EI*², II, 53 provides a chart of the chain of succession in the order.

to their predecessors in that line. It was of Mu'inu'd-Din Chishti (d. 1236) and 'Ala'u'd-Din Sabir (d. 1291) that Husain Ahmad Madani dreamed after he received initiation from Rashid Ahmad. Rashid Ahmad was himself descended in twelve generations from the Chishti *shaikh* 'Abdu'l-Quddus Gangohi (d. 1537), and actually revived his *khanaqah*, which had lain deserted for three hundred years.[70] He taught his disciples to love and emulate him, and often told exemplary stories of his poverty and simplicity, his voiced *zikr* that lasted the entire day, and his disregard for the officials of the king.[71] The Deobandis especially valued the reputation of the Chishtis for being aloof from the state and for basing their influence on individual spirituality alone.

Nevertheless, they cited others as their spiritual forebears, and visited tombs such as that of Shaikh Ahmad Sarhindi Naqshbandi when they traveled on hajj. Rashid Ahmad and his fellows constantly kept alive the memory of other great saints of the past: Bayazid Bistami, Shihabu'd-Din Suhrawardi, and Imam Ja'faru's-Sadiq. Above all, they placed themselves in the primarily Naqshbandi tradition of the family of Shah Waliyu'llah. "When the Deobandis talked of the families 'Aziziyyah [of Shah 'Abdu'l-'Aziz] and Ahmadiyyah [of Sayyid Ahmad Barelwi]," recorded a young scion of the Barelwi family, "they spoke with the pleasure of a lover for his beloved."[72] They held all these elders to be the source of spiritual blessing. "I am worthless," wrote Muhammad Ya'qub, "people today are mere *sajjadah nishin*, successors; our *pirs* are the elders of the family."[73] In the act of initiation, the blessing inherent

70. For studies of 'Abdu'l-Quddus, see Simon Digby, " 'Abd ul-Quddus Gangohi (A.D. 1456-1537): The Personality and Attitudes of a Medieval Indian Sufi," in K. A. Nizami, ed., *Medieval India, a Miscellany*, III (Aligarh, 1975), 1-66; and I'jāzu'l-Ḥaqq Quddūsī, *Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddūs Gangōhī aur un kī Ta'līmāt* (Karachi, 1961).

71. Muḥammad 'Āshiq Ilāhī, *Tazkiratu'r-Rashīd*, II, 224, 253-54, 264.

72. 'Abdu'l-Ḥayy, *Dihlī aur us kē Aṭrāf*, pp. 17-18.

73. Muḥammad Ya'qūb, *Maktūbāt-i Ya'qūbī*, pp. 130-32.

in these various distinguished chains was passed to the recipient.

The influence of the *shaikh* was further bolstered by the emphasis in this period on having a single spiritual guide. Although it was permissible, it was not common to have formal relations to various *shaikhs*, one for instruction in *zikr*, for example, one for initiation, one for companionship, and another for general guidance.[74] There had to be between disciple and *shaikh* an affinity of the heart, *qalbi munasabat.*[75] Thus Mulla Qasim met Muhammad Ya'qub only briefly, but his love for him was deep and spontaneous, wholly oblivious of his beliefs or background: "I found that over time, as I repeated my prayers, the love of my heart and soul for him was growing. . . . He was not present, but it was as if he were before my very eyes; and sometimes, in dreams, I would imagine that I was kissing his feet."[76] Ya'qub in turn accepted this emotion as genuinely of the soul, the more so since the tie or *rabt,* he explained, existed without personal contact. The key in choosing a *shaikh* was not the order he represented, since he to some degree represented all, but the strength of the relation to him. Thus it was only after he had sought initiation, and almost as an afterthought, that Mulla Qasim asked Muhammad Ya'qub to identify his *pir.*[77] It was not to the *silsilah* but to Ya'qub that he was drawn. For the disciples of Rashid Ahmad, the emotion was much the same. As Khalil Ahmad wrote, "I remember that being in his presence was like the sun, so happy and so light-filled it was. He [and his associates] in their purity and their love of obedience to the *sunnat* were veritable models of the Companions."[78] Rashid Ahmad himself loved his *shaikh* Imdadu'llah above all others, and when the latter died he wept over him at night for months, only regaining his composure if someone ap-

74. Muḥammad 'Āshiq Ilāhī, *Tazkiratu'r-Rashīd,* II, 85.
75. Ḥusain Aḥmad Madanī, *Naqsh-ı Ḥayāt,* I, 77.
76. Muḥammad Ya'qūb, *Maktūbāt-i Ya'qūbī,* p. 22.
77. Ibid., p. 45.
78. Muḥammad 'Āshiq Ilāhī, *Tazkiratu'r-Rashīd,* I, 218.

peared.[79] All of Muhammad Qasim's disciples, says one account, were his lovers.[80]

Once a person had chosen a *pir*, he did not readily displace him by another. A disciple of Muhammad Ya'qub, Mulla Qasim, had in fact had a previous *shaikh*, but unusual circumstances led him to make a change. His initial *shaikh*, a Qadiri, was wholly absorbed in preaching. Mulla Qasim wrote, "what learning I acquired, merely *barah tasbih* and the names of the initiatory chain, was no more than the learning of a parrot. I was very young and there was no guidance nor was there good companionship. . . . I read three or four pamphlets which did inspire me to some extent but often I did not understand certain matters and became very unhappy."[81] Yet even in this case, it was only after a dozen years of an ever-deepening relationship that Mulla Qasim received initiation from a new *pir*. Muhammad Ya'qub urged a person disenchanted with his *shaikh* to pray for his reform and not to leave him. If someone differed with a *shaikh*, he was to discuss the problem openly, and if difference was irreconcilable, to increase his belief in the *shaikh* to the point that he could accept his view.[82] Rashid Ahmad trusted utterly Hajji Imdadu'llah, despite his apparent commitment to practices disapproved of by the Deobandis. This was, it is argued, a providential test for Rashid Ahmad who, having mastered it, learned *hifz-i maratib*, the preservation of degrees, embedded in the relation of follower to *shaikh*.[83] One ought not, wrote Rashid Ahmad in a *fatwa*, leave a suitable *pir* even if one's own parents urge it.[84]

None of the Deobandis granted initiation lightly, for it entailed great commitment. The granting of initiation took place only after a period of contact in which the good intentions of the disciple, the spiritual perfections of the *shaikh*, and the personal compatibility of both were shown. Often

79. Ibid., pp. 148-49.
80. Ẓuhūru'l-Ḥasan, *Arwāḥ-i Ṣalāṣah*, p. 271.
81. Muḥammad Ya'qūb, *Maktūbāt-i Ya'qūbī*, pp. 20-22.
82. Ibid., pp. 130-31, 162-63.
83. Muḥammad 'Āshiq Ilāhī, *Tazkiratu'r-Rashīd*, pp. 148-49.
84. Rashīd Aḥmad, *Fatāwā-yi Rashīdiyyah*, I, 53.

there would be a prolonged stay with the *shaikh* and substantial instruction in the disciplines and traditions of the order. By stressing the need to remain loyal to a single *pir*, the Deobandis provided a corollary to the juristic position that in matters of the law one should turn only to one *mufti* for guidance. Among the Deobandis, functions of both *pir* and *mufti* were often united in a single person. This dual role provided the foundation of the one-to-one relationships that characterized the popular religious leadership of the day.

The culmination of this relationship was the granting of authority to make disciples oneself. Husain Ahmad Madani described his receipt of this authority:

> Despite great difficulties, after some time we returned [from Medina] to India to see Rashid Ahmad. My brother went directly to Gangoh to present the dates and water of Zamzam we had brought, but I went to Deoband and thence on foot—something my brother would not do—and thinking of my shortcomings, I often wept. Rashid Ahmad welcomed us, gave us clothes, and had Muhammad Yahya ask if we needed any help such as finding employment. I answered that my only purpose was seeking the Essence of Truth. . . . I would sit in his presence and gain great strength from that. Once, while massaging his body, I heard a voice say, "After forty days you will gain your goal." Exactly forty days later Rashid Ahmad wrapped turbans on our head which we thought were turbans in honor of our accomplishments. They were in fact turbans of succession [permitting us to initiate disciples ourselves.] My brother became very happy; but I wept continuously, thinking of my lack of skill, of intention, of progress.[85]

Thus the change in status that derived from the granting of permission to take one's own disciples was often resisted because of the disciple's long-nurtured humility before the *shaikh* and the deep respect accorded him. The disciples of

85. Ḥusain Aḥmad Madanī, *Naqsh-i Ḥayāt*, I, 86-89, paraphrased.

Hajji Imdadu'llah invariably sought permission from him as the "grandfather" or *dadapir* in each individual case of initiation, even though they had been given permission to take disciples. This desire to preserve the status of the *pir* is paralleled by the common practice within Muslim families of fathers being called elder brother by their own sons during the lifetime of the grandfather. The paternal metaphor was apt, for the disciple considered his *shaikh* responsible for his spiritual life, as his father was for his physical.

The metaphor was extended to those who were fellow disciples of a common *shaikh.* They thought of themselves as brothers through the *shaikh,* and called each other *pirbha'i.* Muhammad Qasim always referred potential disciples to his *pirbha'i,* Rashid Ahmad, who also acted as "father" to Qasim's disciples after his death. When Rashid Ahmad himself died, one of his older disciples, ʿAbdu'r-Rahim Raipuri, treated the other disciples as Rashid Ahmad's "orphans."[86] The *pirbha'i* of one's own *pir* was respected as an uncle. The disciples of Hajji Imdadu'llah would go to Rampur to visit their "uncle" or *chachah pir,* Hakim Ziya'u'd-Din, particularly after the emigration of their own *pir.*[87] The unity of the different groups of ʿulama was based in large part on the shared spiritual allegiances of each. The Deobandis were primarily Chishti; the Barelwi, Qadiri; the Nadwi, Naqshbandi. The order per se did not define different religious styles as much as they did different spiritual networks. The Sufi relationships were among the deepest and most abiding a person could have, and helped account for the sense of shared purpose that characterized each group of ʿulama.

The Personality of the Shaikh

The personality of the *shaikhs,* the very pattern of their lives, was at the center of the formal institutions of sufism and of the individual experience of each disciple. The *shaikhs* were held to have a special intimacy with God, earned with

86. Muḥammad ʿĀshiq Ilāhī, *Taẕkiratu'l-Khalīl,* p. 60.
87. Manṣūr ʿAlī Khān, *Maẕhab-i Manṣūr* (Hyderabad, 1909), I, 168.

God's grace through discipline and obedience. They had gained that intimacy by training their moral capacity, counted as a sixth sense, through exercising it continuously in just the same way as all people train their five physical senses. The spirit was thus subject to the same development as the body. Moreover, as the spirit developed, the body changed as well. Specifically, the heart, held to be the seat of the sixth sense, itself grew strong as the capacity for obedience to God increased. This belief reflected the same understanding of the close relation of body and spirit evident in the Islamic concept of illness.

As the moral sense and, concomitantly, the heart grew stronger, the Sufis believed that man found himself in the state of *ihtida*, of being rightly guided, for he then knew the Law not merely through *ʿilm*, the intellectual knowledge of what is commanded and what is forbidden, but through *maʿrifat*, the immediate and intuitive knowledge of the essence and attributes of God. The heart was freed of all conflict and, filled only with love of God and the Prophet, experienced perfect equilibrium or *iʿtidal*. The resultant holy power, *quwwat-i quddsiyyah*, accounted for the quality of the *shaikh's* relations to both God and man. He was, most basically, a man of great power—of power over himself, and, by extension, over others and even over nature. The power was evident in his spiritual perfections, *maʿnawi kamalat*, and in his lesser but more visible sensory miracles, *hissi karamat*.[88] The personal qualities of the *shaikh* were the stamp of his holiness and a model made manifest for the emulation of his followers.

Of the spiritual perfections, the most awesome was the devotion of the saints to God and to the Prophet.[89] They emulated the Prophet and his Companions in every detail of their life.[90] They recounted stories about them, and cherished relics from the Hijaz. Rashid Ahmad, for example, deterred from emigration by his teaching responsibilities,

88. Muḥammad ʿĀshiq Ilāhī, *Taẕkiratu'r-Rashīd*, II, 136-37, 161-62, 165.
89. Muḥammad Ikrām, *Mauj-i Kauṡar* (Lahore, 1968), p. 211.
90. Muḥammad ʿĀshiq Ilāhī, *Taẕkiratu'r-Rashīd*, II, 165-66, 178.

welcomed every souvenir brought to him by returning pilgrims, and so valued a piece of the ground where Abraham is said to have prayed that he would entrust it to no one but would place it in water, which then became the most valued of relics.[91] The depth of Muhammad Qasim's devotion was evident in his ability to make the entire trip from Mecca to Medina barefoot, a feat impossible for his companions but not for him because of "the power of his love." When Muhammad Qasim heard the Prophet's name he would tremble.[92] When Rashid Ahmad read the Qur'an alone at night, he would be overcome with joy at the sections on God's mercy; and he would weep and shake and appear terrified at the sections on God's wrath.[93] During Ramazan, Shaikh ʿAbdu'r-Rahim would be so absorbed in devotion that he would meet no one, but spend day and night reciting the Qur'an. Were Muhammad Yaʿqub to read aloud Rumi's *masnawi*, one account recorded, the jungle would start on fire.[94] Contemporaries compared Muhammad Qasim to the Prophet; Muhammad Yaʿqub, Rafiʿu'd-Din, and Hajji Muhammad ʿAbid to Abu Bakr, Usman, and ʿAli, respectively.[95] Their spiritual intensity, only rarely attainable by most men, confirmed the belief that the *shaikhs* were close to God.

So did yet another perfection, their great humility, for they were held to be so acquainted with the greatness of God that they were incapable of pride or arrogance. They would tolerate no praise of themselves, and indeed, Rashid Ahmad once threw dirt at Maulawi Hakim Ismaʿil Gangohi who, above his protests, read an elegy in his honor.[96] He would compare himself unfavorably to his great predecessors, and lament that their hospice had now become worldly.[97]

91. Ibid., p. 167.
92. Manṣūr ʿAlī Khān, *Maẕhab-i Manṣūr*, p. 181.
93. Muḥammad ʿĀshiq Ilāhī, *Taẕkiratu'r-Rashīd*, II, 192-93, 198.
94. Ẕuhūru'l-Ḥasan, *Arwāḥ-i Ṡalāṡah*, pp. 319-20.
95. Manāẕir Aḥsan Gīlānī, *Sawāniḥ-i Qāsimī*, I, 82 quoted from the manuscript of Muḥammad Yaʿqūb, *Sawāniḥ-i Makhtūtah*. Nanautah, he wrote, was like Medina, for dates grew there.
96. Muḥammad ʿĀshiq Ilāhī, *Taẕkiratu'r-Rashīd*, II, 166.
97. Ibid., p. 169.

Humility was the most consistent element in the personal relationships of the *shaikhs*. It figured prominently in a description of the ideal behavior of the Sufis written by Rashid Ahmad as a young man: "They were to be humble, warm, and forebearing toward others, and completely free of anger, sympathetic and self-abnegating, generous, forgiving, open, happy, informal; trusting in God, satisfied with very little, abstemious, free of anger or envy, unconcerned with status, devoted to keeping their word, farsighted, full of love for their fellows, generous to Muslims."[98] Such detachment from all selfish interests characterized the Sufi's relations to others, just as intense devotion characterized his relation to God.

The *shaikhs* sought no wealth or honors. They tended to refuse prestigious positions with princes and nobles. Indeed, they often refused even the modest salaries now institutionalized in the new *madrasahs*. Maulana Ziya'u'l-Haqq De'obandi would not take his salary at the Madrasah-yi Aminiyyah because, his biographer simply concluded, "none of these people ever cared for money."[99] Muhammad Yahya Kandhlawi refused compensation for teaching, even when in great need, until he was made principal of his school and could agree to accept a salary for that.[100] Mahmud Hasan took a salary at Deoband only under the compulsion of Rashid Ahmad.[101] Muhammad Qasim would deduct any time he spent with friends from his salary, and would use not even a drop of ink from the school's supplies.[102] Above all, he, even more than the others, did with very little. "Mahmud Hasan said that our elders were like suns and moons, they were so bright. They lived very modestly, but Hajji ʿAbid Husain and Rashid Ahmad would have at least something in their cell. Muhammad Qasim had nothing, or if anything, only a torn grass mat. If Rashid Ahmad traveled he would take his special servant to carry

98. Ibid., pp. 11-12.
99. *al-Balāgh, Taʿlīmī Nambar* (Bombay, December-January 1954-1955).
100. Muḥammad ʿĀshiq Ilāhī, *Tażkiratu'l-Khalīl*, p. 199.
101. Asghar Ḥusain, *Ḥayāt-i Shaikhu'l-Hind* (Deoband, 1920/1), pp. 20-21.
102. Manāẓir Aḥsan Gīlānī, *Sawāniḥ-i Qāsimī*, I, 173.

a box of supplies; Muhammad Qasim would take nothing, make no preparations."[103] The *shaikhs* declined personal gifts, pardoned debts, and shared what they had. This frugality, as described above, had a practical as well as spiritual benefit, for it made it possible to run the school economically and fostered the unity of the staff.

The Deobandis sought to be free of the meshes of social consideration. They were men of high birth, whose religious status in fact derived in part from being the scions of the respectable and the pious, and they valued their heritage. Yet they often minimized family concerns. Rashid Ahmad did, quietly, look after the women and children of his family but, as we have said, ignored his *dunyawi baradari* in favor of his fellow ʿulama. He loved as sons "people of God who traveled through the world as through a guest house."[104] The ʿulama were not concerned with the worldly status of their families. To the despair of his relatives, Muhammad Qasim twice contributed his wife's jewels to relief funds for the Ottoman Empire. He, too, valued above all his relations to his fellows, following Hajji Imdadu'llah and Sufi tradition in preferring to help his friends even over performing supererogatory religious acts.[105] ʿAbdu'r-Rahim, on pilgrimage, was distressed that his dying son might distract him from those who had undertaken the hajj in order to be with him.[106] The ʿulama often lived apart from their families in mosques or schools[107] so that Mahmudu'l-Hasan, for example, lived at home only in childhood and advanced old age.[108]

The *shaikhs* of Deoband did not treat the rich with any special consideration, and were, perhaps, more critical of them than of the poor. Shah ʿAbdu'r-Rahim was recorded as being "distracted with the great but familiar with the poor."[109] Muhammad Qasim never once met with Deoband's benefactor Nawwab Mahmud ʿAli Khan of Chha-

103. Ẕuhūru'l-Ḥasan, *Arwāḥ-i Salāṣah*, p. 242.
104. Muḥammad ʿĀshiq Ilāhī, *Tażkiratu'r-Rashīd*, II, 168, 198-99.
105. Manāẓir Aḥsan Gīlānī, *Sawāniḥ-i Qāsimī*, II, 454.
106. Muḥammad ʿĀshiq Ilāhī, *Tażkiratu'l-Khalīl*, p. 240.
107. See, for example, ibid., pp. 6, 64, 103, 116.
108. Asghar Ḥusain, *Ḥayāt-i Shaikhu'l-Hind*, p. 156.
109. Muḥammad ʿĀshiq Ilāhī, *Tażkiratu'l-Khalīl*, p. 25.

tari, despite the latter's deep desire that he do so.[110] He refused to see Nawwab Kalb ʿAli Khan of Rampur when summoned, and he ignored the invitations of the great trader Shaikh ʿAbdu'l-Hakim of Meerut.[111] When the ʿulama associated with the great, it was on their own terms. Rashid Ahmad, who knew and loved Mahmud ʿAli Khan, nonetheless advised the latter's employees to leave him when he was using money against the norms of the *sharʿiat.*[112] Muhammad Qasim left Galaothi when Sayyid Mihrban ʿAli, who had founded both a *madrasah* and a mosque, struck a humble servant.[113] Muhammad Qasim flaunted class and family distinctions to accept any invitation from a humble person. Once when he went to the house of a weaver, his aristocratic disciple Ahmad Hasan Amrohawi was apparently so shocked "that it was as if he had been struck by a bullet." Muhammad Qasim simply insisted that he, too, call there. On another occasion someone sent Muhammad Qasim some coarse cloth, which he used for coats for both himself and Amrohawi.[114] He personally greeted humble callers and, contrary to his custom of refusing gifts while traveling, accepted their small offerings so as not to disappoint them.[115] Both he and Rashid Ahmad were sufficiently humble in dress and deportment to be mistaken for poor people themselves.

They also denied the status inherent in their positions as teachers and *shaikhs*. Rashid Ahmad told stories illustrative of the superiority of disciples over *shaikhs*, and of disciples who had aided their *shaikhs* in their religious life.[116] When Muhammad Qasim once erred in one of his rare *fatawa*, he not only accepted the correction of a disciple but went on foot to the home of the humble questioner to tell him.[117]

Such stories of the humility of the *shaikhs* are echoes of

110. Manāẓir Aḥsan Gīlānī, *Sawāniḥ-i Qāsimī*, I, 578.
111. Ibid., p. 324.
112. Muḥammad ʿĀshiq Ilāhī, *Taẕkiratu'r-Rashīd*, II, 194.
113. Manāẓir Aḥsan Gīlānī, *Sawāniḥ-i Qāsimī*, I, 461-62.
114. Ibid., pp. 440-41; Ẓuhūru'l-Ḥasan, *Arwāḥ-i Ṣalāṣah*, p. 231.
115. Manāẓir Aḥsan Gīlānī, *Sawāniḥ-i Qāsimī*, I, 579.
116. Muḥammad ʿĀshiq Ilāhī, *Taẕkiratu'r-Rashīd*, II, 173-75.
117. Manāẓir Aḥsan Gīlānī, *Sawāniḥ-i Qāsimī*, II, 387-88.

stories told of their immediate forebears, of Muslim saints throughout history, and indeed, of saints of all kinds. They are not for that less true, for pious men aspired to the model of those who had gone before. The holy man was believed to be, and, in fact, was "the stranger" untouched by the concerns of place and practicality that motivate and bind most men. In this case he did not withdraw from society but lived in it with detachment. He still could practice the *tark o tajrid*, abandonment and separation, characteristic of Muslim piety, and was thus presumed to speak from moral concerns alone, not from the interests of a single class or social group. He affirmed universal truths, and he affirmed the unity of a community that transcended divisions of wealth and birth. Religious leaders of this sort were perhaps particularly valued in a period that lacked Muslim political institutions to affirm communal unity.[118]

The humility of the *shaikhs* did not render them weak in their encounters with other people but rather inspired awe and respect. The central metaphor to describe their personalities was, as described above, one of power, *quwwat-i quddsiyyah*. In times of conflict their moral rectitude, coupled with their self-abnegation, often moved their opponents to agree with them. An example from Rashid Ahmad's early life suggests the characteristics of such encounters:

> When the number of his students grew, Rashid Ahmad decided to build a verandah in front of his cell, using the income from the jewels of the late daughter of Qazi Imanat ʿAli Lakhnawi. Everyone respected Rashid Ahmad, but there was still local opposition to him. Why should he wonder at this when even the Prophet was not accepted in his own home? The opposition came from the guardians of the *khanaqah* of Shah ʿAbdu'l-Quddus, who felt him their enemy because he opposed their wrong beliefs and ideas. A large group came to him and asked him to vacate the cell. He answered that he would cer-

118. Compare Peter Brown, "The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity," *Journal of Roman Studies* 61 (1972), esp. pp. 91-94, 100-101.

> tainly do it, but that they had no need to have sent anyone other than a humble servant to ask him. They then offered him the costs of his construction, and he accepted the small amount he had used of his own money. He moved into a nearby mosque. He forbad his students to discuss the matter.
>
> Many people from the city, the area of Gangoh on the other side of its large tank, then invited him to come to them, as the Prophet had come to Medina when ousted by the Meccans. He thanked them, but said that "as a servant of God, he would stay in the house of God." Meanwhile those who had ousted him were so amazed by his quick compliance and his forebearance, that they began to accuse each other of suggesting this disrespectful act, of being the cause of interrupting his teaching, and so forth. Ultimately they sought his pardon and asked him to return.[119]

Muhammad Qasim once converted a close friend to upright behavior by placing his own values on the line. The friend, with whom he worked in a printing house in Meerut, was given to stylish clothes, never prayed, and consorted with prostitutes. Yet he and Muhammad Qasim were very close friends, helping each other bathe and dress, sharing sweets with each other. Finally Muhammad Qasim said that it was not good for such close friends to be so different and that he would accept his ways. Faced with this prospect, the friend, rather, became like Muhammad Qasim.[120]

In general, the ʿulama avoided direct encounters. Only when pressed would a *shaikh* like Rashid Ahmad, "for the sake of spreading correct guidance, be so moved, weeping and trembling that [he] would overcome his reluctance and speak out."[121] They forbad their followers to mock their opponents. Rashid Ahmad silenced those who delighted in the illness of Ahmad Riza Khan Barelwi;[122] Muhammad

119. Muḥammad ʿĀshiq Ilāhī, *Tazkiratu'r-Rashīd*, I, 96-99.
120. Ẓuhūru'l-Ḥasan, *Arwāḥ-i Salāṣah*, p. 227.
121. Muḥammad ʿĀshiq Ilāhī, *Tazkiratu'r-Rashīd*, II, 41-42.
122. Ibid., pp. 82-83.

Qasim reproached someone who made a pun of the name Fazl-i Rasul Badayuni.[123] They avoided force or pressure because of a sense, Gandhian in style, that such struggle produced no genuine change in personalities. Their goal, as expounded by Maulana Ashraf ʿAli Thanawi, was not *ʿilm,* the imparting of knowledge, but *tarbiyat,* the tutelage that transforms character.[124] For this the ability of the *shaikh* to eschew argument or denunciation seemed in itself to confirm his moral certainty and strength of personality, and thus to enhance belief in his instruction.

The *shaikhs,* however, did not only exert influence by the evidence of their spiritual intensity and humility; they were held to be able, as well, to exercise an effective physical force over other people and over the outside world. This force was considered a manifestation of their spiritual perfections and was understood, no doubt, as an extension of the power they clearly exerted over their own instincts and personalities. The pious held this power to take various forms although, in actual cases, the distinctions were not always clear. One of the most important forms was called *tasarruf,* literally, "application" or "expenditure," because the *shaikh* was held to concentrate his attention on a person and expend his power upon him. The power was irresistible, and could be used even on those unaware of it or at a distance. It was brought into action above all to influence people to conform to the *sunnat.* The *shaikhs* used it to complement the instruction of their disciples. Thus Rashid Ahmad, his biographer explained, through *tasarruf* had brought thirty-five disciples to the stage where they themselves could undertake guidance of others.[125] Maulana Ashraf ʿAli Thanawi, one of those disciples, specifically attributed his changed position on the legitimacy of customary practices such as the celebration of the *maulud* to the *tasarruf* of Rashid Ahmad.[126]

123. Ẓuhūru'l-Ḥasan, *Arwāḥ-i Ṣalāṣah,* p. 229; Manāẓir Aḥsan Gīlānī, *Sawāniḥ-i Qāsimī,* I, 471. Amir Shah Khan called him Fasl-i Rasul, "distant from the Prophet."

124. Manāẓir Aḥsan Gīlānī, *Sawāniḥ-i Qāsimī,* I, 467.

125. Muḥammad ʿĀshiq Ilāhī, *Tazkiratu'r-Rashīd,* II, 136-37, 150.

126. Ibid., pp. 145-46.

The *shaikh* could use his power to win his followers away from worldly concerns, away from distractions that hindered their fidelity to religious obligations. Rashid Ahmad, through *tasarruf*, was able to inspire a man to return to impassioned recitation of the Qur'an after he had neglected it for years; to force another, absorbed in his work, to engage in hours of meditation; to awaken for prayer a man who previously had slept soundly. *Tasarruf* could influence such distracting personal habits as the use of opium; or could change the whole course of a person's life.[127] A police official, Hajji Dost Muhammad Khan, described his own all-encompassing change. "For eighteen years I took bribes, sent the innocent to exile and death, called the right wrong and wrong right. I made no distinction of good or bad; I had no thought of the afterlife. My heart was hard. After three days with him I was forebearing, compassionate, just, faithful to *namaz*. . . . From his company (*suhbat*) I gained reform of my heart."[128] In a similar incident concerning another official, a sometime worldly police inspector (*daroghah*), the *shaikh* further intervened to prevent him, after his reform, from resigning and giving up worldly affairs. Rather he was to continue his work, but now on a new footing. The power could be used not only to effect general reform but dramatically to stop short someone about to engage in a single illegitimate act.[129]

Tasarruf could also check cases of severe psychological disturbance. For that it was apparently necessary for the troubled person to be physically present in the quiet and awesome presence of the *shaikh*. A *hakim* of Hathras, whose own Naqshbandi *pir* had died, wrote to Rashid Ahmad asking his help for his fears that lightning was continuously falling on him and that he was about to die. Rashid Ahmad told him to come to Gangoh. When he entered into Rashid Ahmad's presence, he was immediately cured.[130] Similarly, a very pious man of Khurjah believed that he was being

127. Ibid., pp. 139-49.
128. Ibid., pp. 142-43.
129. Ibid., pp. 148-91.
130. Ẓuhūru'l-Ḥasan, *Arwāḥ-ı Ṣalāṣah*, pp. 286-87.

continually destroyed. If a vehicle went by, he felt that he was the ground underneath; if dogs were fighting, he believed it was he being bitten; if grain was being ground, he was the grain. He wrote to Muhammad Qasim for help, and then, at his command, came to him. Muhammad Qasim simply changed the time of his litanies and meditations, and he was cured.[131]

Tasarruf, moreover, was believed to be effective not only on those who wanted cure or guidance, but also on those who opposed the *shaikhs*. Muhammad Qasim, for example, believed that his *tasarruf* could convince people of the validity of his arguments, but he preferred not to use the power for that purpose.[132] Rashid Ahmad, intuitively aware that an opponent was present in a congregation, used the power to win him:

> There was a young man of Abh, called Maulawi Muhammad Nazir Khan, who saw others going to Nanautah for the Friday prayer. He wished to join them, but his father forbad him, explaining that there were Wahabbis there. He, however, wanted to go very much; and, finally, his father, not wanting him to go alone, went with him. When he first set foot inside the mosque he caught sight of Muhammad Ya'qub's beautiful face, and, seeing him, he had a vision of lights. He had expected his face to be uglier than that of a Shi'i. Then he saw Rashid Ahmad and felt love surge within him. . . . Nazir Khan said: "I had heard that the Deobandi group denied the Prophet and were disrespectful Wahabbis. But when Rashid Ahmad spoke, it was like the Prophet speaking. My heart opened like a flower." Both father and son were completely won over.[133]

One judges in this case, at least, that the son was in fact open to such influence.

Another form of the saint's power was *tawajjuh*, the con-

131. Manāz̤ir Aḥsan Gīlanī, *Sawānıḥ-i Qāsimī*, I, 333; Z̤uhūru'l-Ḥasan, *Arwāḥ-i Ṣalāṣah*, pp. 220-21.
132. Manāz̤ir Aḥsan Gīlanī, *Sawānıḥ-i Qāsimī*, I, 310.
133. Muḥammad 'Āshiq Ilāhī, *Taẕkiratu'r-Rashīd*, II, 138-39.

centration of the *shaikh's* attention on a follower. Generally *tawajjuh* did not produce the kind of dramatic conversions that *tasarruf* entailed, but rather created an immediate spiritual experience on the person involved. It could produce a vision.

> A disciple of Muhammad Qasim, Diwan Muhammad Yasin, was very famous for his voiced *zikr*. Once he was repeating it in a corner of the Chattah Masjid; Muhammad Qasim sat in another corner, facing him, and exerting his attention on him. Such a state spread over Muhammad Yasin that he saw the roof of the mosque disappear and a throne in the heavens, approaching him, surrounded by a strong light. On the throne was seated the Prophet surrounded by the four caliphs. The Prophet asked Muhammad Qasim for the accounts of the school, then had him read them aloud. His happiness and pleasure at this reading was boundless. He dismissed Qasim; and the throne reascended to heaven.[134]

On this occasion the effect of *tawajjuh* sanctioned the educational work of the Deobandis. Its use to create support for their work was also evident on an occasion when Muhammad Qasim aided a graduate of Deoband, resident in the Punjab, who was under attack for his beliefs and in danger of losing his livelihood. Through *tawajjuh*, Muhammad Qasim was able to convey to him a speech so compelling that the man did not recognize himself as he talked, and his enemies wept for forgiveness.[135] Muhammad Qasim also used this power of transferring his thoughts to others on two occasions when his disciples repeated his sermons word for word.[136] Most commonly, however, *tawajjuh* produced mystical experiences of light or of sensations like "a river flowing through one's heart."[137] As in the case of *tasarruf*, the *shaikhs* used this power to effect reform and spiritual progress.

134. Ẕuhūru'l-Ḥasan, *Arwāḥ-i Ṣalāṣah*, p. 413.
135. Manāẓir Aḥsan Gīlanī, *Sawāniḥ-i Qāsimī*, I, 344-45.
136. Ibid., pp. 329-31.
137. Ibid., p. 318.

Somewhat different was the ability of the *shaikhs* to perform wondrous deeds or *karamat*. The *karamat* were breaks or exceptions to the normal working of nature that gave evidence of God's continuing power and grace in the world. The saint did not perform *karamat* himself, but God acted through him. The fact that he could be a vehicle for a miracle, however, confirmed his great spiritual attainments. *Karamat* were an adornment to his stature, if not a foundation. As an intermediary to God, the Source of life and the world, the saint could aid his disciples not only spiritually, but, as symbolized in *karamat*, materially as well. Many of the *karamat* did have this function; others simply revealed the power of the *shaikh*. All were alike in being visible, although, ideally they were to be kept private. They were held to be of far less value than the spiritual perfections of the saint, and were considered to be acts cherished by the common people instead of by the elite. In the telling of the miracles they were, of course, likely to be exaggerated in order to glorify the *shaikh*. In his *fatawa* Rashid Ahmad neither confirmed nor denied the possibility of *karamat* but urged people to be quiet about stories that were not credible.[138]

There were countless reports of *karamat* of the Deobandi *shaikhs*. A key element in many of the episodes is the *shaikh's* knowledge of what was not evident to anyone else. They were believed, for example, to have heightened perceptions and sensitivity. This skill, *idrak*, was evident on such occasions as when Rashid Ahmad could "smell" someone present in a large crowd or detect a few drops of rinse water in his tea. On more substantial matters, the knowledge would be interpreted as an "opening" from God or *kashf*. This knowledge could be used to help the pious, as when ʿAbdu'r-Rahim Raipuri could direct a pilgrim to his lost horse,[139] or when Rashid Ahmad knew of a student's straitened circumstances and could then help him. Often it enhanced the *shaikh's* ability to provide spiritual guidance by revealing a person's needs or thoughts. Such knowledge kept the

138. Rashīd Aḥmad, *Fatāwā-yi Rashīdiyyah*, I, 61, 128.
139. Muḥammad ʿĀshiq Ilāhī, *Tazkiratu'l-Khalīl*, pp. 205, 228.

shaikh from being the dupe of his opponents. Rashid Ahmad refused initiation to some Shiʿis who were trying to test him, and he rejected the request for lodging of an apparently pious man who in fact wanted only a place to stay until the *ʿurs* of Shah ʿAbdu'l-Quddus.[140] Most chilling of such episodes was the attempt of some Shiʿis to persuade Muhammad Qasim to read the funeral prayer for a man who only feigned death. Muhammad Qasim complied, and the man never rose again.[141]

Thus the miracle of the saint's knowledge of what was not evident often shaded into an ability to intervene in the course of events. This was particularly true when his knowledge was of the future. In some of these cases, the saint presumably knew what would happen in any case. Rashid Ahmad thus urged a person to stay the night because it was going to storm, and urged someone else to come to him immediately because he knew he was about to get sick. Muhammad Yaʿqub foretold a cholera epidemic and even the future expansion of Delhi.[142] The line between foresight and intervention was less clear, however, on such occasions as the assurances of Rashid Ahmad about the outcome of a court case, the fate of an enemy, the reconciliation of a father and son, and the provision of resources for persons going on hajj. Maulana Ashraf ʿAli Thanawi himself puzzled over this distinction on one occasion when Rashid Ahmad assured him that he would never need the income of his property.[143]

Another mark of the grace shown the ʿulama was their dreams of the Prophet or other great men. Dreams of this sort were understood to be divine communications, not products of one's own experiences and wishes.[144] The pious prepared themselves for such dreams by the repetition of certain prayers and phrases before sleeping, and learned

140. Muḥammad ʿĀshiq Ilāhī, *Tazkiratu'r-Rashīd*, II, 59, 209-27.
141. Manāẕir Aḥsan Gīlanī, *Sawāniḥ-i Qāsimī*, II, 71.
142. Ẕuhūru'l-Ḥasan, *Arwāḥ-i Ṣalāṣah*, pp. 321, 313.
143. Ibid. p. 203.
144. For a series of essays on dreams, including several on Islamic conceptions, see Gustav von Grunebaum and Roger Caillois, eds., *The Dream and Human Societies* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1966).

to remember their dreams. Most of the recorded dreams bestowed support and approval. Maulana Hussain Ahmad Madani, for example, recorded eighteen of his dreams of the Prophet, many of which involved the Prophet himself, or Abraham, or Rashid Ahmad giving him food such as dates, pumpkin seeds, sweets, or, most often, milk or buttermilk. He noted in particular that he would often have such sustaining dreams shortly before he would have to face some problem. In one he was lying in the Prophet's mosque, covered by a green shawl; and a man told him that his feet were like the Prophet's. He saw the Prophet in another dream granting him knowledge; in another he saw him and felt no gulf between the Prophet and himself. In dreams he received *bai'at* from a dozen saints; the assurance, as interpreted by Rashid Ahmad, that his lineage went back to the Caliph Usman; the prediction that he would be an *imam* and officer of the hajj; and the promise that "the Divine Grace which had been directed toward Mahmud Hasan would now be directed toward [himself]."[145] Of similar reassurance was a dream of Rashid Ahmad's: "Once Rashid Ahmad saw himself acting as *mufti* before the enthroned Prophet, who posed to him one hundred questions that he answered successfully. 'Since that day,' he said, 'I have been happy and felt that were the whole world against me I would still know that the right was on my side.' "[146] The 'ulama interpreted dreams positively. Husain Ahmad dreamed that he saw the Prophet's grave opened and saw him looking completely fresh except that his lips and nose were enlarged; he cut the lips and nose and they did not bleed. In describing the dream he emphasized the value of having dreamed of the Prophet, and marveled at his miraculous appearance and failure to bleed. He did not take into account the aggressive element involved in his mutilating him. Rashid Ahmad, after Muhammad Qasim's death, dreamed that Qasim was his bride.[147] Since Rashid Ahmad had, on one occasion, publicly had

145. Ḥusain Aḥmad Madanī, *Naqsh-i Ḥayāt*, I, 90-97.
146. Ẓuhūru'l-Ḥasan, *Arwāḥ-i Ṣalāṣah*, pp. 287-88.
147. Muḥammad 'Āshiq Ilāhī, *Tażkiratu'r-Rashīd*, I, 244.

Qasim lie next to him and had embraced him (to the latter's acute embarrassment)[148] one might have expected him not to record such a dream. Instead he did, and interpreted it to mean that all Qasim's pupils were his children as well, and he would continue their spiritual guidance.[149] Dreams were a source of comfort and sustenance, a channel of divine communication and approval.

The teachers and *shaikhs* of Deoband were known as men of great spiritual power. Over and over those who knew Hajji ʿAbid Husain, Muhammad Yaʿqub, Muhammad Qasim, or Rashid Ahmad would say that to see their faces would be "to be reminded of God."[150] The ʿulama were intimate with a God who could seem distant and, by their very being, they brought Him close to other men. When Rashid Ahmad preached, the whole mosque would reverberate with "ahhh."[151] The ʿulama knew the Law and they knew the Path, and their teachings could provide meaning in this life and hope of happiness in the next.

The Experience of Discipleship

The disciples of these men were taught through writings, homilies, and example the fundamental truths of Islam. Above all, their teachers taught that the inner experience of sufism was not a challenge to Islam but the deepest of its reaffirmations. They taught that the knowledge of sufism was certainty of Islam's most basic truth, the truth of *tauhid* that underlay the Law. That truth revealed that God alone had an independent existence, and that all else derived from him. This belief was to be accepted not on the basis of rational proof but on faith.[152]

In their teaching, the *shaikhs* used a variety of classical

148. Ẓuhūru'l-Ḥasan, *Arwāḥ-i Ṡalāṡah*, p. 289. The commentator suggests that in Rashid Ahmad *fana* (annihilation) predominated; in Muḥammad Qasim, *hujlat* (modesty).

149. Muḥammad ʿĀshiq Ilāhī, *Tażkiratu'r-Rashīd*, I, 244.

150. For examples of this comment see: Ḥusain Aḥmad Madanī, *Naqsh-i Ḥayāt*, p. 118; Mansur ʿAli Khan, *Mażhab-i Manṣūr*, p. 197; Muḥammad ʿĀshiq Ilāhī, *Tażkiratu'r-Rashīd*, II, 28.

151. Muḥammad ʿĀshiq Ilāhī, *Tażkiratu'r-Rashīd*, I, 251-52.

152. See Marijan Molé, *Les mystiques musulmans* (Paris, 1965), pp. 29-31.

metaphors to describe this all-important relationship of man and God: man's existence is like that of a rider who moves in a boat without himself moving; it is like the light of the earth, which depends on the sun and does not itself produce light; it is like a letter written in the air, distinguishable but without existence.[153] The relation, or *nisbat*, between God and man they held to be embodied in the Arabic language, where man and God are each described by different measures of the same root, and are thus joined in multiple relationships like that of mercy, in which God is The Merciful and man is the one shown mercy.

The goal of this teaching was not asceticism or withdrawal from the world but a reorientation of one's active life on the basis of religious obedience. "As for solitude," wrote Ashraf ʿAli Thanawi, "all that achieves is fame."[154] A person following this teaching would not withdraw from the world, nor would his basic character (*tabiʿat*) change. A harsh person would remain harsh, but now would ride roughshod over wrong-doing; a careless person would neglect the entanglements of the world but not his religious duties.[155]

The basic step required of the disciple was repentance for his previous deviations and a sincere undertaking to adhere to the Law. Rashid Ahmad, in a letter according *baiʿat*, wrote: "Say prayers, act on the *sunnat*, and do nothing against the *sharʿ*, for this is the reason for initiation and is its sum."[156] *Shariʿat* and *tariqat*, he explained, were interdependent: "to act from the outside is *sharʿ*, to have injunctions enter the heart is *tariqat*."[157] Rashid Ahmad explained that great leaders of the past knew both inner and outer knowledge; and he required students to complete their lessons before being initiated. The *shaikh* himself tried to guide his disciples in specific applications of the Law, as

153. Muḥammad Yaʿqūb, *Bayāẓ*, pp. 107, 109.
154. Ẕuhūru'l-Ḥasan, *Arwāḥ-i Ṡalāṡah* pp. 302-303.
155. Rashīd Aḥmad, *Fatāwā-yi Rashīdiyyah*, I, 76, 81, 90.
156. Ibid., p. 41.
157. Ibid., p. 13.

well as in its spirit, and often answered technical problems of the legitimacy of their activities.[158]

The Deobandis emphasized these teachings rather than the customary observances of sufism. Indeed, the disciple was expected to forsake such observances as that of *ʿurs*, the death anniversary of the saints, which often lasted several days and involved various rites such as the repetition of Fatihah, offering of money, the reading of the Qur'an in a single night, and the distribution of food.[159] Most extravagant were the observances at such tombs as that of Hazrat Nizamu'd-Din in Delhi and Hazrat Muʿinu'd-Din in Ajmer. Observances were held even apart from the tomb on behalf of such important saints as Shaikh ʿAbdu'l-Qadir Gilani, many of whose followers observed not only the yearly anniversary of his death but a monthly one (the *giyarhwin*), as well. The Deobandis were not notably influential in eliminating these observances, for even in Gangoh, Rashid Ahmad, to his great anguish, was unable to stop the celebration of the *ʿurs* of Shaikh ʿAbdu'l-Quddus.[160] Indeed, the appeal of these festivals can be judged by Muhammad Yaʿqub's own attraction to them. He wrote that although he no longer participated in them as he had in his youth, his outward propriety belied his inner attitude.[161] He felt similarly ambiguous about *samaʿ*, the use of music associated particularly with the Chishtis, but he condemned its use as harmful to beginners and unnecessary to the advanced.[162] Some of the Deobandis also questioned the legitimacy of making pilgrimages to the graves of saints.[163]

In limiting the practices associated with what is often called "popular sufism," the Deobandis tried to minimize, as they had in the case of the living saint, the role of the dead saint as intercessor. Rashid Ahmad explained in a *fatwa* that praying to a saint to grant one's wish was wholly

158. Muḥammad Yaʿqūb, *Bayāẓ*, pp. 44, 62, 81, 98-99, 101-106.
159. See description in Murray Titus, *Islam in India and Pakistan* (Calcutta, 1959), p. 142.
160. Muḥammad ʿĀshiq Ilāhī, *Tazkiratu'r-Rashīd*, II, 9.
161. Muḥammad Yaʿqūb, *Bayāẓ*, pp. 83-84, 87.
162. Ibid., p. 42.
163. Rashīd Aḥmad, *Fatāwā-yi Rashidīyyah*, II, 100.

illegitimate, nothing less than *shirk* or polytheism. He admitted a certain ambiguity on the question of whether one could ask that saint to intercede with God on one's behalf.[164] He himself implied that this was also wrong. He doubted that the saints could even hear one's prayers, and specifically forbad his followers to call on the *shaikh* deemed most powerful, Shaikh ʿAbdu'l-Qadir Gilani.[165] He urged his followers simply to venerate the memory of the dead by performing good works and rituals whose credit could be assigned to them (through the transfer of reward, *isal-i sawab*). Muhammad Yaʿqub, in contrast, believed that the dead could hear prayers and hence intercede, but only if the believer were present at their graves.[166] Muhammad Qasim also believed that the dead could hear, but urged his followers just to come to a grave, read a section of the Qur'an, and offer its reading as *isal-i sawab*.[167] He turned to metaphor to explain the subtle balance between recognition of the saint's power and preservation of belief in the unity of God and the necessity of obedience to Him. A servant, working a large ceiling fan, asked him what the value was of visiting graves. "He in turn asked the *pankha-wallah*, 'For whom do you pull the *pankha*?' He answered, 'for you.' 'Even so,' said Muhammad Qasim, 'but others sitting here also benefit, and thus God's mercy and forgiveness are shared by those close to one of His saints.' "[168] The Deobandis uniformly prohibited tombs and monuments for themselves and their followers,[169] and forbad the placing of food on graves.[170]

Whatever the intercessory role of the saint might be, the Deobandis, in contrast to the common practice of the *pirs* of the shrines, emphasized as far more effective the central

164. Ibid., I, 12, 29-30, 72, 76-77, 92-93. On the subject of *sawab* (merit), however, he often condemned those who held that the souls of the dead come to homes on Friday nights in search of *sawab*. See ibid., p. 90.

165. Ibid., pp. 32-36, signed by others as well; II, 4-5.

166. Muḥammad Yaʿqūb, *Bayāẓ*, pp. 106-109.

167. Manāẓir Aḥsan Gīlanī, *Sawāniḥ-i Qāsımī*, II, 30-31. Manṣūr ʿAlī Khān, *Maẕhab-ı Manṣūr*, I, 92.

168. Manāẓir Aḥsan Gīlanī, *Sawānıḥ-ı Qāsımī*, II, 34-35.

169. Rashīd Aḥmad, *Fatāwā-yi Rashīdiyyah*, I, 5, 51, 94.

170. Ibid., pp. 47-147.

responsibility of the disciple to adhere to the Law. Rashid Ahmad once lamented the failure of Sufis to recognize this responsibility:

> The harm the Sufis have caused to Islam . . . is greater than that of any other sect. Originally the Companions did not need disciplines. Over time they became necessary, but then deteriorated into deviant practice. Those who tried to effect reform were Shaikh ʿAbdu'l-Qadir Gilani, Shaikh Shihabu'd-Din Suhrawardi, Shaikh Ahmad Sarhindi, and Sayyid Ahmad Barelwi. God revealed to them the way of the *sunnat* and, praise be to Him, He also revealed it to me. If a person does the things ordered by the Prophet, like *namaz,* no one considers him a saint or a great man. But if he does things not so enjoined . . . everyone does.[171]

The Deobandis affirmed that the most advanced mystic was he who most successfully imitated the exemplary life of the Prophet.

The Deobandis not only taught these fundamental truths of the religion but also instructed their disciples in methods of meditation and devotions that prepared their hearts for intuitive knowledge of these same truths. The centrality of the relation between the *shaikh* and the disciple was evident in their teaching of the practice known as *tasawwur-i shaikh,* conceiving of the image of one's *shaikh* as an aid to focusing one's thought on spiritual matters. Some earlier reformers, such as Maulana Isma'il, had condemned the practice; and some of the Deobandis suggested that its practice should be spontaneous, not taught. They held it wrong to consider the practice a necessity or to consider the *shaikh* actually present.[172] They did not want the *shaikh* to be understood as an intercessor or conduit of divine power to a passive believer. At the same time, they held that the spiritual power of the *shaikh* had a compulsion beyond that of the guidance of the *ʿalim* in effecting the common goal of a more perfect commitment to the Law. Muhammad Yaʿqub urged one

171. Ẓuhūru'l-Ḥasan, *Arwāḥ-i Ṣalāṣah,* p. 279.
172. Rashīd Aḥmad, *Fatāwā-yi Rashīdiyyah,* I, 70, 72-73, 74, 80.

of his followers to engage in *tasawwur* at the time of the spiritual exercise of *zikr* "as the lover continuously thinks of the beloved, or the student holds in mind the image of his teacher while doing his work." The *shaikh* was, he explained, the channel through which Divine Grace reached the disciple, and he was, accordingly, to be obeyed "as the magistrate of a city on behalf of a king."[173]

The desired result of contemplation of the *shaikh* was extinction of the thought of all else but him, *fana fi'sh-shaikh*. This was a recognized step toward extinction of all else but the Prophet, *fana fi'r-rasul*; and ultimately, of all else but God, *fana fi'llah* or *ihsan*. In a state of excitement, Rashid Ahmad once confided his own experience of this progression: "For three years the face of Imdadu'llah was in my heart and I did nothing without asking him first. . . . Then, for three years the face of the Prophet was in my heart. . . . Then there existed the rank of spiritual realization (*ihsan ka martabah*)."[174] Rashid Ahmad's disciple, Husain Ahmad Madani, described his own experience of identification with his *shaikh*, in turn:

> In Medina, at first, my various occupations kept me from assiduity in practicing my disciplines. Then, however, I became more regular, and as I did I found that my love for Rashid Ahmad was growing so intensely that it became even greater than my love for Mahmud Hasan, although that love did not diminish. I had many dreams of virtuous people. I would go every night to the mosque which has the tomb of the Prophet; and I would repeat my *zikr* until my body began to move out of control, then, if other people were present, I would go outside. A powerful feeling would come over me that my body had become Rashid Ahmad's body. This was the state called *fana fi'sh-shaikh*, annihilation in the *shaikh*.[175]

In his case he had wanted to have initiation from Mahmud

173. Muḥammad Ya'qūb, *Bayāẓ*, pp. 71-74.
174. Ẓuhūru'l-Ḥasan, *Arwāḥ-i Ṣalāṣah*, pp. 290-91.
175. Ḥusain Aḥmad Madanī, *Naqsh-i Ḥayāt*, pp. 87-88.

Hasan, his childhood teacher, but Mahmud Hasan had directed him to his own *shaikh* instead. The effect of initiation had proved awesome not only in the kind of experience described above but, as he wrote, in a startling new fidelity to the repetition of *namaz* without any conscious effort.

The core of the meditational practices of the Deobandis, as of Sufis everywhere, was *zikr*, the "recollection" of the name of God. There were two categories of *zikr*. One was *zikr* of the name of God alone, *zikr-i ism-i zat*. The second was the first phrase of the profession of faith, *la ilaha illa'llah*, which enshrines the fundamental truth of the nature of God and man. The phrase was known as the *nafi o isbat* because it contained both negation, *nafi*, of all divinity other than God, and affirmation, *isbat*, of His singular divinity. By regular repetition and by meditation on various aspects of the meaning of the *zikr*, the disciple sought complete forgetfulness of self and consciousness of God. The method was not esoteric or difficult. Its success rested on the intention of the believer and on his acceptance by God, not on the cultivation of extra-ordinary states. Indeed, believers were warned to avoid such experiences in favor of *jazb* "not in the sense of unconsciousness or madness but rather attentiveness to God's kindness, and the sense of being drawn to him. One perceives light and the revelation of secrets. And finally *zikr* becomes permanent, a part of one's nature."[176] Through the influence of *zikr*, Rashid Ahmad asserted, there was a doorkeeper at the door of the heart to keep out all else but the thought of God.[177] The importance given to *zikr* was evident in a *hadis* cited by the Deobandis which explained that the very foundation of the world was *zikr*, and only as long as there were people on earth who repeated God's name would the world continue.[178]

Much of the teaching of the *shaikhs* dealt with methods of *zikr*. Their teachings were not uniquely Deobandi, nor

176. Muḥammad Ya'qūb, *Bayāẓ*, pp. 60-61.
177. Muḥammad 'Āshiq Ilāhī, *Taẕkiratu'r-Rashīd*, II, 119.
178. Muḥammad Ya'qūb, *Bayāẓ*, p. 61.

even Indian, but rather typical of sufism in general.[179] They taught, most basically, that to embark on the path of sufism required a substantial commitment of obedience to the chosen *shaikh*, to the Law, and to a routine of devotion. One was to adhere to that routine, however difficult, and however slight the result seemed to be. A fundamental rule was that whatever disciplines be undertaken, they should be such that they could be faithfully performed every day. There was to be neither slackness nor an attempt at extreme devotions that would create some artificial state. Muhammad Ya'qub's frequent word to his disciple Mulla Qasim was that steadfastness was greater than any miracles. He praised him most for his continuance through personal difficulties and illness. "If one weary," wrote Ya'qub, "praise God that the effort is so little for a work so great."[180] Man's efforts however, had to be great, for sufism, like all aspects of religion, was felt to have fallen into decline. Rashid Ahmad believed that the "blessing of *zikr*" had declined in Hindustan and that there was greater hope of its being influential in the Hijaz.[181] Muhammad Ya'qub offered as a justification for permitting moderately voiced *zikr* the explanation that in this age difficult devotions were beyond man's capacity. To attain silent *zikr*, coupled with control of one's breathing, was the desired goal, but was long unattained even for Muhammad Ya'qub himself.[182] His advice was to engage in a moderate amount of *zikr* and simply to increase the amount of devotions and the amount done silently as best one could. His teachings reflected great understanding of the difficulty of fidelity to the routine. Rashid Ahmad, similarly, urged his followers to complete their repetitions in the day if they could not finish them at night; to perform them softly if they could not do them silently;

179. Compare descriptions of Sufi practices in such works as Martin Lings, *A Sufi Saint of the Twentieth Century: Shaikh Ahmad al-'Alawi* (2nd ed. Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1973 [1961]) and Hamid Algar, "Some Notes on the Naqshbandi Tariqat in Bosnia," *Die Welt das Islams*, X (1972), 168-203.

180. Muḥammad Ya'qūb, *Bayāẓ*, p. 154.

181. Muḥammad 'Āshiq Ilāhī, *Taẕkiratu'r-Rashīd*, I, 90.

182. Muḥammad Ya'qūb, *Bayāẓ*, pp. 106-108.

to meditate lying down if they could not manage sitting; and to engage in their disciplines without ablution, if they could not perform ablution.[183]

If *zikr* were successful, one would feel warmth, enthusiasm, agitation, and such physical symptoms as hairs standing on end, spontaneous speaking, laughing and weeping, and visions of light. If such signs occurred, one was to be thankful; if not, simply patient.[184] Moreover, such experiences could be a distraction, an end in themselves, and the role of the *shaikh* was, in part, to guide his followers beyond such potential distractions. A *shaikh* like Rashid Ahmad would guide them toward a regulated life and check their pride in such experiences: "One Afghan had a vision and became very proud. Rashid Ahmad told him of a man who had engaged in *zikr* for a thousand years, yet suffered in hell because of his ingratitude to God. 'All things praise God, but only man, after a bit of *zikr*, thinks he has reached some height. We cannot even thank Him.' "[185] The physical experience could be helpful, but far more important was the growing understanding of man's relation to God and the obedience to Him that that understanding engendered.

The goal of *zikr* was the symbolic cleansing of the heart of all distractions and the impression on it of the single name of God. As Muhammad Ya'qub taught Mulla Qasim, the best devotion for both beginner and advanced was that of the repetition of *nafi o isbat*, accompanied by techniques of motion and breathing as a way of eliminating distracting thoughts.[186] He taught him the following exercise, and enjoined him to master it thoroughly before moving to a subsequent step:

> In the morning, sit quietly with your eyes closed and your tongue fixed on the ridge of the roof of your mouth. Draw your breath in and fix it so that there be no motion. Bow your head toward the heart and pull *la* toward the

183. Muḥammad 'Āshiq Ilāhī, *Tazkiratu'r-Rashīd*, II, 117.

184. Muḥammad Ya'qūb, *Bayāẓ*, pp. 61, 70, 106, 113-14, 161-62; Muḥammad 'Āshiq Ilāhī, *Tazkiratu'r-Rashīd*, II, 126-36.

185. Muḥammad 'Āshiq Ilāhī, *Tazkiratu'r-Rashīd*, II, 125.

186. Muḥammad Ya'qūb, *Bayāẓ*, p. 167.

> right shoulder cap and think *ilaha*; then bring the head back to the left, giving a mental emphasis to *illa'llah* which is to be implanted in the heart. At first do this three times in one breath, then quietly exhale through the nose, so that if someone is sitting close by, he will not notice what you are doing. Then increase the number by one each day up to two hundred. If you cannot control the breath in this way, exhale when pulling *la* toward the right shoulder, whether your repetition is silent or voiced or secret; and with the next breath impress *illa'llah* on the heart.[187]

Muhammad Ya'qub taught him to meditate on various dimensions of the meaning of *zikr* while saying *la ilaha*: as a beginner he was to think *la ma'budah*, nothing worshiped other than God; as an intermediate, *la maqsudah*, nothing intended; as an advanced disciple, *la maujudah*, nothing existent. With the second phrase, *illa'llah*, all were to think on the Essence of God as the summation of His attributes.[188] Later, he taught him variations in the repetition, such as providing a more rhythmic repetition by emphasizing the long "a" and double "l" of *la* and *allah*, respectively.[189] He also taught him various methods of repeating the *ism-i zat*, the name of Allah, both in rhythmic patterns and in the method called *zikr-i arrah*, in which breathing resembles the sound of a saw. The basic devotion of the order was the repetition of *barah tasbih*, a baker's dozen of recitations, each ninety-nine times, guided by a rosary: two of *nafi o isbat*, four of *isbat*, six of *allahu allah*, and one of *allah*.[190]

Muhammad Ya'qub also provided practical advice about the procedure for performing meditations. He urged Mulla Qasim to spend at least one-eighth of the day, at best, one-third in *zikr*.[191] He recommended solitude, particularly if one's *zikr* were done aloud. He suggested late night as the best time: "when one is neither hungry nor full of food, nor preoccupied with the cares of the day . . . nor filled

187. Ibid., pp. 13-14, 167.
188. Ibid., pp. 59-61.
189. Ibid., p. 167.
190. Ibid., pp. 51, 60, 115, 160.
191. Ibid., p. 33.

with lust." The time of the supererogatory night prayer was particularly good, its excellence indicated by its initial inclusion as a required prayer.[192] Ever practical, he suggested that one eat lightly and take a nap to facilitate getting up at this hour;[193] and ever comforting, he assured a discouraged Mulla Qasim he would find it easier as the nights grew longer.[194] One ought to be in temperate surroundings, he urged, neither hot nor cold; and one should use neither cold water nor cold things like camphor to temper the effects of the *zikr*, nor heat-producing medicines or foods like sweets to stimulate the warmth the *zikr* itself should induce.[195] If one were thirsty during *zikr*, he recommended changing to silent *zikr* or meditation, not drinking water. And if one were continually distracted, he recommended reading lines of poets such as Hafiz, Dard, and Sauda, and then meditating on *nafi*, the nonexistence of all distractions other than God.

In addition to the *zikr*, the *ashgal* or disciplines of the disciple included periods of meditation. Muhammad Yaʿqub recommended meditation on certain concepts while repeating the phrases of the *zikr*; and at its conclusion, he suggested concentration on one's heart, in which one would place an image of "light or comfort, or repose or warmth." He recommended two times in particular for quiet meditation. In the morning he suggested that one spend some time thinking about death, lying in the position of a dead person, in order to accustom one's nature to death and to stimulate one's consciousness of shortcomings.[196] In the evening, after the sunset prayer, he suggested sitting alone, quietly, thinking of "the Divine Grace that would reach one through the medium of the heart of the *shaikh*."[197] He suggested, as enjoined by *hadis*, the repetition a fixed number of times of certain *suras* of the Qur'an and of certain phrases, primarily of praise to God, after each *namaz* and at bedtime.

192. Ibid., pp. 42, 154.
193. Ibid., p. 120.
194. Ibid., p. 120.
195. Ibid., pp. 166-70.
196. Ibid., pp. 44, 116, 158-59.
197. Ibid., pp. 120-23.

He also set as part of *ashgal* the reading of certain litanies: of praise to the Prophet, of supplication for forgiveness, and of desire for aid and protection. Some of these litanies, such as the *hizbu'l-bahr*, had been condemned by various reformers who preferred only formulae present in the Qur'an. Rashid Ahmad, for example, did find certain *durud*, litanies in praise of the Prophet, to be illegitimate.[198] In general, however, they encouraged as frequent prayer and *zikr* as possible, teaching phrases to say at every stage of one's life[199] and in every event of one's day—even ones for various postures in a wrestling match.[200]

Some of the Deobandis, notably Muhammad Ya'qub and Hajji 'Abid Husain, also taught *'amaliyyat*, prescriptions of certain prayers, readings, and phrases that differed from *zikr* because they were intended to secure such particular goals as employment, increased resources, the end of an unsuitable relationship, or the defeat of an enemy. *'Amaliyyat*, typically in the form of *ta'wiz* (amulets) and *nuqush* (numerical charts), were considered far less important than *zikr*. The *ta'wiz* generally involved some written matter that was often worn in a particular place on the body. The recipient was enjoined never to open the *ta'wiz* to read it, and to perform certain accompanying prayers or actions. *Nuqush* took such forms as a numerical chart carved in wax and encased in leather that was devised by Muhammad Ya'qub for the general protection of a young child. To ensure the effectiveness of the chart he decreed that the child should eat no eggs, chicken, or milk until the age of twelve.[201] Another kind of *'amaliyyat* is exemplified by one designed to identify a thief. Muhammad Ya'qub instructed the recipient to read sections of the Qur'an and make use of a numerical chart drawn on iron that included the phrase "he is not a thief" and the suspect's name. The piece of iron was to be breathed on and thrown into water. If the

198. Muḥammad 'Āshiq Ilāhī, *Taẕkiratu'r-Rashīd*, II, 116.
199. Ibid., p. 117.
200. Muḥammad Ya'qūb, *Bayāẓ*, p. 185.
201. Ibid., p. 293.

name of the presumed thief washed off, he was deemed innocent.[202]

The material used in the *ʿamaliyyat,* such as phrases from the Qur'an or numerical charts based on the *abjad* system of assigning numerical equivalents to the Arabic letters, were part of the high Islamic tradition. But many of the ancillary directions that often derived from folk practices, and the basic use to which the material was put, could conflict with the fundamental teaching of simple trust in God. The ʿulama were aware of the danger in *ʿamaliyyat,* even though they could be an aid to piety, and warned against belief that they could be effective alone. Once, for example, when Muhammad Yaʿqub gave a *taʿwiz* for the prevention of miscarriage, he reminded the suppliant that the amulet was only a stratagem, a *hilah,* and added the prayer that God, the provider of all "real cures," act on its behalf.[203] He often reminded Mulla Qasim to remember the centrality of *zikr* and *shaghl,* and once instructed him to cease the distraction of *ʿamaliyyat* and concentrate only on the recitation of the *barah tasbih.*[204] Thus *ʿamaliyyat* had to be used in the context of an obedient and pious religious life. It is misleading to judge *ʿamaliyyat,* as some scholars do, to be magic practiced by the *pirs* of the shrines for the benefit of the simple and uneducated. *ʿAmaliyyat* were in fact used by the pious of all backgrounds. The Deobandis regarded them as merely ancillary to other religious responsibilities and practices, but all, no doubt, saw what seemed to be the granting of a prayer in the context of the goodness and the power of God.[205]

Many of the ʿulama also treated their followers and other people according to the system of Islamic medicine known as *yunani tibb.* Medicine was widely understood to be not

202. Ibid., p. 298.
203. Ibid., pp. 80-83.
204. Ibid., pp. 150, 153.
205. For a discussion of the general question of so-called magic and its relation to religion see Hildred Geertz, "An Anthropology of Religion and Magic, I," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History,* VI (Summer, 1975), pp. 71-89; and Keith Thomas, "An Anthropology of Religion and Magic, II," ibid., pp. 91-109.

an objective science but an ancillary dimension of religion. As in *ʿamiliyyat*, the efficacy of cures was understood to depend on the will of God, not on principles tested by experimentation and observed results. Hence the piety of the practitioner, who was close to God, was considered to be of great importance. Collections of prescriptions, therefore, frequently included the caveat that the reader not attempt to apply them himself. He was to turn, rather, to the *shaikhs* who were "healers of the body" as they were "healers of the soul." Indeed, the two were interrelated. His biographer wrote of Rashid Ahmad: "healing of the spirit—for which he was made a Deputy of the Prophet and sent into the world—was the soul of healing bodily ills."[206] Muhammad Yaʿqub, in this vein, wrote, "for a Muslim, illness is a cleansing, an occasion to seek inner as well as outer health."[207]

The ʿulama studied the body of traditional medical knowledge that was based on Greek principles and preserved, especially, by families of distinguished doctors in Delhi.[208] Some of the ʿulama studied directly from them; others, like Rashid Ahmad, mastered the subject primarily from the study of books.[209] There was, however, as with the use of *ʿamaliyyat*, a deeply felt inclination to forego treatment and trust simply in God. Rashid Ahmad, for example, although a skilled practitioner of *tibb* in his youth, later gave it up. He sought no treatment for his own ills but would humbly accept any medicine offered him by his fellows. Blind in his old age, he refused the offer of the Civil Surgeon to operate, for he feared he might miss the more efficacious required prayer.[210]

The value of practicing *tibb* was, however, great. It was sanctioned by the example of the Prophet, who himself acted at times as a doctor. It was held to be a way of serving one's fellow creatures, for the prime prerequisite for its

206. Muḥammad ʿĀshiq Ilāhī, *Tazkiratu'r-Rashīd*, II, 63.
207. Muḥammad Yaʿqūb, *Bayāẓ*, p. 164.
208. See Qāẓī Muḥammad ʿAbdu'l-Ghaffār, *Ḥayāt-i Ajmal* (Aligarh, 1950) for the most distinguished of these families.
209. Muḥammad ʿĀshiq Ilāhī, *Tazkiratu'r-Rashīd*, I, 63-65.
210. Ibid., II, 77.

practitioners was compassion for the unfortunate, the quality above all of God himself. The pious ʿulama who knew *tibb* requested no compensation, and treated anyone, the great or the lowly, Hindu or Muslim. They had, in *tibb*, a way of exercising extensive influence. In the period when he engaged in *tibbi* cures, Rashid Ahmad treated humble peasants with whom he conversed in their own dialects and whom he treated with great kindness. Medicine was also valued because its principles were held to be an affirmation of the existence and character of God. It in no sense enshrined the truths of the religion, as did the fundamental studies of Qur'an and *hadis*. Indeed, for this reason it was long excluded from the Deobandi syllabus. But as exemplified in the work of Hakim Mansur ʿAli Khan Muradabadi, a graduate of Deoband and later chief teacher at the medical college in Hyderabad, many proofs of God's existence could be derived from the beneficent and regular principles enshrined in medical theories.[211] There was ambivalence about the place of medicine, not only as exemplified by those who favored simple trust in God in times of illness, but also by those who felt it legitimate to frequent practitioners of various systems, specifically Ayurvedic and allopathic, "as the Prophet used both the medicines of *ʿarab* and *ʿajam*."[212]

Whether in illness or any other crisis, the disciple knew that his *shaikh* would provide concerned and effective help. Often the intervention of the saint took the dramatic form of *karamat* discussed above. One cure for illness was held to be the very dust of Muhammad Yaʿqub's grave.[213] Muhammad Qasim made it possible for a police official to free a barber, already charged with a crime, and the entry simply disappeared.[214] Rashid Ahmad influenced the outcome of court cases; effected the reinstatement to employment of an inspector of police; righted the bad accounts of an-

211. Manṣūr ʿAlī Khān, *Maẕhab-i Manṣūr*.

212. Manāẓir Aḥsan Gīlanī, *Sawāniḥ-ı Qāsimī*, I, 62; Muḥammad Yaʿqūb Nānautawī, *Sawāniḥ-ı ʿUmrī-yi Maulānā Muḥammad Qāsim*, p. 21.

213. Ẓuhūru'l-Ḥasan, *Arwāḥ-i Ṣalāṣah*, p. 322.

214. Manāẓir Aḥsan Gīlanī, *Sawāniḥ-i Qāsimī*, I, 321.

other police inspector—in this last case at the price of his repentance for his opposition to the Daru'l-ʿUlum. Many accounts describe the ability of the *shaikh* to transform natural phenomena: turning bitter water sweet, quieting a storm, making food feed many people.

In addition to such material crises, the follower could expect aid in his moral and psychological life, as well. The follower was, on his side, expected to open himself wholly to the *shaikh*, to describe his feelings and his actions honestly and without reserve. Often, through *kashf*, the *shaikh* in fact knew the disciple's thoughts without being told. Thus Rashid Ahmad knew a person longed for a private audience with him but hesitated to ask; and that another was perplexed by Rashid Ahmad's fine clothes and needed to be assured that they had been an unsought gift. He knew that one of his students was unsuited for his unspoken desire to record *fatawa* and urged him to drop it. He also knew people's behavior when not in his presence, and on this basis told a follower to stop consorting with the unreformed (*bidʿatis*).[215] When a disciple did describe his problems, the worthy *shaikh* listened with complete sympathy. Over and over the characteristic response of the *shaikh* was to reassure the disciple of the normality, of the typical quality of his experiences. Thus Hakim Mansur ʿAli Khan Muradabadi described one of his experiences in bringing a problem to his *shaikh*:

> I was so infatuated with a young boy that his image was before me day and night. I told Maulana Muhammad Qasim, for I was troubled by this and all my work suffered. He treated me with great kindness. . . . He asked me if the boy came to me. I was ashamed to answer, but finally said no. He told me not to be ashamed and assured me that many people had experiences like this. Because he was so understanding I described my love further. He showed no anger, no displeasure.
>
> But this emotion continued to trouble me. I went to Muhammad Qasim again and told him that this love had

215. Muḥammad ʿĀshiq Ilāhī, *Tazkiratu'r-Rashīd*, II, especially pp. 226-28, 173, 229-30.

> suffused my veins and that I needed help. He told me to come to him after the prayer. I did. He held my hands and such a state of light came over me that it was as if I were in the presence of God. Nothing like this has ever happened in my life. He kept rotating my hand and I went beyond myself. When he stopped that rotating the experience came to an end. And my infatuation had ended.[216]

Striking in this episode was the *shaikh*'s supportiveness, his lack of condemnation, and his reassurance that the problem was a common one. In the expenditure of *tawajjuh* and *tasarruf*, the *shaikh* was "wholly present" for his disciple.[217]

Disciples also brought their dreams to the *shaikh* and sought explanation of them. Again the *shaikhs* seem to have given a positive meaning to dreams whenever possible, and to have relieved the disciple of worry about dreams. Thus Mulla Qasim once sought an explanation of a particularly gory dream in which his own head was cut off. Because at the time of decapitation he had uttered the attestation of faith, Muhammad Ya'qub stressed that and praised God that *zikr* had begun to take effect.[218] The skill of the 'ulama in interpreting such dreams depended on *kashf*, an opening from God.[219]

The interpretations of two of Mulla Qasim's other dreams, recorded in the notebook of Muhammad Ya'qub, nicely recapitulate the characteristics of the relation between *shaikh* and disciple and the conception of the world both espoused. In the first dream Mulla Qasim saw letters of the Qur'an flying away. The reason for this dream, Muhammad Ya'qub explained, was that the attention of Muslims toward the Qur'an was so little. In such matters as marriage, divorce, and inheritance they turned to English law, and in other matters more narrowly religious, such as prayer and fasting, they were lax. In the dream, buildings and trees were

216. Ẓuhūru'l-Ḥasan, *Arwāḥ-i Ṣalāṣah*, pp. 245-48.

217. The phrase is that of Dr. Muhammad Ajmal, "Muslim Traditions in Psycho-therapy" (typescript, 1966).

218. Muḥammad Ya'qūb, *Bayāẓ*, p. 181.

219. Ibid., p. 127.

also seen to be falling away. This he interpreted as a sign of the disappearance of blessing. Finally, the sky was seen to be falling while all remained oblivious. This he saw as a sign of man's disobedience, which recalled the *hadis* that the sky was falling and man felt it no more than he would feel a wad of cotton on his nose.[220] The pious view of the world was one of utter decline.

But even in that world it was possible to find meaning and coherence. A second dream, striking because it seems to have no religious meaning, he interpreted to suggest the richness, the green fecundity, of the spiritual life. In it Mulla Qasim saw himself walking along a road where he met a goat and came upon a pool, fed by a flowing fountain at the foot of a hill. There he heard an unknown voice. His *shaikh* interpreted this dream symbolically, taking the goat as a sign of blessing in *suluk*; the pool as a sign of the body of ʿulama, which was being nourished by the fountain, who were the Sufis (*darwesh*). The hill was a symbol of the high internal stages one might reach, and the grass represented corresponding mystic states. As one progressed in understanding the singleness of God, the easier one would find the climb. The voice was that of the *shaikh*, an expression of the voice of God, which could reach seekers at every moment and provide aid at every time of need.[221]

To be that voice was the goal of the *alim* of the late nineteenth century. The follower wholly entrusted himself to the direction of his guide. In the context of the subsequent nurturing relationship he put himself in touch with what were held to be the truest currents of the religious tradition. At best, he learned—from the teaching of his *shaikh* as well as from the experience of an intimate relationship with him—an integrity of purpose and personality that gave direction, certainty, and meaning to his life.

The Deobandi ʿulama were thus far more than professors in a theological academy. They offered reformist guidance in matters of belief and ritual through the dispensa-

220. Ibid., pp. 128-30.
221. Ibid., p. 117.

tion of *fatawa*; they taught techniques of discipline and meditation; they provided guidance, understanding, and material aid in times of personal crisis. They provided their followers a route to God; a tie to the great religious figures of the past; a sense of pride in their cultural tradition; a model of personal qualities—responsible, humble, whole—for people who continued to live in society but to live with detachment and dignity. Their followers sought out their presence directly, corresponded with them, communicated with them through dreams and visions.[222] As Muhammad Yaʿqub assured his disciple Mulla Qasim, whatever blessing the elders could impart was dependent on neither time nor place.[223]

ʿUlama like the Deobandis had many different circles of followers, some of whom considered their relations with the ʿulama the most important of their lives, others who knew them only tangentially. Important in sustaining the wider influence of the ʿulama was their work as writers and preachers, a role that often involved them in controversy and that identified them as protectors of the tradition. This role, to which we now turn, was a further source of Deobandi prestige among Muslims of their day.

222. At one extreme, Muhammad Ismaʿil Kandhlawi stayed with Rashid Ahmad for twelve years. Muftī ʿAzīzu'r-Rahmān, *Tażkırah-yi Mashā'ikh-i Dē'ōband* (Bijnor, 1958), p. 81.

223. Muhammad Yaʿqūb, *Bayāẓ*, p. 158.

V

The Style of Religious Leadership, II: Writers and Debaters

> A pious man was blessed by a dream in which he saw Almighty God. Seeing him speak Urdu, he inquired: "O God, how did you happen to pick up that language? You used to speak only in Syriac or Hebrew or Arabic." God replied: "From dealing with Shah Rafiʿu'd-Din and Shah ʿAbdu'l-Qadir and Thanawi and Deobandi and Mirathi and Mirza Hairat and Deputy Nazir Ahmad, I learned the language."[1]

THE ʿulama of the late nineteenth century played traditional public roles as prayer leaders and preachers, but they took on as well new roles that brought them into touch with ever larger numbers of people. They enthusiastically embraced two means of communication that their precursors earlier in the century used somewhat, but that now were newly important: the lithographic press and public debates. The Christian missionaries had introduced these means of proselytizing but, as in the case of so many policies and products brought by the Westerners to India, their use was not at all what had been anticipated. Indeed, one can argue that in this period in north India, the main influence of the missionaries was not the message they disseminated but the challenge they offered and the example of preaching and publishing they provided. Indigenous leaders welcomed cheap publications and public preaching not as a source of a new world-view but as a way of spreading their own new formulations of self-statement and identity.

As we have seen above, the sense of being newly and consciously faithful to their tradition was a source of great

1. Anonymous. *Mablaʿ-i Wahhābiyyāt kō Garēz* (Bombay, n.d.), p. 61.

satisfaction to the Muslim reformers. The late nineteenth century saw, in fact, a variety of movements of religious renewal, each of which thought itself to be correct. Not surprisingly, the movements tended to come into conflict. But the conflict was more than accidental. Its impetus was in part psychological, an aspect of the very search for individual meaning and self-esteem. By defining others as adversaries, the religious leaders enhanced their own sense of worth.[2] Conflict became, as well, a dimension of rivalry among potential leaders within religious groups[3] and among the ever-more politically conscious religious communities themselves. By participating actively in these contests, the Deobandis established themselves among other Muslims not only as intellectuals, but as defenders of their faith and their community.

The ʿulama had always written and had, indeed, at times participated in debate. New in this period was the social context in which these activities were carried on and the new technology that gave them unprecedented publicity. New as well—and intrinsic to that publicity—was the use of Urdu, lightly treated in the epigraph above by a writer who opposed the reformist ʿulama, who had pioneered its scholarly use.

Publications

The Beginnings

As early as the first decades of the nineteenth century, the reformers set the pattern of spreading religious teachings by new methods of cheap publications. Lithographic presses in northern India came first to towns dominated

2. I am grateful to Michael Zuckerman of the University of Pennsylvania for stimulating this analysis by his work on colonial American religious sects. See his "The Fabrication of Identity in Early America," *William and Mary Quarterly*, XXXIV (April 1977), 183-214.

3. Sandria B. Freitag, "Community and Competition in Religious Festivals: The North Indian Prelude," presented to the Conference on Intermediate Political Linkages at Berkeley, March 1978.

by Muslims: Bareilly, Moradabad, Agra, Meerut, and Delhi.[4] And the reformers were preeminent among those using the presses. They tended to publish in Urdu, thus participating in the shift from an imperial to a regional culture whose participants were more geographically restricted but more socially diverse than those who had shared the court culture embodied in Persian. Urdu was, however, known beyond its immediate region by urban Muslims elsewhere, and particularly by the *ashraf* Muslims of Bengal, who claimed an origin in the Urdu-speaking area. Hence Urdu publications had an audience among the Muslim upper class of the east and, most importantly, among much of the population of the north.

The two main documents of the early period of reform, the *Taqwiyatu'l-Iman* and the *Siratu'l-Mustaqim,* both addressed themselves to all Muslims, not only to the learned. They sought to disseminate familiarity with the fundamental sources of the faith. To do so, Muhammad Isma'il explained in the introduction to the *Taqwiyat,* the argument of the book was carried by quotations from the Qur'an and *hadis,* "adding their translation and true meaning in simple and easy Urdu so that they would be comprehensible to all who read or heard."[5]

Such works clearly gained at least a substantial degree of the currency that the reformers desired. A British observer in Calcutta in 1832 counted seven different reformist works circulating in the bazaars of the city.[6] Rashid Ahmad Gangohi estimated that two or two hundred fifty thousand people had been "set aright" by reading the *Taqwiyatu'l-Iman* during the lifetime of the author, and that numbers beyond any counting had been influenced since.[7] Whatever the

4. Kenneth W. Jones, *Arya Dharm* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1976), pp. 19-20.

5. Muhammad Isma'il, "Taqwiyat ul-Iman," translated by Shahamat Ali, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society,* 13 (1852), 317.

6. Muhammad Isma'il, "Notice of the Peculiar Tenets Held by the Followers of Syed Ahmad, Taken Chiefly from the Sirat ul Mustaqim . . . ," translated by J.R.C., *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal,* I (1832), 494.

7. Ẓuhūru'l-Ḥasan Kāsōlī, ed., *Arwāḥ-i Ṡalāṡah* (Saharanpur, 1950), p. 82.

value of his estimate, it is clear that its message did indeed spread. Then, as later, the message of religious books reached an audience far larger than those who were themselves literate:

> In the town of Uldhan there lived a very old man who was the disciple of Shah ʿAbdu'l-ʿAziz. He was barely able to see or hear. When the *Taqwiyatu'l-Iman* was first published copies came to his town. People engaged in extensive debates and discussions, some being for the book, some against. Finally, the old man, Tabarruku'llah, said, "I see you young men flourishing sheaves of pages around and talking incessantly. What is going on?" They explained that a new book had been published and, at his request, then proceeded to read him the entire work aloud, from the first page to the last. When he had heard it, he asked them to assemble the entire town to hear his opinion. He then declared that heretofore he had despaired of the world, for no one cared about anything and all were on the wrong path. Now he had found someone who had separated the chaff from the grain and shown them the right path. Now they, he continued, had the power to choose to follow it.[8]

Thus a single copy of a book would be passed from hand to hand, read aloud to those unable to read themselves, and discussed with enthusiasm by supporters and detractors alike.

In this early period members of the ʿulama also began the publication of classical religious works, particularly of *hadis*, for the first time in India. Notable among early publishers was, of course, Maulana Ahmad ʿAli Saharanpuri, the teacher of many of the Deobandis. His books included not only editions of the classics, but Urdu translations, often printed in an interlinear format, and annotated in Urdu. Ahmad ʿAli published the first editions in India of Tirmizi and Bukhari as early as 1850. He himself wrote the notes

8. Ibid., pp. 82-83.

to these editions, with help from Muhammad Qasim for Bukhari.

The first translations of the Qur'an were also undertaken in the early nineteenth century, in this case by two sons of Shah Waliyu'llah who built on their father's example of a translation into Persian. There were other early translations of the Qur'an, as well. One was carried out under the direction of John Gilchrist at Fort William College by Maulawi Imanatu'llah, Mir Bahadur ʿAli, Kazim ʿAli, and others, but, like many works produced there, it had little influence. The American Presbyterian missionaries sponsored a translation, begun in 1844, of use perhaps to native converts for debates.[9] No doubt these Christian efforts were an example and spur to Muslims. But it was the Waliyu'llahi translations, the literal one by Shah Rafiʿu'd-Din and the more idiomatic one by Shah ʿAbdu'l-Qadir, that provided a basis for the many translations of the later nineteenth century.

By the late nineteenth century, the sheer quantity of publishing had dramatically increased. The proportion of Muslim religious works continued to be substantial.[10] Of all works registered in the government's annual catalogue for the North-Western Provinces in 1877, for example, some seventy percent of all titles classified as religious were Muslim.[11] In addition, there were biographies of saints and ʿulama, accounts of Islamic history, and diaries of pilgrimage classified by the government under such headings as

9. ʿAbdu'l-Ḥaqq, ed., *Qāmūsu'l-Kutub Urdū*, Vol. I, *Mazhabiyyāt* (Karachi, 1961) (cited hereafter as *Qāmūs*). This work notes these early translations as being in "Hindi" or "Rekhta," both terms interchangeable for Urdu in the nineteenth century. Unless otherwise indicated, the following discussion of books is based on the notices in this compendium.

10. That is, they were a substantial proportion of titles published. Most copies of books were published by the government for use in the schools. The average issue of an educational book was 10,000 copies, whereas that of other works was about 2,000. The disproportion in favor of educational books is clear from the fact that in 1870, for example, 745,885 of 887,020 copies of all books printed were educational. Secretary to Government, NWP to Officiating Director of Public Instruction, *Proceedings in the General Department* (hereafter cited as *Proceedings*), April 12, 1871, para. 5.

11. Director of Public Instruction to Secretary to Government, NWP, *Proceedings*, March 19, 1878, para. 5.

biography and travel, but clearly to the pious works primarily religious. Muslim preeminence in religious publishing was a result, no doubt, both of the literary tradition within Islam and of the earlier efforts at revival of Muslims. "Unusual energy has been shown by the Mahomedans in providing for their educational wants in their own way," wrote Murray Kempson, the Director of Public Instruction for the North-Western Provinces, in 1872.[12] And five years later he noted, correctly, that on the basis of publications there appeared to be "a marked tendency to religious revival among the Mahomedans."[13] A missionary in 1902 echoed the same point: "The Mahomedans are certainly learning the power of the press."[14]

The Publication of Religious Classics in the Late Nineteenth Century

Prominent among the publications of the second half of the nineteenth century were additional editions of religious classics, including the Qur'an. At least a dozen different translations of the Qur'an were, in fact, published. They were prompted in part by the desire to make the Qur'an available in a language more natural and idiomatic than that of the earlier versions, for now less attention was given to maintaining Arabic word order and style. They were also the fruit of rivalry among religious leaders, for the ʿulama of each school produced their own. ʿAshiq Illahi Mirathi, Ashraf Ali Thanawi, and Mahmud Hasan, among the early Deobandis, did translations—as did their rival Ahmad Riza Khan Barelwi. Sayyid Ahmad Khan began a translation and commentary, and Deputy Nazir Ahmad, his associate, wrote an almost conversational translation accompanied by glossary and index.[15]

12. *Proceedings*, February 20, 1872, para. 2.
13. *Proceedings*, March 19, 1878.
14. G. H. Rouse, *Report of the Fourth Decennial Missionary Conference* (Madras, 1902), p. 371.
15. A personal anecdote will convey the depth of current feeling about the different translations. In May 1975, I stopped at a bookstall in the old city of Lahore and requested a copy of Deputy Nazir Ahmad's translation of the Qur'an. The shopkeeper, soon joined by a friendly crowd

All these groups shared the belief that familiarity with the Qur'an would be a major contribution to the reinvigoration of their religion. A newspaper article published in 1876 succinctly stated this hope: "Whatever the current defects and fallings away among Muslims, because of the existence of the Qurʾan, peace and accord among Muslims must of necessity take its place. In Arabia where Arabic is used, there is not the discord there is here. . . . Since the Qurʾan, accompanied by a word-for-word translation in Hindustani, is now available, we hope that the true essence of Islam will be manifest."[16] The Qurʾan was, in fact, more often in people's hands. In 1871, the government report noted that twenty-three thousand copies of the Qurʾan, or parts of it, were published in that year: "a large number when the demand for general literature is next to nothing."[17]

Hadis was also extensively published, often with translations, often with commentaries. In addition to Ahmad ʿAli and Muhammad Qasim, Mamluk ʿAli, Muhammad Ishaq, Muhammad Ahsan, ʿAbdu'l-Hayy Farangi Mahalli, and Ashraf ʿAli Thanawi were among the ʿulama associated with Deoband who edited *hadis*. Not surprisingly, the reformers known as the *Ahl-i Hadis* in particular contributed publications on this subject. At least twenty-three publications on *hadis* are attributed to Nawwab Siddiq Hasan Khan alone, almost all printed at the Mufid-i ʿAm press in Agra.

In the late nineteenth century, a whole range of works was edited and translated from Arabic and Persian: the writings of al-Ghazali and Ibn Khaldun, important collections of *fatawa*, and lives of great Muslims. Kempson, com-

of supporters, pressed me to read Ahmad Riza Khan Barelwi's translation instead. They insisted that it was more authoritative, and opened both versions to show me the greater number of marginal notes in his. They claimed that it was read by everyone in Lahore. When I asked if even the Deobandis read it, they demurred. At this point the shopkeeper gave up and sold me the translation I wanted.

16. Quoted in [Joseph Héliodore Sagesse Vertu] Garcin de Tassy, *La langue et la littérature hindoustanies dans l'an 1876* (Paris, 1876), p. 127.

17. Director of Public Instruction to Officiating Secretary to Government, *Proceedings*, February 20, 1872, para. 2.

menting on the numbers of publications of the Qur'an as well as of Arabic grammars and treatises on logic, concluded that "so far as the indications of the Registration Act are concerned, the [Muslim literary] movement is strictly conservative, and points to revival."[18] In another year he noted a number of reprints of medical treatises, from which "it would appear that the study of medicine is undergoing revival." Describing a Persian tract reproducing an Arabic treatise on optics, he wrote, "It has no scientific value except in so far as it supplies technical terms for use in Urdu. . . . I am unable to explain the appearance of a book of this kind, except by supposing that some of the better Muhammedan schools in the Upper Doab are turning their attention to the science of their old books."[19] Kempson's cautious supposition was correct.

The ʿulama who published and read these books had, by contrast, no such caution about asserting their value and their purpose. In 1895 Maulana Nazir Husain described the extraordinary transformation in religious education that had taken place as a result of these publications:

> Now God has been gracious by providing books. Books which one could not see in dreams or conceive of in imagination are now sold for cowries. . . . The [*Fatawa-yi*] *ʿAlamgiri* used to be unavailable. The government published it in Calcutta before the Mutiny, but it sold for 90 rupees. Similarly, the *Tafsir-i Kabir* sold for 300. The king had a copy of it and when Shah ʿAbdu'l-ʿAziz needed it, he borrowed it from him. No one even knew the *Fathu'l-Bari*, for in all of Delhi there were only parts of it, scattered among three places. There were only eighteen copies of Bukhari, and of these, generous people had divided copies into parts and distributed them among students so that they could study them. When I studied Tirmizi from Miyan Sahib [Maulana Shah Muhammad Ishaq] three of us shared one copy; and we three lived in different sections of the city. . . . One of

18. *Proceedings*, February 20, 1869.
19. *Proceedings*, March 4, 1876, para. 4.

> us would study it for a few hours, then another would carry it off. . . . No one had a chance to study a whole book. A copy of the *Hidayat* was divided among students: one would start it from one place, another from another. . . . Because of reading incompletely and out of order, [the study of] every book was deficient. If a person had even a faulty copy of a book, that was considered a great blessing and he was held to be very wealthy.[20]

Publication of the religious classics was clearly key to the effectiveness of the reformist movement.

The Use of Urdu

The use of Urdu continued to be a notable feature of the writing of the period. It served, as described above, for notes and translations of religious classics. But it was also the language of an original religious literature in Urdu whose beginnings had been the *Taqwiyat* and the *Sirat*. This literature both exemplified and furthered the new use of Urdu for prose. The Urdu newspapers of the day, themselves providing examples of the enhanced range and simpler style that were gaining currency, frequently commented on the novelty of religious writing in Urdu.[21] The *Awadh Akhbar* of 1870, for example, noted that "[religious]

20. ʿAbdu'l-Ḥayy, *Dihlī aur us kē Atrāf: Ēk Safarnāmah aur Rōznāmah Unnīswīn Ṣadī kē Ākhir Mēn* (Lucknow, 1958), pp. 39-40.

21. By the second half of the nineteenth century, newspapers had become a major form of Urdu literature. One compilation lists more than 700 Urdu newspapers, published throughout India, which began between 1875 and 1900; most were in upper India, but a surprising number were published from Bombay, Madras, Calcutta, and other distant places where there was either an emigrant elite or inhabitants who emulated the culture transmitted by Urdu. Most were not dailies, but published at weekly intervals. The papers were often ephemeral, lasting only as long as the interest or life of one editor remained; but a significant number were long-lived and had substantial influence. The papers appear to have made a great literary contribution. Papers such as the *Paiyam-i Yar* of Lucknow, the *Dil Gudaz* edited by the novelist Sharar, and innumerable others were critically important in disseminating Urdu literature, both poetry and prose, and, through editorial writings, in debating norms for writing. In both explicitly literary journals like these, and in more general papers like the celebrated *Oudh Punch*, substantial debates were held over literary questions. Imdād Ṣābirī, *Tārīkh-i Ṣiḥāfat-i Urdū*, 3 vols. (Delhi, 1952-1953).

works of fifty years standing are now all being compiled in Urdu."[22] And the *Terhwin Sadi* of Agra regularly decried the style of earlier religious writings: "Educated people had been out of contact with ordinary people. If one were a *maulawi*, he read and wrote in Arabic; if a *munshi*, in Persian; a *qazi* rendered his decisions in Arabic; and a *hakim* wrote prescriptions in Persian. . . . This was so extreme that if a person searched out the most difficult and obscure words in these languages, he was considered a particularly learned man."[23] From modest beginnings early in the century, Urdu had become the language of almost all Muslim religious works. In that period, moreover, the social and political implications of using Urdu were gradually shifting.

The basis of that shift was the decision made by the government in 1837 to replace Persian as court language by the various vernaculars of the country. Urdu was identified as the regional vernacular in Bihar, Oudh, the North-Western Provinces, and Punjab, and hence was made the language of government across upper India. The indigenous impulse toward the cultivation of Urdu was thus stimulated by its official position and by government patronage. It was taught in the schools and encouraged by such methods as rewards for distinguished writing. Urdu was increasingly known by the entire service elite of the area, Hindu and Muslim alike.

The language was, no doubt, understood by a broader section of the population than Persian had been. Nevertheless, only the educated knew Urdu in its most refined and subtle forms. Those Muslims and Hindus who shared the court culture of the region cherished Persianate forms of polite and formal discourse, just as they had cultivated those forms in Persian itself. A person had only to open his mouth to identify himself with that culture. Those Hindus who knew Urdu tended not to use it for their family or ritual life. Nor did the women of their families consider

22. *Awadh Akhbar* (Lucknow), January 25, 1870, in Government of India, *Selections from the Vernacular Newspapers Published in the Punjab, North Western Provinces, Oudh, and the Central Provinces.*
23. Imdād Ṣābirī, *Ṣiḥāfat-i Urdū*, II, 171.

it "ladylike" to use it.[24] The language was, after all, written in a form of Arabic script and drew its loan words from Persian and Arabic. It was to them a Muslim language and a public language. Reservations about the Muslim character of the language grew in the late nineteenth century. As Hindus challenged both the literary and official position of Urdu it came increasingly to be the language not of regional elites but of the Muslim elite; and as the sense of Muslim identity grew, the language not only of the upper Indian Muslim elite, but of the Muslim elite throughout India and of ordinary Muslims, as well. The change was gradual, and many Hindus continued to learn and use Urdu. From the late nineteenth century on, however, the proportion of Hindus learning the language steadily declined.[25]

The movement against Urdu began in the late 1860s, when some Hindus, of whom Babu Siva Prasad, an official of the Education Department, was the most outspoken, began to press the government to replace Urdu with Hindi as the official language of the North-Western Provinces. Hindi was a form of the same vernacular, self-consciously developed in the nineteenth century, whose script derived from Sanskrit and whose loan words came from that same indigenous language. As such it appealed to those Hindus newly conscious of their religious and cultural heritage. The debate about the merits of the two forms of the language was largely in the hands of government servants who, on the Muslim side, were often associated with Aligarh. Indeed, Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan later declared with some exaggeration that it was over the language issue that his concerns shifted from the well-being of the mixed Hindu-Muslim elite to that of the Muslim community alone. Public meetings were held; newspapers published arguments on both sides; societies were formed to push one script or the other. Many arguments dealt with the presumed merit of

24. Prakash Tandon, *Punjabi Century*, 2nd ed. (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1968 [1961]), pp. 66-67.

25. See Paul R. Brass, "Muslim Separatism in U.P.; Social Context and Political Strategy before Partition," *Economic and Political Weekly*, Annual Number (January 1970), pp. 167-85.

one language or script over the other. The real issue, however, was the power of the spokesmen of each side. The supporters of Hindi had the advantage that if they could convince the government that each script was associated with a religious community, theirs could be argued to represent the majority. In that case, they felt, a government committed to vernacular education and justice would sympathize with them. Finally, first in Bihar in 1881 and then in the United Provinces in 1900, the Hindi form of the vernacular was given equal status with Urdu as the language of official business.[26] The process of identifying Urdu with Muslims and Hindi with Hindus began in this debate. This identification gave each community an incentive to patronize and encourage its form of the language.

The ʿulama, like other literate people, were thus, in part, reacting to a threat to their culture and political position by fostering the use of Urdu. But they not only reacted to a threat, they responded to the positive advantages of having a common language bind the Muslims scattered throughout India. Schools such as Deoband and the Mazahir-i ʿUlum taught standard Urdu to students who spoke a dialect or another language, thus creating a basis of communication among the religious elite. Such students would teach in Urdu upon their return to their homes, and spread its use among their associates. Moreover, whole groups of Muslims made a self-conscious change to Urdu from the late nineteenth century on. The Bohras of western India shifted from Gujarati to Urdu in this period, for example, and some Tamil Muslims made the same transition shortly after.[27] The use of Urdu continued to mark one as part of a refined and influential culture, but that culture was increasingly limited to those who saw it as exclusively Muslim.

26. For discussions of the political context of the language debate, see Karen Dittmer, *Die Indischen Muslims und die Hindi-Urdu Kontroverse in den United Provinces* (Wiesbaden, 1972); Paul Brass, *Language, Religion and Politics in North India* (Cambridge, 1974); and Francis Robinson, *Separatism among Indian Muslims* (Cambridge, 1974), especially Chapter II.

27. See Mattison Mines, "Toward a New Perspective on Muslim Identity and Integration in Contrasting Social Setting" (unpublished paper, University of California, Santa Barbara, 1973).

Urdu was to be the preeminent symbol of Muslim identity in India. In establishing it in that role, the publications of the ʿulama and others were fundamental.

The Publication of Original Writings

The publications of the ʿulama included *fatawa* and letters written to disciples and followers, biographies and biographical dictionaries, and collections of exemplary anecdotes or *hikayat*. They included diaries of visits with religious leaders. They included the major new genre of simple exposition of basic religious duties. All these works reflected to varying degrees the atmosphere of controversy among the schools of thought of the ʿulama. Even more a product of controversy were the publications of tracts against Hindus and Christians, among the best known and most popular writings of the day.

No writing served what one might call an "objective" or "intellectual" concern. The writing was didactic and educational, and its goal was the shaping of the religious life of the reader. Maulana Sayyid ʿAbdu'l-Hayy Barelwi, for example, published a diary of his tour of religious centers in the western United Provinces in 1894.[28] His was far from being a travelogue or a social study. He wrote for only one reason: to share the blessings he had derived from the tour with those less fortunate who were unable to undertake such a journey. Authors often interspersed prayers for the benefit of the reader of their biographies or collections of letters, or enjoined him to read on for the sake of his spiritual benefit. The editor of Muhammad Yaʿqub's diary and letters asked, "What is the purpose of publishing this book? It is to receive profit myself and to profit others as well."[29] The very act of writing down the words of religious leaders was a source of blessing, a *tabarruk*.[30] All Urdu prose lit-

28. ʿAbdu'l-Ḥayy, *Dihlī aur us kē Aṭrāf.*

29. Muḥammad Yaʿqūb Nānautawī, *Maktūbāt-i Yaʿqūbī wa Bayāẓ-i Yaʿqūbī* (Thana Bhawan, n.d.), p. 3.

30. Muḥammad ʿĀshiq Ilāhī Mīraṭhī, *Tazkiratu'r-Rashīd* (Meerut, n.d.), II, 84.

erature shared this didactic orientation. This was true even of a Western form like the novel, newly transposed into Urdu literature. The popular novels of Deputy Nazir Ahmad, which preached fidelity to religious practice and the values of an upright life, set the standard in this.

Correction of the reader was the obvious goal of the pamphlets that described religious duties. Often inexpensive and crudely lithographed, such modest works delineated the correct method of performing the canonical prayer, of holding a marriage ceremony, or of accomplishing the pilgrimage. Sometimes such works not only described a correct standard of religious performance, but included declarations, often by occupational groups of a given area, to adhere to that standard. Some were explicitly written for women, in whose hands, ultimately, the instruction of children and the organization of family ceremonies rested. Most celebrated of such Deobandi works was the *Bihishti Zewar* of Maulana Ashraf ʿAli Thanawi, originally printed in a dozen sections to keep the female mind from wearying. It claimed to offer the whole knowledge necessary for a woman: the alphabet, letter writing, simple religious duties, the stories of the prophets, and practical advice on cookery, care of the sick, and domestic management. Endlessly reprinted, the book became a standard gift for new Muslim brides.[31]

Also aimed at correction, of course, were the controversial works written against other Muslims, Hindus, and Christians.[32] Pamphlet warfare, as it was called, had begun in the earlier period of reform. One of the most celebrated exchanges was begun by Shah ʿAbdu'l-ʿAziz's publication of the *Tuhfatu'l-Isna ʿAshariyyah* (A Gift to the Twelver Shiʿah), first answered on behalf of the Nawwab of Oudh by Maulana Dildar ʿAli Khan. The story goes that despite his Persian background he could not match the style of ʿAbdu'l-ʿAziz, and he turned for help to the poet Mirza

31. A very truncated version has been translated into English by Rahm Ali Hashmi as *Bahishti Zewar (Requisites of Islam)* (Delhi, 1973).

32. See the extensive lists of published controversial works, arranged by the group addressed, in the *Qāmūs*.

Qatil. He, in turn, emphatically refused to enter any literary competition with ʿAbdu'l-ʿAziz because once, determined to prove his skill to a courtesan of Delhi, he had written to her in his most elegant Urdu; but she, with the help of ʿAbdu'l-ʿAziz, had decisively outwritten him.[33] The early pamphlet wars—like the early debates—were limited in scope and genteel in their emphasis as much on form as on content.

The exchanges of the late nineteenth century reflected the more intense competition of the time. The presence of the British and the possibility of accusations of libel or of fomenting disorder added a further fillip to the exchanges. Moreover, the improvements in communications permitted the "wars" to be carried on over a wider geographic area. One Deobandi pamphlet, Muhammad Qasim's *Tahziru'n-Nass* triggered off no fewer than nine responses from the Barelwi group of ʿulama, and was reprinted many times. Of Qasim's other writings—some two dozen titles—roughly half were controversial writings: four against Christians and Arya Samajis, largely reprinted from major public debates he had with their representatives; two specifically against the Arya Samajis; three against the Shiʿah; one against Sayyid Ahmad Khan.

A typical controversy within Sunni Islam was one between Maulana Mahmud Hasan Deobandi and two members of the Ahl-i Hadis.[34] Maulana Muhammad Husain Batalawi, an outspoken member of the Ahl-i Hadis resident in Lahore, initiated the debate by issuing a circular addressed to the Hanafi ʿulama. In it he called on them to give a justification, based on Qur'an or *hadis*, for ten specific issues in Hanafi law. He offered, as an indication of his contempt for their efforts, a reward of ten rupees for

33. Ẓuhūru'l-Ḥasan, *Arwāḥ-i Ṣalāṣah*, pp. 42-44. Dildar had no choice but to answer the book himself. The Nawwab showed the answer to Qatil and asked for an honest opinion. He first mocked his title, and then dropped the devastating Urdu saying, "What a difference between a weaver from Jais and [even] a loafer sitting on the steps in Delhi"—thus reducing the best man Lucknow could offer to the level of a country bumpkin.

34. Sayyid Asghar Ḥusain, *Ḥayāt-i Shaikhu'l-Hind* (Deoband, 1920), pp. 172-76.

each point they could confirm in the revealed sources. A Punjabi Hanafi immediately responded, but even his fellow Hanafis found his effort something of an embarrassment.[35] Mahmud Hasan resolved to write a response himself. The result was his first written work, the since oft-reprinted *Adillat-i Kamilah*. The popularity of the work did not derive from its originality, for it was a standard account of Hanafi belief and practice. It justified the jurisprudential position of the Hanafis, and accused the Ahl-i Hadis, as the Deobandis always did, of following not *hadis* but personal opinion, and of being excessively literal in their reading of texts. The value of the book rested in its careful argument and self-confident exuberance. Thus, Mahmud Hasan addressed Batalawi with exaggerated respect as *janab-i man*, offered him not ten but twenty rupees, and suggested that he should not have merely slandered the Hanafi but gone on to the Prophet and God Himself, "thus really gaining a big name."[36]

Batalawi, of course, was not convinced, and used the newspaper of which he was an editor to promise a final answer to Mahmud Hasan's points. That answer, written by an associate, proved no more convincing to the other side. Mahmud Hasan, under Muhammad Qasim's supervision, wrote a second answer, thus concluding, at least from the Deobandi side, this particular debate. Presumably neither the ten nor the twenty rupees were ever delivered. This style of inconclusive pamphlet writing, in which each answer elicited a response, was typical and often went beyond the four exchanges produced here.

Many other works, not explicitly controversial, were in fact stimulated by the contemporaneous debate within Islam. All the leading groups published their *fatawa* and issued, in addition, collections of opinions on specific issues of debate, such as the observation of *maulud* and the per-

35. The author was probably Maulawi Muhammad ʿUmr Rampuri (d. 1878), who is noted as having written an answer to Batalawi (*ʿAsharah Mubashirah*) in the *Tazkirah-yi ʿUlama'-yi Hind* by Raḥmān ʿAlī (Karachi ed., 1964), pp. 454-55.

36. Maḥmūd Ḥasan Dē'ōbandī, *ʿAdillah-yi Kāmilah* (Kanpur, n.d.), p. 3.

formance of Fatihah and *sama'*.[37] Biographies and biographical dictionaries often had an implicit bias toward one group. Biographical dictionaries began to take as their subject the 'ulama of a particular orientation, like the Ahl-i Hadis or Deobandi, rather than using the conventional delimitations of a particular family or geographic area. Even the comprehensive *Tazkirat-i 'Ulama-yi Hind*, a major biographical dictionary written at the turn of the century, was implicitly weighted in favor of the Barelwi 'ulama, and excluded many of the reformers and their forebears.[38]

Muslims also engaged in frequent and serious debate with Christians and Arya Samajis. The American Presbyterians in Ludhiana had a very active press in the late nineteenth century, and the writings of such missionaries as E. M. Wherry, who had some familiarity with Islam, were considered particularly threatening. Various other "padris," as they were called, including converts from Islam like 'Imadu'd-Din, published extensively. The revivalist Arya Samaj was similarly active in publications. One major "pamphlet war" was that sustained by the writings of Munshi Indarman, a convert from Islam to Hinduism. Indarman wrote two books in the 1860s, in Persian but translated into Urdu, that were answered by a number of Muslim writings published throughout the century. As indicated by the large proportion of Muhammad Qasim's works directed against the Arya Samajis, the theme of Muslim defense against newly aggressive Hinduism was to become increasingly important.

All activity connected with these publications centered on bookshops, for they were not merely places to sell books, but publishing houses, libraries, and centers for the propagation of particular points of view. The Matba' Ahmadi and the Matba'-i Mujtaba'i in Delhi, the Matba'-i Siddiqi in Bareilly, and the Madinah Press in Bijnaur were identified with the Deobandis, for example. Rashid Ahmad issued a *fatwa* making it illegitimate to trade in books of *bid'at*

37. See lists of these works in *Qāmūs*.
38. See the introductions by 'Abdu'r-Rashīd Nu'mānī and Sayyid Mu'īnu'l-Ḥaqq to the *Tazkirah-yi 'Ulama'-yi Hind* by Raḥmān 'Alī. Both discuss trends in the writing of *tazkirahs*.

and *ghair mazhab*, of the Barelwis or the Ahl-i Hadis.[39] Some presses, of course, like the celebrated Lucknow press of the *kayasth* Newal Kishore, published without regard to ideology. Around all these presses grew a whole new industry of publishers, copyists, lithographers, bookbinders and booksellers. The presses were energetic in selling their wares—one technique, for example, being to enroll a body of subscribers to finance a particular work, then to send them, at regular intervals, chapters of a book or of its translation. In a town like Deoband today, one can scarcely count the number of bookstalls and publishers, for the business of books in all its dimensions is one of the major activities of the town.

To assess the results of all this publication, in 1901 the Anjuman-i Taraqqi-yi Urdu, a newly formed association to promote the interests of Urdu, undertook the task of creating a catalogue of all books written in that language, a task only conceivable because of its relatively recent history. The project was long delayed, and to date only one volume, that on religious books, has been published. The founder of the Anjuman, who lived to see its recent completion, introduced the volume with a striking assessment: "From the catalogue, one can see how very wide the scope of our language and literature is, and, in particular one can conclude this: that in respect to Islam it embodies a treasure which perhaps exists in no other language of the world."[40] His estimation may have been exaggerated, but the creation of Urdu as a language of Muslim religious literature in the past hundred years was an enormous undertaking, and one highly influential in disseminating instruction in religion and creating an interest in it.

Oral Debates

Of great importance, as well, were the public debates of the period. These debates most emphatically did not provide an occasion for serious intellectual exchange. The ar-

39. Rashīd Aḥmad Gangōhī, *Fatāwā-yi Rashīdiyyah* (Moradabad, 1906), I, 103-104.
40. *Qāmūs*, I, 3.

guments offered—whether among representatives of different religions or among religious leaders of the same tradition—were stereotyped and repetitious. Indeed, there were thoughtful people of the day who despaired of these debates, lamenting both their indecorousness and their seeming ineffectiveness. A correspondent wrote the following in a letter to the editor of the *Arya Patrika* in 1885: "but what I ask is, has any good resulted from these fiery discussions, has any Mahommedan been made to believe the doctrine, has any Christian been won over on its side, has any Brahmo been convinced of it? I have seen all parties sticking to the same arguments from day to day a thousand times *ad nauseam*. Not a single new argument has been advanced on any side."[41]

The debates, of course, continued. Their importance rested on two of their characteristics in particular: the fact that such public performances took place; and the fact that the exchanges were indeed formulaic and ritualistic, and hence of unquestioned legitimacy to spokesmen and followers alike.

The debates were part of the general trend toward increased public roles for Indians in the nineteenth century. People of the time were conscious that public debates represented a new arena for religious activity, an arena different from the familial or community-wide context that had been more common. Another writer to a newspaper, this time a correspondent of the *Awadh Akhbar* of 1864, indicated an awareness of the novelty of public preaching and debate:

> It is said that the custom of street-preaching is peculiar to Christians. The Hindoos will find some fitting spot to perform their religious duties, also the Mahomedans, but "*Padrees*" keep to the streets and highways to preach the Bible, with the idea that the Mahomedans might relinquish their religion from hearing the lectures. . . . Only

41. *Arya Patrika*, September 5, 1885, pp. 3-5, quoted in Jones, *Arya Dharm*, p. 123. "Brahmo" refers to members of the Brahmo Samaj, a Hindu reform movement of the nineteenth century.

> let the Mahomedans and Hindoos have the same advantage, and not confine their preaching to *mosques* and *mundurs*. . . . The writer then advocates the formation of religious societies similar to the Christian Missions, Bible Societies, etc., to be supported by funds collected among each creed, so that each particular religion may have the same advantage as the Christian religion, with books, lectures, etc.[42]

Indians readily responded in kind. In 1882, E. M. Wherry reported to a missionary conference that Muslims had been "obliged to adopt the tactics of European unbelief in order to make a stand at all," and he added more specifically that "an aggressive religion . . . has propagandized a regular system of antagonistic preaching; Muslim preachers are sent forth . . . to oppose missionaries in their work and to sustain the faithful in their profession of Islam."[43]

There had, to be sure, been earlier religious debates, but in the first half of the nineteenth century in Delhi, at least, they had tended to be with other Muslims and had typically taken place in the salons of the nobles or even at the court itself. The most famous debate was that over the question of *imkan-i nazir*, the question of whether God could create a prophet the equal of Muhammad. Taken up by members of the religious and literary circles of the day, supporters and opponents argued with enthusiasm and ingenuity. The poet Ghalib entered the fray when pressed, delighting everyone with a poem at once clever and obscure on exactly where he stood.[44] The participants in a debate like this shared a common religious tradition and common culture norms. The style of language they used and the niceties of decorum they followed were central to the debate. An example of a debate held at court between a senior woman

42. *Awadh Akhbar* (Lucknow), July 4, 1865, in Government of India, *Selections*, pp. 352-53.

43. E. M. Wherry, American Presbyterian Mission, Ludhiana, in *Report of the Second Decennial Missionary Conference Held at Calcutta, 1882-83* (Calcutta, 1883), pp. 223, 228-30.

44. Ralph Russell and Khurshidul Islam, *Ghalib: 1767-1869*, I, *Life and Letters* (London, 1969), pp. 33-34.

of the royal family and the famous reformer, Maulana Isma'il, suggests this. Here the issue was elimination of certain popular customs.

> Once the princes of Delhi decided to stage a debate between the sharp-tongued old Bi Chuku, elder sister of King Akbar Shah, and Maulana Isma'il. The princes shocked her by tales of Maulana Isma'il's opposition to her favorite customs like celebrating the eleventh day as the death anniversary of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir Jilani; and offering food in the name of Fatimah. When Bi Chuku heard that Isma'il had arrived she began to assail him from behind her curtained-off *pardah*. He captivated her with gentle answers and won her over when he explained that he forbad nothing; her father, the Prophet, did.[45]

Thus Muhammad Isma'il's social skills were as important as his intellectual ones, and his decisive argument, the authority of the Prophet, was brought home not by jurisprudential argument but by flattering his colorful opponent: linking her, by birth, to the Prophet himself and luring her, by identification with him, to acceptance of his position.

Why did the later 'ulama embrace the new style of public interreligious debate? They could perhaps have ignored the missionaries, particularly after the 1830s and 1840s, when it was seen that Christian converts were few. Neither imitation in itself nor the ostensible goal of conversion of members of other religions is sufficient explanation. The importance of debate to the participants clearly rests elsewhere.

Above all, the debates both reflected and shaped the late nineteenth-century view of society as one defined by membership in the high religious traditions.[46] Public debate replicated those divisions, and aloofness diminished one's po-

45. Ẓuhūru'l-Ḥasan, *Arwāḥ-i Salāṣah*, pp. 91-92.

46. For reflections on the British census in India, a stimulus to this view of society, see Kenneth Jones, "Religious Identities and the Indian Census" in *The Indian Census: A New Perspective*, edited by N. G. Barrier (Columbus, Mo. forthcoming).

sition vis-à-vis the others. Moreover, the arena of public religious debate was one turf on which the Christians, as one of the groups, could be fought on relatively equal terms with the others. The debates were, however, not only important for defining the boundary of each community. They also provided an opportunity for rivals within each tradition to make a bid for leadership within their own community. If, for example, the reformist Arya Samajis were accepted as "Hindu" spokesman, that enhanced their position within their own community. Moreover, those who debated claimed to be defenders of their faith. The Deobandis contrasted their activity with the silence of the ʿulama of Budaun and Bareilly, to the discredit of the latter.

Aside from these public political considerations, the debates clearly served important psychological functions. For people who were powerless in many political areas, who felt their own worth and the worth of their culture questioned by the very fact of arrogant imperial rule, the debates—and in general the concern with correct religious practice—provided one dimension of life in which Indians could assert their own self-worth. There was a deep satisfaction in identifying themselves and their fellows as morally right, in separating themselves from others who were judged wrong. In many ways, as we shall see in examining one debate, the purpose of debate, its meaning for its participants, was to be found in speaking—often quite literally—not to one's opponents but to oneself.

The debates had certain common characteristics. First someone would take the initiative to invite either specific individuals or representatives of communities to participate. An open public space would be chosen where people could gather and perhaps pitch tents for temporary accommodation. The debates often had a semi-official atmosphere, with local notables or even a government functionary presiding. Sometimes government legal officials would be called on to decide a point of law. In Agra in 1853, for example, British judges and officials were invited to be present for a Muslim-Christian debate, and were invited to

comment on issues as the debate unfolded.[47] Once present, the participants would work out a framework of formal organization. There would be intense discussion of procedural matters: the questions to be answered, the number and order of speakers; the length of time to be accorded each side. Each side would want to be first in order to take the initiative, but would also seek a final rebuttal so as to have the last word, as well. Such matters were ones of status and dignity and often seemed more crucial than issues of substance. It also became common for each side to seek a further debate, and then invariably to report that the other side refused or failed to appear, thus giving the impression, even beyond the debate, of each person having had the last word, of having silenced the other. Moreover, since there was no judge at the conclusion of the debate, each side invariably claimed to its followers that it had won. The debates were thus formalized and ritualized, far different from mere discussions or exchange of views.

The substance of argument between Christians and Muslims had of course centuries of precedent, but particular points at issue were honed by debates that took place in the decades before the Mutiny. Notable in this connection were the debates between Maulana Rahmatu'llah Kairanawi and the German missionary, K. G. Pfander, in Agra in the 1850s.[48] Rahmatu'llah offered a series of basic arguments against Christianity. These arguments refuted the doctrine of the Trinity, particularly showing the logical inconsistencies of analogies; they documented the alteration of Christian scriptures; they dismissed Christian claims about the importance of miracles; and finally, they insisted that any suggestion of Qur'anic confirmation of the divinity of Christ was based on misunderstanding of the Qur'an. The arguments were to appear and reappear in subsequent decades.

The Muslims felt not only intellectually but morally su-

47. A. A. Powell, "Maulana Rahmat Allah Kairanawi and Muslim Christian Controversy in India in the mid-19th Century," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1976), pp. 54, 57.
48. See ibid.

perior to their Christian opponents. In debate they judged them devious in methods, given to pressure and bribery, and unfairly helped by the power of the state. They were, in short, uneducated and uncouth. In the first half of the nineteenth century, one scholar has noted, missionaries were in fact "of the class of skilled mechanic," and their education was usually narrowly confined to Biblical studies.[49] Pfander was an exception in this regard, for the seminary at Basel, where he studied, alone offered instruction in Muslim languages and texts. Even Pfander, however, found himself at a serious intellectual disadvantage in debates; for his Muslim opponents challenged him with the work of recent English Biblical scholars, wholly unknown to him, in order to prove their contention about the variability of the Biblical text. The argument of textual corruption was an old one for Muslims, but took on new force in this period because of Western scholarship itself.[50]

Even Western missionaries often felt their side ill-matched in contests with the most respected scholars of the other side. E. M. Wherry, an American Presbyterian missionary who directed his work primarily toward Muslims, lamented that missionaries often preached "a medley of Gospel truth, erroneous statements of Muslim belief, and misdirected assaults upon Islam and its Prophet."[51] As for Indian Christians, according to a Muslim source, "they were simple villagers who had converted from opportunism."[52] Whether that judgment was just or not, the missionaries probably did not have the intellectual sophistication or even the cultural refinement of their Muslim opponents.

One celebrated debate, generally characteristic of the religious debates of the late nineteenth century, was the Mela-yi Khudashanasi, the "Festival of the Knowledge of God," held on two successive occasions in 1875 and 1876 in

49. Ibid., p. 45.
50. Ibid., p. 51.
51. Wherry, *Report of the Missionary Conference*, p. 229.
52. Manāẓir Aḥsan Gīlānī, *Sawāniḥ-i Qāsimī* (Deoband, 1955), II, 353.

Shahjahanpur. The debate was three-sided, among Christians, Deobandis, and members of the reformed Hindu Arya Samaj.[53] The debates had a somewhat official air, since they were organized by the American Methodist head of the mission school, Samuel Knowles; a Hindu government servant, Munshi Piyare Lal Kabirpanthi, who provided food for the participants; and a Muslim Honorary Magistrate Moti Miyan, who was appointed director of the debates in both years. The debates were held on the grounds of the mission school.

The debate was organized in the formal style of the Europeans. The first year it was agreed that each side would appoint two men who would each speak for a fixed amount of time. Each side would have a fixed opportunity for questioning and rebuttal. According to the Muslim account of the proceedings, the Christians tried to monopolize the debate, producing, in addition to their two appointed representatives, the celebrated convert to Christianity, Tara Chand. The Arya Samaji representative, not one of the better-known members of the sect, seems to have played almost no role at all, and baffled his opponents utterly by speaking in Sanskrit. The Muslims, led by Muhammad Qasim of Deoband and Sayyid Abu'l Mansur of Delhi, outlined the basic doctrinal points of Islam to the satisfaction of the Muslims at least, who proclaimed their side unquestionably the winner. Their accounts were sprinkled with colorful claims to victory: "The gossip of the triumph of Maulana Muhammad Qasim Sahib, known by his blue *lungi*, became famous throughout the whole world. . . . Ordinary Hindus would point to him and say, 'That is the *maulana* who silenced the *padris* and restrained the erring. He is not a *maulawi* but an *avatar*!' "[54] The debate was, in fact, not very successful, for which many blamed the searing heat of May.

53. Muḥammad Qāsim Nānautawī, *Mubāhaṣah-yi Shāhjahānpūr* (Deoband, n.d.). This report of the debate is the source for the discussion that follows, unless otherwise noted. See also Manāẓir Aḥsan Gīlānī, *Sawāniḥ-i Qāsimī*, II, 364-486 for a long discussion of the debate, based primarily on the former work but interspersed with additional information and reflective comments.

54. Muḥammad Qāsim, *Mubāhaṣah-yi Shāhjahānpūr*, pp. 4-5.

The next year the debate, held in the pleasant month of March, was more lively. Piyare Lal sent out notices, put advertisements in newspapers, and wrote letters of invitation. Maulana Muhammad Qasim was joined again by Maulana Abu'l Mansur, who was one of the most respected debaters of Delhi.[55] They apparently hesitated to come, believing the debate a waste, but felt people would judge them to have missed a chance to make a stand against "great *netas* of the Ved and famous people."[56] Dayanand Saraswati, the founder of the Arya Samaj, did indeed appear, accompanied by the notorious Munshi Indraman, the convert from Islam known for his vituperative attacks on his former coreligionists. The missionaries included not only Padri Knowles, but a number of others, among them T. J. Scott, John Thomas (an Indian), Reverend Noble, Reverend Parker, and Reverend Walker.[57] The issues of organization and procedure among these participants proved to be deeply troublesome. "Though hours were spent in these deliberations," the Arya Samaji source noted, "no unanimity of opinion could be secured as to the conditions of the *shastrarth*."[58] First the Muslims objected to the very brief limit set for the opening statements of each side. A talk of

55. Abu'l-Mansur, born near Qanauj in 1823, was the son of a *mīr munshi* in the British Residency in Delhi. Raḥmān ʿAlī, *Tazkirat-i ʿUlama'-yi Hind*, p. 507.

56. Muḥammad Qāsim, *Mubāḥasah-yi Shāhjahānpūr*, p. 4.

57. *The Annual Report of the Mission Stations of the North India Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, 1877, p. 10, notes S. Knowles as pastor of the English Church of Shahjahanpur; Rev. E. W. Parker as presiding Elder of Rohilkhand District; Rev. T[homas] J[efferson] Scott, D. D., as Missionary in Bareilly; and Rev. John Thomas as native minister associated with the theological school in Bareilly. The report of 1876 offers one paragraph written by Knowles on the debate of that year, and concludes that "much acknowledged good was done at this mela" (p. 13). Curiously, the 1877 report does not mention the much more substantial debate of that year at all. I have not been able to identify the other Europeans mentioned. The *Church Missionary Intelligencer*, organ of the London-based Church Missionary Society, seems not to mention the debate or list as their members any of those present.

58. Bawa Arjan Singh, translator, *Mela Chandapur*, edition revised by Bawa Chhajju Singh (Lahore, n.d., ca. 1903), p. 2. I am grateful to Professor Kenneth W. Jones, Kansas State University, for sending me a copy of this pamphlet.

only five minutes, they said, was "suitable only for a religion of few virtues."[59] The Christians rejected their objections. Then there was a discussion about the number of debaters permitted on each side. On the final procedural issue, that of the order of speakers, apparently Padri Knowles announced that Dayanand should go first, whereupon Muhammad Qasim agreed, but laid claim to the final slot on the grounds that his religion was of most recent origin! Alarmed at losing the last word, Dayanand insisted he must then be able to respond. Knowles then announced that Qasim would speak first and Dayanand would inaugurate the second day.

But procedural issues reoccurred throughout the debate. According to the Muslims, it was always the Christians who raised problems. They were late; they changed their minds about having brief speeches; they wanted to add another speaker; they refused to allow an extra few minutes to answer a question; they would not answer the questions in order; they preached after the debate concluded and wanted the Muslims present, but did not reciprocate. The implication throughout was one of arrogance on the part of those who shared the culture of the imperial rulers. Piyare Lal was reproached for siding with them on a number of points, and is recorded as having apologized, but with the argument that the Christians were simply less accommodating than the Muslims, and unless placated they would leave. The Muslims saw Piyare Lal as someone who had been taken in by the headiness of associating with the Europeans and the esteem (*ʿizzat* and *tauqir*) that brought. Clearly part of the Muslim satisfaction in their "triumph" was that they battled against such odds. They relished, moreover, confronting the Europeans with their unfairness, and did not suffer silently.

The topics themselves were not quarreled over, even though the issues were generally characteristic of Semitic religions if not of Christianity in particular. They dealt with the nature of creation; the oneness of God; the contradic-

59. Muḥammad Qāsim, *Mubāḥaṣah-yi Shāhjahānpūr*, p. 47.

tion between God's justice and mercy; the proof of the divinity of the Vedas, Bible, and Qur'an; and the nature and means of salvation. The Arya Samajis, for whom one might have thought the questions least congenial, did represent, of course, a systematic and abstract orientation within Hinduism so that they differed from other Hindus who would indeed have found these questions irrelevant. Moreover they, and the Muslims too, had learned to emphasize certain issues from within their respective traditions in the very process of debate with Christians. But perhaps most importantly, the reason there was no challenge to the question was, no doubt, the fact that each participant immediately put the issue into the context of his own tradition. Thus a question on the oneness of God became the issue of *tauhid* for Muslims, and for Hindus that of whether God was or was not "all-pervading"[60]—clearly not equivalent concepts.

Indeed, nothing is more striking about the content of this and other debates than the extent to which none of the sides entered into the intellectual frame of reference of the others. Thus Muhammad Qasim's address was a statement of the classical beliefs of Islam. His one accommodation to his Christian opponents was to give prominence to the issue of the miracles of the Prophet. He asserted the Muslim position that the proof of prophethood did not rest in miracles but in the possession and proper exercise of outstanding personal qualities. Each prophet, he explained, was characterized by some dominant quality, and Muhammad was characterized by the possession of *'ilm*, or knowledge, the quality that subsumed all others. Nonetheless, he went on to insist that Muhammad's miracles were both superior to and more authentic than the miracles of Christ or of any other prophet. This exceptional discussion aside, Muhammad Qasim stressed such fundamental Islamic issues as the relation between God and creation, the obligation of man to obey, and the importance of prophetic revelation as man's only guide to that obedi-

60. Bawa Arjan Singh, *Mela Chandapur*, p. 10.

ence. As rhetoric, Muhammad Qasim's speech was clearly masterful. He began with disclaimers of any worldly motive in speaking, and went on to try to establish an identity with his listeners, insisting on his own lowliness—but at the same time claiming the lofty worth of what he had to say. Everyone must obey even a *bhangi* if he brings orders from the king, he explained. That established, he went on to speak in Arabicized language of the nature of existence and the relation of man to God as if to show, in fact, how very learned he was. He mingled such discussions with straightforward and moving passages on such subjects as the qualities of the Prophet and the devotion of his followers to him. He also interwove comments directly addressed to his opponents. He expressed the classical Indo-Muslim attitude toward Indian religions, namely, that in all probability they too had had their prophet and their book, and that their religion had once been legitimate but no longer was.[61] To the Christians, of course, he insisted that Christianity itself had been a "heavenly religion," but that its followers had distorted its message. In a further gesture toward establishing a common ground with the Europeans, he explained the supercession of other religions by Islam:"Today it is not enough to obey the commands of Lord Northbrook, but it is necessary to obey those of Lord Lytton."[62] This hardly persuaded the Christians to accept his conclusion. This debate was not, like that of Muhammad Isma'il and Bi Chuku, to be resolved by a rhetorical coup.

Maulawi Abu'l-Mansur in his comments further developed Muhammad Qasim's charge that the extant Biblical texts were corrupted. In proof of this contention, he cited in particular a Mirzapur edition of the Bible that included a footnote identifying a verse about the Trinity as an interpolation. The Christians tried to respond, the Muslim version of the debate records, but were simply overcome. Muhammad Qasim then raised a tumult by suggesting that

61. For background to this position, see Yohanan Friedmann, "Muslim Views of Indian Religions," *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 95 (April-June 1975) pp. 214-21.

62. Manāẓir Aḥsan Gīlānī, *Sawāniḥ-i Qāsmī*, II, 438.

that verse corrupted the Bible as a drop of urine in a cup of water makes the whole dirty. He then, according to his followers, miraculously singled out from the crowd a judge from Shahjahanpur and asked him what punishment was meted out for a false document. Convinced of their success, the Muslims retired in triumph.

The Muslims could, no doubt, in fact show that the Gospels had less textual authenticity than did the Qur'an. Their conclusion that Islam was therefore superior to Christianity, however, had weaker grounds. Such a claim was possible only because the Muslims imputed to Christians their own understanding of the meaning of a sacred book. For Muslims the text was not merely inspired by God but the very embodiment of revelation. For Christians the text was sacred because divinely inspired; but the embodiment of revelation was not the text but Christ himself. Thus even in answering a common question—on the sacred quality of their respective texts—the debators could not understand the context of the answers given by each other. Similarly, it would appear that the questions of opponents were transposed immediately to the frame of reference of the other side. Thus, for example, the Muslim source records the questions of a convert, Padri Muhyi'd-Din Pashawari, in such a way that they appear to be grounded in the Muslim understanding of prophethood. Either he was misunderstood, or his conversion to Christianity did not represent a fundamental change in his religious conceptions.

The Christians, according to the Muslim source, were now in some disarray and wanted both to speak for an hour and to include another participant. Piyare Lal, fearful that the Christians would simply leave, implored Muhammad Qasim to agree to their demands, assuring him that he had already triumphed. A compromise was struck, and Padri Scott commenced. As reported by the Muslims, his arguments were not convincing. He suggested as proof of the Trinity that a tree, although one thing, has roots, leaves, and a trunk. Muhammad Qasim suggested that he go on to count the flowers, branches, and other parts of the tree. Scott also argued that the superiority of the Bible over other

holy books was attested to by its being translated into two hundred and fifty languages; Mansur ʿAli responded that those translations only dated from the previous century, and inquired what its status was before. Scott finally argued the superiority of Christianity on the grounds that the British had brought peace and order to India. Muhammad Qasim, expressing astonishment that a man who could offer such an argument had won a prize for logic, pointed out that this had nothing to do with religion, that the British had come only for trade, and that, by implication, they could not claim responsibility for the condition of India. Scott fell, he said, into the fallacy of *post hoc ergo propter hoc*. Moreover, Qasim went on, the Europeans were hardly free of sin: they ate pork, drank spirits, and indulged in fornication even here. Imagine, he asked, warming to his subject, what London must be like when even the newspapers report hundreds of illegitimate children thrown daily into the streets.[63]

Swami Dayanand made a speech, but the Muslims failed to understand it, claiming that his vocabulary was wholly Sanskrit. Anxious to show themselves alone truly engaged in the debate—and alone able to answer all points—the Muslims said that Muhammad Qasim asked Munshi Indarman to translate, but that he had refused.

On the second day, the specific question of salvation was discussed and, again, the Muslims declared themselves the winners. Muhammad Qasim's disciple, who recorded the debate, wrote that he overheard Hindu villagers telling each other, "the Pathans won," and Muhammad Yaʿqub in his account concurred, writing that the *padris* fled, even forgetting their books.[64] Even Padri Scott was said to have praised Muhammad Qasim by saying he was "not a *maulawi* but a *sufi maulawi*." The Muslims attributed their triumph to the humility (*inkisar*) of Muhammad Qasim and to the prayers of the *ahl-i islam*. Satisfied and self-confident, the

63. Ibid., pp. 406-10; and Muḥammad Qāsim, *Mubāhaṣah-yi Shāhjahānpūr*, p. 67.

64. Muḥammad Yaʿqūb Nānautawī, *Sawāniḥ-i ʿUmri-yi Maulānā Muḥammad Qāsim* (Deoband, n.d.), p. 19.

Muslims settled down in their tent to hear Muhammad Qasim's well-honed and classic answers to the questions left unanswered in the debate.

The Arya Samaji account of the debate, not surprisingly, differed from this. The Aryas, like the Muslims, were concerned primarily with showing their superiority over the Christians. The Reverend Mr. Scott is quoted at one point as saying to the Muslims, "Hear, my Muhammadan brethren! The Pandit, [Dayanand] can reply to this question in a thousand ways, and if a thousand men like us were to continue, even then he could reply to them. Hence it is not desirable to prolong discussion on this subject."[65] Moreover, at the conclusion of the fair the Arya Samajis reported that Mr. Scott and two others of the missionaries came to Dayanand in his tent to seek further conversation with him. That in itself was a mark of their subservience.[66] The Arya Samajis, like the Muslims, refused to accept the argument that the prosperity of the British Empire was to be attributed to the character of Christianity. Dayanand explained that their success was a result of their superior methods of organization and of nothing else. However, the Arya Samajis, who printed their account in English as well as in Hindi, sought an audience among Europeans as well as among Indians and were not as exultant over Christian error as were the Muslims.

The Arya Samajis, moreover, not only recorded their triumphs over the missionaries, but the details of their presumably successful exchanges with the Muslims as well. The Muslim account of the debate did not attempt to summarize the Arya Samaji arguments, presumably because the Muslims did not understand their language. The Arya Samajis, by contrast, knew the Urdu of their opponents, for they used it in their careers as government servants and traders and in their religious writings, as well. Coverage of their statements, however, did the Muslims little good. They are accused of proposing that Muslims and Hindus unite against the Christians; and are blamed for trying to foment dis-

65. Bawa Arjan Singh, *Mela Chandapur*, p. 27.
66. Ibid., pp. 39-40.

sension among the Hindus. They are quoted as making outrageous statements, not recorded in their own account, such as, "whosoever traduces Muhammad, our Religion, and the Qur'an deserves death."[67] They are described as engaging in such unlikely practices as bowing their heads toward Medina, then Mecca, when objectionable statements were made: this presumably gave credence to the Arya contention that the Muslims made an idol of the Ka'abah.[68] In general Muslims were presented as illogical and incoherent. Thus, it is presumably Muhammad Qasim's comment about Lord Lytton, quoted above, that is reported thus: "we must have faith in the ruler of the time (i.e., the Divine Viceregent on earth). The ruler of the present time is our prophet: salvation, therefore, depends entirely in professing faith in him."[69]

The debate confirmed to the Aryas their superiority, just as it had confirmed it to the Muslims. "The people said of Dayanand, 'We have found him a thousand times wiser than we heard he was.' "[70] Characteristically, the Arya Samajis claimed that they invited Muhammad Qasim to debate with them again but he failed to appear;[71] and the Deobandis claimed that they sought out debate, but Dayanand—described as a great eater, fancy dresser, and user of *bhang*[72]—only set conditions and delayed. The debate had been a success for both. Muhammad Ya'qub, foretelling Muhammad Qasim's death, concluded that his life must be almost over, for in this one debate he had fulfilled the purpose for which he had been created.[73]

Thus for the 'ulama—as for the Arya Samajis—it made no difference that debates had become stereotyped and the exchange of ideas clearly ceremonial. The debates continued with ever increasing frequency and popularity. Crowds

67. Ibid., p. 7.
68. See Muhammad Qasim's pamphlets in reply to this charge: *Qiblah-nāmah* and *Turkī ba-Turkī.*
69. Bawa Arjan Singh, *Mela Chandapur,* p. 32.
70. Ibid., p. 27.
71. Ibid., p. 40.
72. Ẓuhūru'l-Ḥasan, *Arwāḥ-i Ṣalāṣah,* p. 236.
73. Ibid., p. 235.

gathered to hear them, newspapers gave them extensive coverage, publishers reprinted them in pamphlet form. Skill in debate became an important accomplishment of religious leaders. Deoband even established a separate department of *munazarah* to train students in its art.

Debate was important, for if it did not influence other participants, it clearly did influence those who were the followers of those participants. For them the debates offered a confirmation of their sense of community. The Arya Samaji leaders spoke in highly Sanskritized Hindi. They did, in fact, often debate in Sanskrit itself in order to prove their claim to scholarship in the high tradition of their religion.[74] That they would use Sanskrit vocabulary in a debate with opponents who did not know the language makes dramatically clear the fact that the important achievement of each debate was internal to each community. Each side invariably claimed that they had won. In a very real sense they always did, because participation itself enhanced their position where it mattered, among their own coreligionists. The followers were impressed by the learning of their leaders and by their involvement in a contest that was a paradigm of the political and social struggle of the day.

Genuine intellectual exchange was thus irrelevant to the purpose of the debates. Each side could feel it had won because it simply judged its opponents by its own standards, and did not explore a different intellectual framework. Thus, as described above, the Muslims discussed the authenticity of the Bible in terms meaningful only to them. Similarly, to give a final example, in controversy with the Arya Samajis the Muslims applied their own principles to assert the illegitimacy of vegetarianism. Muhammad Qasim argued that God, as the owner of the whole of creation, had the right to make use of that creation. He told the highest of His creatures that they might eat meat. To refuse his permission would be lack of obedience and gratitude. Muhammad Qasim noted that most people ate meat, in-

74. Jones, *Arya Dharm*, p. 70.

cluding many Hindus, and that they, in any case, were less than ten percent of the world's population, and "not particularly noted for their intelligence, customs, and habits."[75] Such proofs would satisfy only those who already accepted the fundamental premises of Islam. For the Arya Samajis, vegetarianism not only had complex meaning within their religious system, it also identified its members with high Sanskritic norms that assured them social respect and made, as well, an impermeable boundary between them and the polluted Muslims. Against this Muhammad Qasim's theological arguments—let alone his *ad hominem* assessment of Hindu intelligence—had little chance. The missionaries, absorbed in their hopes of conversions, were no doubt oblivious of these concerns of the other participants.

The internal debate among rival Hindu or rival Muslim leaders, respectively, had many of the same characteristics as did the debate between representatives of different communities. There too, the debate was a significant influence in defining the boundaries of each group. There too, the spokesmen tended to argue within their respective ideological systems, and to develop a series of stereotyped points that satisfied their supporters more than their opponents. There was, however, more shifting of loyalties within each community than across community lines. Debate was intense and often bitter. The Barelwi ʿulama, for example, regularly accused both the Deobandis and the Ahl-i Hadis of being both *kafir* and politically disloyal.[76] Debates over issues like this were popular. When Muhammad Qasim debated with the ʿulama, of Rampur, for example, "All classes, the notables, the ʿulama, the students, came to hear his speech: only the women and children remained at home."[77] In addition to Muhammad Qasim, other leading Deobandi debaters included Ahmad Hasan Amrohawi, Khalil Ahmad Ambahtawi, Anwar Shah Kashmiri, Mahmud Hasan, and, for a time, Sana'u'llah Amritsari, the last

75. Muḥammad Qāsim Nānautawī, *Tuḥfah-yi Laḥmiyyah* (Deoband, n.d.), p. 5.
76. Ẓuhūru'l-Ḥasan, *Arwāḥ-i Ṣalāṣah*, p. 232.
77. Ibid., p. 263.

of whom was particularly renowned in the Punjab, first on behalf of the Deobandis, later for the Ahl-i Hadis. The internal Muslim debates seem to have been less regulated than those among communities. Thus a debate in Bahawalpur among Deobandis, Ahl-i Hadis, a "*nechari*," and Shi'is, presided over by the *nawwab*, continued for four days. Like other debates of the day, however, exchanges were published in the newspapers—and, judging from the Deobandis, each side claimed victory.[78]

The debates were, indeed, a form of social event, a public ritual, that took on new form and meaning in the late nineteenth century.[79] In a society largely illiterate and equipped only minimally with modern forms of communication, they came to serve as a new forum for communicating issues at once religious and social. The debates were long-winded, hackneyed, repetitive—and hence, one would judge, reassuring, convincing, and effective. The followers of the participants took pride in the combative role of their leaders, felt their own faith and their own worth vindicated, and enjoyed a sense of solidarity with those past and present, in this place or elsewhere, who would take the identical stand.

The result of both debate and publication was a substantial increase in the audience of such religious leaders as the 'ulama. Their teachings and opinions achieved ever-wider currency, and the intellectual orientations they represented were increasingly considered the defining characteristics of rival groups. Public preaching and pamphlet controversy had existed earlier, but their popularity in the late nineteenth century is truly striking. It is an indication of the extent to which new formulations of religious identity

78. See Muftī 'Azīzu'r-Raḥmān, *Taẕkirah-yi Mashā'ikh-i Dē'ōband* (Bijnor, 1958), pp. 311-13, and Muḥammad 'Āshiq Ilāhī Mīraṭhī, *Taẕkiratu'l-Khalīl* (Saharanpur, n.d.), pp. 115-43; and Muḥammad 'Āshiq Ilāhī Mīraṭhī, *Taẕkiratu'r-Rashīd* (Meerut, n.d.), II, 260.

79. I am grateful to Drew Gilpin Faust, who pointed me to this interpretation of the debates. See her "Words with the Power of Things: The Rhetoric and Ritual of Agriculture in Ante-Bellum South Carolina" (typescript, University of Pennsylvania, 1978).

proved salient and compelling to many Indians in this period. Pious people at the time lamented divisiveness among Hindus or among Muslims, respectively. But that very competition helped create a familiarity with religious issues that was unprecedented in Indian history.

VI

The Social Milieu of the Deobandi ʿUlama

> Are we not aware that formerly certain particular persons understood the precepts of Law and religion, while the ignorant and lower classes knew nothing about them? During the past thirty years many people have become acquainted with the precepts of religion.[1]

ʿULAMA such as the Deobandis played an important role in the lives of Muslims of many classes. They generated, as we have seen, many concentric circles of influence. At the center were their students and disciples, people trained by them to spread their religious and social concerns. There followed a larger circle of those who had less sustained contact, perhaps by occasional solicitation of judicial decisions, perhaps by attendance at audiences or by the securing of nominal initiation. Still more knew the Deobandis through their writing and publication of religious literature. Others had heard them engage in public preaching and debate. There were people who had not even this indirect involvement, but simply came to know the reputation of the Deobandis as examplars of orthodoxy, devoted to training ʿulama, spreading the tenets of Islam, and defending the faith against all attacks. The system of voluntary donations was in part responsible for creating this last circle, for people who knew the school encouraged others to enroll as subscribers, explaining to them the characteristics of the school and holding out to them the promise of a copy of the annual proceedings and an invitation to the

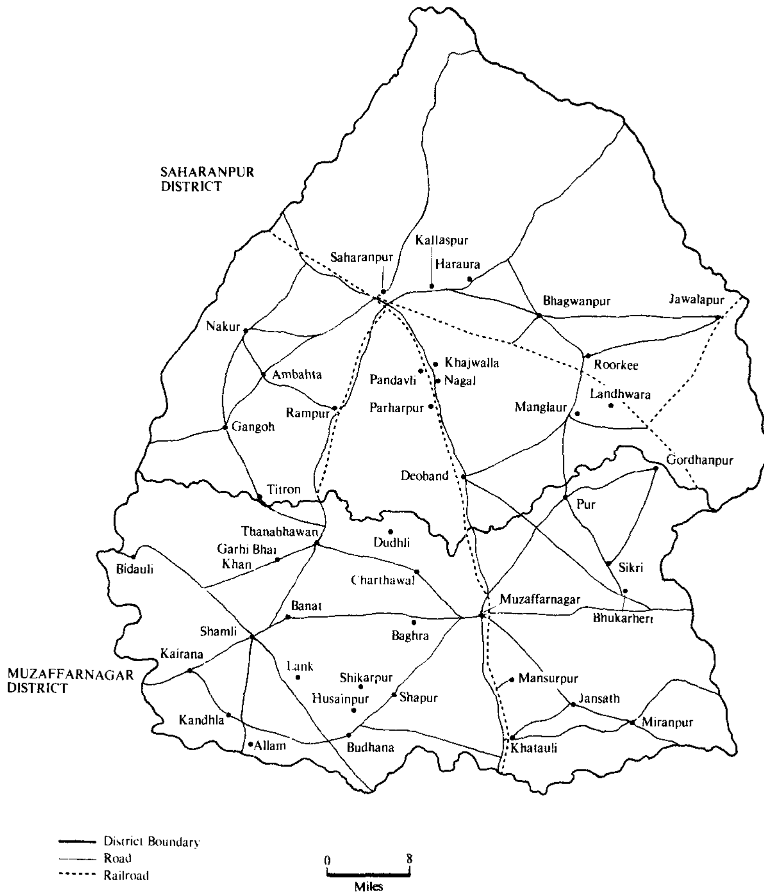
1. The *Awadh Akhbar*, January 25, 1870, quoted in Government of India, *Selections from the Vernacular Newspapers Published in the Punjab, North Western Provinces, Oudh, and the Central Provinces*, 1870, p. 3.

annual convocation. The subscribers, encompassing members of all these circles, provided the financial support of the ʿulama and were, in turn, the main recipients of their teaching and guidance.

The geographic, occupational, and social origin of many of the followers of the Deobandis is recorded in the lists of these subscribers.[2] Their geographic distribution (see the table in the appendix to this chapter) substantiates Deoband's claim to be, even in this early period before 1892, more than a local school. It thus represents one of the first institutions to make effective use of modern improvements in communications such as mail and money-order services and cheap methods of printing. From the town of Deoband and about a dozen nearby villages came about 12% of the donors (335), a substantial number but only a small part of the whole. The entire district of Saharanpur represented 28% of the total (736); Muzaffarnagar district to the south, 27% (713). The centers of Deobandi support in these two districts are shown on Map 6. Almost half the donors resided outside these two districts. The rest of the sprawling United Provinces of Agra and Oudh accounted for almost a quarter of the donors—making a total, then, of three quarters (1947) from the whole province. The quarter that remained was widely scattered: about half (316) from Punjab, the rest from Bihar, princely states, and major cities throughout India. Many of the two thousand people who came to Deoband for its convocation in 1883 (one that happens to have been described) must have been these donors. Invited by letters and posters for a date chosen to coincide with a government holiday, taking advantage no doubt of the new rail line, and looking forward to being entertained by local people "as if it had been one of their own weddings" they arrived "great and small, from all over Hindustan."[3]

The students at the school, one might note, tended to be

2. For an explanation of the lists of donors see the Appendix to this chapter.
3. Muḥammad ʿĀshiq Ilāhī Mīraṭhī, *Tazkiratu'r-Rashīd* (Meerut, n.d.), I, 95-96.



6. Centers of Deobandi Support in Saharanpur and Muzaffarnagar Districts

of even more distant origin than the donors. This was true not only of Deoband but of the Mazahir-i 'Ulum, as well. At the latter school, for example, in 1886 roughly one-third of the students were from the United Provinces, including one-quarter of the whole from Saharanpur city; one-third were from Punjab; and a striking one-third were from Bengal.[4] When they completed their studies, these students would stimulate contributions from their home areas. Thus one would expect donors in later years to be even more widely distributed.

Diverse not only in geographic origin, the donors were also diverse in social origin. They ranged from the Nizam of Hyderabad and other princes to humble coolies and watercarriers. The Deobandis took pride in the presence of the humble on the lists. However, the donors of this period were in fact preponderantly members of the *ashraf* or well-born class of Muslims.[5] They were the people most likely to be in a financial position to make contributions. And they were the people with whom the 'ulama had the most substantial and extensive ties of family and common interests. The *ashraf* origin of the 'ulama accounts in large part for their influence among members of this class and, to some extent, for the character of their teachings, as well.

The 'Ulama and the *Ashraf*

The 'ulama have sometimes been thought to be an "underworld" who influenced only the lower classes, and who

4. Unfortunately my lists of students were lost in travel. However, many students are noted in such works as Muḥammad Ṭayyib Qāsimī, *Dāru'l-'Ulūm Dē'ōband kī Ṣad Sālah Zındagī* (Deoband, 1968) and 'Abdu's-Sattār, *Tārīkh-i Madrasah-yi 'Āliyah* (Dacca, 1959). Among the early graduates was 'Abdu'r-Razzaq of Afghanistan. From Bengal came 'Abdu's-Samad and 'Abdu'l-Hamid of Chittagong, Sayyid Murtaza Hasan of Chandpur, Muhammad Sahul of Bhagalpur, Muhammad Yahya of Saram, and Khan Bahadur Mubarak Karim. In the eastern United Provinces influential early graduates included Muhammad Ibrahim Arawi, Shah Waris Hasan Lakhnawi, Asghar Husain Jaunpuri, and Shukru'llah Mubarakpuri. For Saharanpur, see Muḥammad Ẓakariyā, *Tārīkh-i Maẓāhir* (Saharanpur, 1972), p. 49.

5. For an evocative discussion of the characteristics of *ashraf* culture, see David S. Lelyveld, *Aligarh's First Generation: Muslim Solidarity in British India* (Princeton, 1978), Chapter II.

were cut off from a "collaborating class" of government officials and big landlords.[6] In fact, almost the opposite appears to have been the case. They themselves were *ashraf* and primarily influenced their counterparts. Like others of the *ashraf*, the ʿulama claimed descent from outside India: as *sayyids*, the descendants of the Prophet himself; as *shaikhs*, the offspring of the Prophet's companions; and as Mughals and Pathans, the descendants of the immigrant rulers and settlers of medieval India. They shared the ideology that these four hierarchically ordered groups or *qaum* were the social elite, and they guarded this status not only by marriage within the *qaum* but within the family. They held themselves superior to indigenous converts, particularly those of low occupational castes, but they often accorded high-caste converts the courtesy of the title of *shaikh*. The claim to foreign descent in the case of the ʿulama bolstered their religious authority, for it implied proximity to the Prophet or to areas where he flourished.

This particular definition of social status was unique to India. It was formalized only in the eighteenth century as one of the many developments that fostered the coherence of Muslim society apart from the state.[7] These categories, like Hindu castes, served to demarcate a community and preserve its culture during periods of alien rule. Religious leadership, an important component of that culture, was one of the specific responsibilities of the newly defined *ashraf*, for, as Muhammad Qasim wrote in the proceedings of the school at Deoband, "God entrusted religious learning to these four *qaum*."[8]

Those who were the learned were not isolated from others of the well-born. They and their families tended to engage in a whole range of activities, not only religious leadership, but landholding, government service, and trade. Permeation of diverse branches of society has been, in fact, his-

6. This impression is given by Peter Hardy, *The Muslims of British India* (Cambridge, 1972), pp. 168-69.

7. This theory was advanced by the late Aziz Ahmad, who observed that before the eighteenth century only the title *sayyid* was used to denote social standing.

8. Dāru'l-ʿUlūm Dē'ōband, *Rū-dād-i Sālānah 1290* (1873/4), p. 11.

torically characteristic of the ʿulama, and this phenomenon not only served the interests of individual families, but at best enhanced the effectiveness of the ʿulama's religious influence. We have seen this to be the pattern of the Farangi Mahalli ʿulama. The pattern, particularly when it included government service, was always deemed risky to religious well-being, even if the government was Muslim; but it was wholly abandoned only by those like the *mujahidin* who wanted to throw over the existing world, not work within it.

The position of the leading ʿulama is exemplified by the careers of members of the distinguished Kandhlah family.[9] The ʿulama of that family participated in the reformist movement from the eighteenth century on. They were supporters, disciples, students, and teachers themselves of the Deobandis. Nonetheless, many participated in government service for part or all of their careers; they held properties; some engaged in trade. Far from being incompatible, such diverse activities were deemed essential to the overall well-being of the family. Some disapproved of government service, both because of the historic ambivalence about such activity and because of the alien culture of the British. Like all sensitive Indians of good birth, they resented above all British disregard of the status they felt to be their due.[10] Nevertheless, both before and after the Mutiny, members of the Kandhlah family acted as government servants, often filling such influential posts as *tahsildar*, sub-judge, or staff of the Department of Public Instruction. Some of them

9. This summary is compiled from Muḥammad Iḥtishāmu'l-Ḥasan Kāndhlawī, *Ḥālāt-i Mashā'ikh-i Kāndhlah* (Delhi, 1963/4).

10. The family history does idealize those who remained aloof from government. In the medieval period, for example, an *ʿalim* is praised for refusing a land grant from Shah Jahan; another, for refusing to take a *qazi* as a disciple. In the late nineteenth century the family matriarch, Bibi Ummatu'r-Rahman, refused to accept any money earned from government service. The accounts of those who did serve the government occasionally describe difficulties with the British, and those tend to suggest how important were issues of status: the galling rule that one must remove shoes in court if they were not the British "full boots"; limitations on saying prayers; annoyance at having to wash after shaking hands by British custom.

were even associated with Aligarh. One elder of the family, Maulana Muhammad Akbar, became the first director of religious studies at Aligarh, and, partly because of his presence, at least five members of the family were students there in the late nineteenth century. Like many Aligarh graduates, four of them subsequently joined the government, one combining official service with extensive interests in trade. Attendance at Aligarh did not mean that a person of necessity embraced the ideology of its founder, least of all his religious thought. Thus one of the graduates ʿAziz-u'l-Hasan, a *wakil*, wrote extensively against the religious thought of Sayyid Ahmad. In fact, many of the government servants kept up their religious writings or retired to found schools or devote themselves to spiritual matters. All of the family members had *baiʿat* from Maulana Rashid Ahmad or from one of his disciples.

Many of them, of course, pursued exclusively the interests for which the family was famed. Among them in the late nineteenth century were Muhammad Yahya, who was Rashid Ahmad's most faithful disciple; Muhammad Ismaʿil, who established a center of religious education at Nizam-u'd-din in Delhi and began the education of the nominal Muslims of Mewa; and Muhammad Sulaiman, a man noted for his piety and for such shrewd management of the family properties that he was able to build an ʿIdgah in Kandhlah itself.

Such diverse activities within a single family were not at all uncommon. Of the four sons of Maulana Zu'l-Faqar ʿAli, Deputy Inspector of Schools and advisor to Deoband, two were religious teachers and two were government servants. Their occupations were not motivated by financial need, for the family was an aristocratic one, known for such hobbies as riding and hunting, and Zu'l-Faqar ʿAli, "both wealthy and *sharif*," demurred from his sons' being paid for their religious work. Maulana Ashraf ʿAli Thanawi's father was an influential *mukhtar*, "a man who knew men." Maulana Khalil Ahmad Ambahtawi's father was in princely service, as was his paternal uncle, as *sadru's-sudur*

in Gwalior.[11] Whether to earn needed incomes, to secure family connections where they might be helpful, or to permit individuals to follow their whims, such activities among families of the ʿulama were the norm. Similarly, families whose primary interests lay elsewhere might train one son to be an *ʿalim*.

The ʿulama, then, tended to have contacts with people engaged in a wide range of activities. The career of one *ʿalim*, Maulana Muhammad Ahsan of the Nanautah family of ʿulama, is a particularly good example of the interests of the ʿulama and of the way their contacts with government officials, traders, and literary people could help further their religious work.[12] Ahsan was at once an *ʿalim*, a government servant, a writer, a newspaper editor, a book publisher, and a businessman. His most important activity, that of publishing religious books, clearly depended on the experiences and contacts his diverse roles permitted.

He was, above all, a learned *ʿalim* committed to religious reform. As the son of Mamluk ʿAli, he acquired his early education from the circle of reformers and literati that flourished around the Delhi College in the period before the Mutiny.[13] Like many of his associates, he developed an interest in writing in Urdu, and actually began his career at the instigation of Sayyid Ahmad Khan with a translation of Godfrey Higgins' sympathetic work on Islam. He went on to write two reformist works in Urdu, one on the Hanafi definition of categories of marriagable women; another on lawful and unlawful gain. His religious interests were not,

11. For further discussions of these three families, see the following biographical works: Asghar Ḥusain, *Ḥayāt-i Shaikhu'l-Hind* (Deoband, 1920/1), especially p. 14; Ashraf ʿAlī Thānawī, *Yād-i Yārān* (Meerut, n.d.), and Muḥammad ʿĀshiq Ilāhī Mīraṭhī, *Tazkiratu'l-Khalīl* (Saharanpur, n.d.).

12. For details of his life, see Muḥammad Ayyūb Qādirī, *Maulānā Muḥammad Aḥsan Nānautawī* (Karachi, 1966). The biography is very rich in description of Ahsan's daily life, associates, economic activities, and intellectual interests.

13. He was particularly influenced by Shah ʿAbdu'l-Ghani Naqshbandi, his *shaikh*; Maulana Ahmad ʿAli Saharanpuri, the great *hadis* scholar and publisher; and Maulana Subhan Bakhsh Shikarpuri, a teacher at the Delhi College who developed the discipline of rhetoric in Urdu.

however, only intellectual. In Bareilly, where he spent most of his adult life, he served as *imam* of a mosque and led the ʿId prayers for the entire city. He founded two religious schools there and, in Nanautah after his retirement, he both founded another school and personally taught Qur'an to the women of the family. He was a member of the advisory council of Deoband.

In addition to these interests, he was long engaged in government service as a teacher of Persian at the Government College in Bareilly. In this capacity he enjoyed cordial relations with British officials with whom he, like many of the ʿulama, shared an interest in the development of Urdu. At the request of Murray Kempson, the Director of Public Instruction, he wrote a number of Urdu works for use in the schools, including a very successful work on versification; another in favor of female education; and an Urdu grammar that ran to twenty editions. His Urdu style was widely praised by ʿulama and officials alike for its simplicity and clarity.

His religious commitment, his interest in Urdu, and his experience in the Department of Public Instruction all contributed to his involvement in the new field of publishing. In 1862 he bought two lithographic presses and established the Matbaʿ-i Siddiqi in Bareilly to bring out reprints and translations of Arabic and Persian classics as well as original works, mostly on religion, in Urdu.[14] In this endeavor he had the cooperation of a lively and close group of influential people of the town. Among them were Deobandi and other ʿulama committed to the use of the press in religious

14. Muhammad Ahsan published the first editions ever of Shah Waliyu'llah's major works, *Ḥujjatu'llāhu'l-Bālighah* and *Izālatu'l-Khifā ʿan Khilāfatu'l-Khulafā'*. He also published Urdu translations of al-Ghazali's *Minʿāju'l-ʿĀbidīn*; biographies of the Prophet; anecdotes of great Sufis; and various works of *fiqh*. He published many works on sufism, particularly *sanads*, letters, and treatises related to the Naqshbandi Mujaddiddi order in which both he and his brother, Muhammad Munir, had initiation. He also published many original Urdu works, of which the largest number were polemics directed against Hindus, Christians, and rival Muslim groups. Muḥammad Ayyūb Qādirī, *Maulānā Muḥammad Aḥsan*, pp. 71-79, bases a partial list of the press's publications on the catalogues of the Oriental Library, Muslim University Aligarh (1932), II, 87.

reform; a well-known Sufi *pir*; fellow employees of the Department of Public Instruction, including at least one Hindu; and traders who provided mutual help in distributing and marketing books. The near-by Nawwab of Rampur took an interest in Ahsan's press and subsidized at least one major publication. The Nawwab perhaps aside, most of these men would no doubt have gathered at the bookshop Ahsan opened in the town to dispense his publications. Circles like this, characteristic of the small and fluid elite of the times, were common to towns across north India. They sometimes joined together in voluntary associations, sometimes met less formally on the basis of their common interests. The religious elite were an important part of such gatherings.

Ahsan's stepson, ʿAbdu'l-Ahad, continued his work. In 1886 he acquired the distinguished Matbaʿ-i Mujtaba'i in Delhi which, under him, achieved a stature second only to the famed Newal Kishore press in Lucknow. Again the success of this press depended in large part on the position of its editor among the civic elite. A graduate of Allahabad University, he worked first in the Department of Public Instruction and then as a *wakil*. Later, as editor of the press in Delhi, he served as an honorary magistrate and was awarded the title of Khan Bahadur by the British for his loyal services in World War I. He was both a trustee of Aligarh and a supporter of many religious schools and mosques. In his case, as in so many others, an attempt to distinguish government servants from those involved in religious activities is misleading. Work in both areas enhanced one another. The lives of both ʿAbdu'l-Ahad and Muhammad Ahsan stand as examples of the multifaceted careers and wide circles of association characteristic of many of the ʿulama of this period.

Not all of the ʿulama were, to be sure, of such a prosperous or cosmopolitan background. Many were enabled through religious education, however, to attain suitable employment and a respected standing in their community. The ʿulama deprecated worldly motives as an incentive for religious education, judging such behavior as foolish as

"buying a costly shawl for polishing shoes."[15] They shared with other Muslims, however, a widespread concern for employment of their fellows. The *ashraf qaum*, said Muhammad Qasim, "must acquire learning not merely for glory but for their livelihood as well."[16] And on another occasion the *Proceedings* reiterated, "we are not, as is often thought, concerned only with religion and not with earning a livelihood."[17] The two were not incompatible. Graduates of the schools were prepared for careers as teachers, prayer leaders, guardians of shrines, doctors, writers, and publishers. Thus they could further their religious interests and simultaneously uphold the respectability of their own and their family's interests. In this context it is not surprising that they had little inclination to learn the crafts that some people at the school once wanted to teach.

No statistical information is available about the family finances or backgrounds of the early students at Deoband, but many references suggest the importance of their education in securing a needed livelihood. Maulana Shukru'llah of Mubarakpur in the eastern part of the United Provinces, for example, was a student at the end of the nineteenth century who was described as being of a poor family. When he returned to his home upon the completion of his education he gradually established himself as an elder of the town, organizing financial collections to instruct the children of the poor as well as of the rich, building both an ʿIdgah and a Jamiʿ Masjid, and actively supporting the Khilafat movement. As his own financial position improved, his biographer describes, he himself was generous to poor ʿulama.[18] Like many others, he owed his career to the free education available at Deoband. Indeed, lamented one Deobandi graduate at the turn of the century, "only

15. A comment by Anwar Shah Kashmiri quoted in Sayyid Maḥbūb Riẓwī, *Dāru'l-ʿUlūm Dĕ'ōband kī Taʿlīmī Khuṣūṣiyyāt* (Deoband, 1950?), p. 19.

16. Dāru'l-ʿUlūm Dĕ'ōband, *Rū-dād-i Sālānah*, 1290 (1873/4), p. 11.

17. Ibid. 1303 (1885/6), p. 5.

18. *al-Balāgh, Taʿlīmī Nambar* (December-January 1954/5) pp. 122-29.

the poor go to religious schools."[19] Many 'ulama in the early period were no doubt of families recognized as *ashraf* whose support came from people of similar birth but superior economic conditions, as a description of one new school suggests:

> A certain Shaikh Ahmad 'Ali of Azamgarh, a landholder, had left his family to turn to religious interests. He founded the Madrasah-i Diniyyah in Faizabad. He employed as teacher a young man from Kawal in Muzaffarnagar. He was of a family which had been *qazis* under the Mughals but now, like so many of the Muslim *ashraf*, had fallen on hard times but had not lost his love of knowledge. His name was Muhammad Zaru'd-Din Siddiqi. He became the leader and the pillar of the school.[20]

Thus, as religious leaders, people of humble background were able to attain positions of substantial influence.

This was true even for those students, the so-called *ghair-qaum*, who were not even recognized as *ashraf*. If religious education served the *ashraf* by giving them employment commensurate with their high birth, it gave these students the opportunity to make a new claim to respectability. At the school they acquired not only training for a profession but the style of appropriate behavior that distinguished the well born. Through close association with their teachers over a period of several years they learned aristocratic qualities of hospitality, refined taste, and cultured language. The autobiography of Sayyid Husain Ahmad Madani, one of the most celebrated Deobandis of this century, itself offers clues that members of his own family were enabled through religious training to gain recognition as *sayyid* despite common belief that they were weaver in origin.[21] His father had craved the status of a religious leader. He claimed to be a *sayyid*, called himself a *maulawi*, and, on the basis of a dream, took the title of *khalifah* of Maulana Fazlu'r-Rah-

19. Manṣūr 'Alī Khān, *Maẓhab-i Manṣūr* (Hyderabad, 1909), p. 122.
20. Ḥusain Aḥmad Madanī, *Naqsh-i Ḥayāt* (Deoband, 1953), p. 118.
21. Ḥusain Aḥmad Madanī, *Naqsh-i Ḥayāt.*

man Ganjmuradabadi.[22] The kind of respectability he sought eluded him, for although he so hated the English that he dreamed of excrement when he began to study their language, he was reduced to taking employment in a government primary school. He ultimately found some measure of personal contentment by emigrating to Medina. But his greatest satisfaction came from educating his three sons at Deoband.

All three were prepared by the school to obtain employment of both religious value and social respectability. In the Hijaz they were initially faced with desperate poverty but ultimately, despite the prejudice against "Hindis," all three became known as excellent teachers. Husain Ahmad even attracted Arab students because of his method of preparing lessons in advance so that he appeared to know the books by heart. One of his brothers tutored the children of Indian merchants from throughout the Middle East. Because of these scholarly activities, the family received modest stipends from the Nawwab of Bhawalpur, whose *wazir* was a disciple of Rashid Ahmad, and from the Begum of Bhopal. The sons later returned to India, two continuing their careers of religious teaching, one entering the Department of Public Instruction. Deoband-educated, Arabia-returned, and settled outside their natal village, their claim to being *sayyid* was no longer challenged. They valued that status, for, as Husain Ahmad wrote, ultimately only belief and behavior mattered but both were facilitated by birth, and "one should rejoice in high birth as one rejoices in having a flawless body."[23]

Religious education was thus of value both to the poor *ashraf* in need of employment and to the aspiring *ashraf* in quest of respectable status or satisfying employment. To

22. His claim to be a *sayyid* was, he believed, confirmed by two dreams, one an archetypal dream of himself as a baby swimming to the Prophet's daughter Fatimah, who appeared to be his mother; another, recounted by his *shaikh*, of seeing that he had a *sayyid* ancestor. In a similar fashion, Muhammad Qasim confirmed the *sayyid* status of a family of Amrohah which for generations had had the title of *shaikh*. Manāẓir Aḥsan Gīlānī, *Sawāniḥ-i Qāsimī* (Deoband, 1955), I, 319.

23. Ḥusain Aḥmad Madanī, *Naqsh-i Ḥayāt*, I, 18.

the extent that students of *madrasahs* in this century have increasingly come from the lower classes and rural settlements, they have widened the social contacts of the religious leadership even beyond their wide scope at the end of the previous century.

The Donors: The Central Role of the *Ashraf*

Since, however, Deoband's initial staff and student body was largely *ashraf*, it is not surprising that they attracted many donors of like background. Among the annual donors, about one-half of the 2,658 names listed during the first thirty years of the school's existence were identified by occupations usually associated with the *ashraf*: government service, religious leadership, trade, and landholding. In addition, of the 30 percent of the donors not identified by occupation, about half had *ashraf* titles like *shaikh* or *sayyid* or names like Khan, which often indicates Afghan descent, and Beg, which indicates Mughal origin.

The largest category of donors (as indicated in the appendix) were those in government and princely service, some 735 who comprised 28 percent of the whole. They held a wide variety of positions. Many were professionals, administrators, and specialized officials such as teachers or judges. There were 13 *tahsildars* and 4 deputy collectors, whose posts were among the highest civil positions an Indian could hope to obtain. They, along with the army officers, would have had substantial familiarity with the British and their institutions. The single largest group by department, some 128, were in fact those serving in the army or related military service where officer rank and *ashraf* family ties provided clear channels for collection. Almost as many were in the expanding Public Works Department, followed by over 70 in the police, a department preponderantly Muslim in this province. Others served the Revenue Department, the courts, and the Department of Public Instruction.

Of the donors, 20 percent, some 454, were identified by religious title. It is possible to say very little about one-

quarter of these since they were identified only as *hajji*, those who had made the pilgrimage, or as *hafiz*, those who had memorized the Qur'an. A very substantial number, however, were themselves involved in religious education, some 90 either as teachers or administrators in religious schools and 64 designated as *maulawi*. Others included publishers, traditionally trained doctors, *imams*, guardians of pious endowments, and Sufi *pirs*. Fifty-two were entitled *munshi*, people educated to be scribes, who may well have had some employment in government or business.

Traders made up 7 percent of the donors. Most of them would have been among the prosperous members of the community, although of the total of 138 there were 32 listed as "sellers" of some commodity and 9 as *bisati*, who spread their wares on the ground. *Zamindars* and *ra'is* accounted for 5 percent, clearly among the most prosperous of the donors, particularly the 19 entitled *nawwab*.

The categories are rough, but the importance of the *ashraf* donors is clear. They were also prominent among those who gave "one-time" or *yakmast* gifts to the school. These gifts included money designated as *zakat* for the food of the students, proceeds from the sale of skins from the ʿId sacrifice, books, and other gifts in both money and kind. In one year, for example, three religious leaders of the *qasbah* of Kandhlah organized the sale of hides contributed by 168 families; the landed Sherwani family of Aligarh and a trader from Madras each made substantial gifts to the building fund; and a special association organized in Hyderabad to support the school, the Majlis-i Karrawa'i-yi De'oband, headed by two "captains" (of whom one was a Hindu), made a large donation. Hajji Lutfu'llah Qadiri, a Sufi "whose grace flowed in Calcutta, Bombay, and Karachi," offered a feast to the students and left his own sons at the school to be educated. There were, typically, several hundred donors of single gifts in each year in addition to the regular contributors.

Support of the school spread along preexisting social lines: family, occupation, and religious order. (Indeed, at the Mazahir-i ʿUlum in Saharanpur, support for the school

was explicitly organized on the basis of the Muslim clans or *baradaris* of the city.) The first donor to Deoband from the village of Amaliyah was a *shaikh*, a local spokesman to the government as *nambardar*, and a *hafiz*. Thus he might well have shared a *baradari* tie with the founders of the school, he would have been in touch with government officials in Deoband, and he might well have known the ʿulama because of his religious interests. The school directed its appeal to just such influential people, particularly to government servants. In 1883 Shah Rafiʿu'd-Din used the proceedings to call on people in big cities, particularly on government servants, to use their influence on behalf of the school: "the illustrious officers, *sadru's-sudur*, deputies, magistrates, *munsifs, tahsildars, thanahdars* [should each] make some effort each in his office." He also singled out holders of important offices in the princely states; military officers such as *risaldars, dafʿadars,* and *jamʿdars*; traders; and craftsmen "who had influence within their brotherhoods in such places as Benares and Allahabad."[24] On another occasion he addressed "those who are the leaders of a village or *mahallah* or an official in some government department, or the head of some family or a worker in a factory—on all of these it is duty to gather every one and arouse enthusiasm for knowledge."[25] The school thus tried to create a core of donors who were members of the elite of the day. It is a truism of religious movements that if their appeal is only to peripheral members of society, to "loners and drifters" or even to the humble, that they are likely to falter for lack of influence.[26] The Deobandis made no such error. They recruited people with ties to others of

24. Dāru'l-ʿUlūm Dē'ōband, *Rū-dād-i Sālānah*, 1292 (1875/6), p. 32.
25. Ibid., 1298 (1880/1), back cover.
26. "Pentecostal groups do not grow if they attempt to recruit from loners and drifters. . . . When a person with some influence over friends, family or associates is recruited, he is potentially capable of attracting many recruits from his circle of contacts and membership will grow exponentially." L. P. Gerlach and V. H. Hine, "Five Factors Crucial to the Growth and Spread of a Modern Religious Movement," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 7 (1968), 23.

their class and, through them reached their colleagues, subordinates, and followers as well.

The widespread ties of the *ashraf* to their fellows is evident in the lists of the donors. Time and again, when there was only a single donor or only a few donors from a place, he or they were identified by such occupations as teacher, government servant, landed notable, factory owner, or religious teacher. In Saharanpur district, in addition to clusters of donors in various towns and villages, there were 211 donors from 51 different places. Such scattering was possible only because the elite positions of the donors linked them with others over a wide area in what was largely a locally organized society. They alone were likely to know of distant events such as the founding of this school.

They too were the people who were most likely to move. Of the donors, at least 9 percent did indeed move during this period, often more than once. From the town of Deoband alone there was a surprisingly large "diaspora" of some 60 donors who spread throughout India, 46 as government servants, 6 in princely service, 9 engaged in religious occupations, and 7 who followed occupations in trade. In Roorkee, for example, a major center of Deobandi support, the first donors were two Deobandi emigrés, a drawing master and a teacher at the Thomason Engineering College. Ultimately one-third of the donors from that town were other government servants. A trader in Danapur, Bihar, donated from 1867 to 1882, in one year presenting in addition to his personal gift a sum collected from the residents of the town. He also, no doubt, enrolled the town's 6 regular donors, all traders like himself. A *tahsildar* from Saharanpur gave during the entire thirty-year period and moved eight times, stimulating support for the school as he went. Over and over this pattern repeated itself.

Even when one cannot identify the person who stimulated support, the pattern of donations often indicates some single stimulus. Thus several donors from a town are often identified by a common place of work: 7 employees of the Department of Public Instruction of Saharanpur; 32 employees in the government godown in Roorkee; 9 people

engaged in work on canals in Daudpur in the Punjab; 10 employed at the government armaments headquarters in Multan. More generally, donors from one place often shared a single occupation. Thus 38 of the 59 donors from the summer capital of India, Simla, were traders. Beyond the districts of the upper Doab contributors clustered in a single occupational group in each area. In Rohilkhand the donors were mostly religious leaders and government servants. Elsewhere in the United Provinces (that is, besides the upper Doab and Rohilkhand) they were government servants, with two exceptions: a cluster of landlords who gave from the district of Bulandshahr, and a group of traders from the provincial capital of Nainital. In the Punjab, with the exception of the district of Ambala, which adjoins Saharanpur, the donors were government servants and traders who were almost entirely resident in large towns and cities. In Bihar and in the two south Indian cities of Vellore and Madras, the donors were primarily religious leaders. They were princely employees in the states, and in the distant places of Calcutta, Burma, and Siam, they consisted of a few traders. Presumably, a few supporters in each area initiated donations among their occupational colleagues.

An Ideology for the *Ashraf*

What about Deoband particularly appealed to these donors who were well born and engaged in occupations connected to government, religious leadership, landholding, and trade? These were people who were particularly affected by the changes of the period: the presence of non-Muslim rulers, new patterns of recruitment to government service, the economic consequences of colonial rule. Roughly 80 percent of the donors were urban; the rest, largely resident in the countryside immediately adjacent to the Deobandi schools. On the whole, the donors were people sensitive to the changes of the time.

Deobandi teaching offered a formulation of Islam particularly salient to the concerns of the urban *ashraf*. The Deobandis, notably, provided a modus vivendi with the

political situation of the day. They did not do so by idealizing British rule or by defining success in terms of assimilation to British culture. Rather, they sustained a traditional Muslim strategy already current in India of tolerance of alien regimes, which provided security and permitted Muslims to foster an autonomous religious and a social life of their own. The Deobandis seem to have had little hesitation about the legitimacy of taking government jobs, and many, in fact, shared the increasing concern that more of those jobs should be in Muslim hands. They accepted the reality of their weakness, and tried to take the best advantage possible of the political situation. Such a practical stance was psychologically possible because the core of Deobandi teachings encouraged a sense of moral superiority over the obviously politically superior British.

The Deobandis epitomized the pattern of many religious movements in the nineteenth century that rejected the customary style of religious practice in favor of emulating the practice of an authentic text or an idealized historical period. All such movements fostered a sense of cultural pride and self-esteem. The Deobandi emphasis was on the centrality of the religious law, an emphasis that seemed a particularly effective response to the implicit or explicit challenge of the alien culture. Based on revelation and cherished over the centuries, the Law was deemed the most fundamental guide to the faith. It was, moreover, susceptible to generalization by carefully defined rules, a characteristic that made it analogous to the British legal system. Muslim culture was thus understood to be the equivalent of British culture in its ability to generate a coherent and inclusive system, and superior to that culture in divine sanction and scope.

In a period of substantial constraints on indigenous initiatives of all kinds, the goal of a return to textual norms offered an opportunity for active mastery and effort in one sphere of an individual's life. This in itself was deeply satisfying. It was not, one might note, understood to be devoid of political implications. The Deobandis, much like Gandhi later, believed that if individual lives were properly or-

dered, the community's life would be transformed as well. In this belief in ultimate social change, we see an echo of the Deobandi style of indirect influence through the exertion of bodily and spiritual powers rather than through direct confrontation. A Deobandi wall poster, designed to solicit support for the school, pointed out the sorry conditions of the times and obliquely held out the hope that they would be put right by religious endeavor: "O Brother Muslims, awake from the dream of oblivion. Open your eyes. Become wise. See what is happening. What are you giving? What are you writing? The Lord Almighty will bless your worldly well-being."[27] The call of the Deobandis held out the possibility of action that would effect not only individual but communal change. And the Deobandis, of course, not only developed a style of psychological resistance to British culture but were in the forefront of those who challenged the spokesmen of other religions in public debates and pamphlets.

But Deobandi teachings were satisfying not only because of their value as a response to an alien culture. Within Islam, they offered an alternative to the widespread acceptance of the power of the descendents of the medieval saints, the *pirs* (or *sajjadah nishins*), whose influence rested on descent rather than accomplishment. The *pirs* mediated between their followers and interceded between their followers and God. This style of religion made the follower dependant on the *pir* without requiring the *pir* to foster his follower's spiritual development. It was, moreover, a religion of a particular local area, operating best in face-to-face contacts and requiring the presence of the follower at fixed times and places. The Deobandi objection to both pilgrimage and the celebration of *'urs* undermined the two customs that sustained the lives of the shrines. In contrast, the Deobandis offered the Law, with themselves as inter-

27. Dāru'l-'Ulūm Dē'ōband, *Rū-dād-i Sālānah*, 1301 (1883/4), back cover.

preters, as the guide to a fruitful and satisfying religious life.[28]

The implications of this alternate style were many. The believer understood himself to be responsible, with the guidance of an *ʿalim*, for measuring his practices and adhering to legitimate and required ones. This implied a shift in understanding of fundamental beliefs, putting much more emphasis on individual initiative and on formal rules than had been characteristic of the shrine-based religion. At the same time as it gave more scope for individual responsibility, adherence to the high tradition provided the opportunity for identification with Muslims throughout India and beyond. The focus on Law minimized the believer's enmeshment in parochial and familial concerns. The Deobandis not only opposed rites revolving around Sufi shrines, but also elaborate marriage, birth, and funeral ceremonies. Such observances bound participants to particular places and times and encumbered them with debt. Other Muslim reform movements of this period, one might note, among them those of Aligarh, the Ahl-i Hadis, and the Ahmadiyyah, all opposed these observances. Among the reformers, the Deobandis in particular stressed the resulting comprehensiveness of their teachings, pointing to their inclusion of the teachings of all the Muslim sciences and to their synthesis of the various Sufi orders. A poster soliciting support for the school noted in this respect that the staff was "rent by no quarrels" and included "Naqshbandi, Qadiri, and Chishti who revere equally the founders of all the orders."[29] In Law they adhered to the Hanafi school, thus identifying themselves with the tradition accepted by most of the Muslim population of India. Their teachings defined an ideal that could appeal to Muslims throughout India.

28. For a study of the *pirs* and the reformist ʿulama in the Punjab, particularly in relation to political developments in this century, see David Gilmartin, "Tribe, Land, and Religion in the Punjab: Muslim Politics and the Making of Pakistan," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1979).

29. From a poster included in the *Proceedings* of the school for 1304 (1886/7).

Reformist formulations focusing on the Law, whether Deobandi or other, have provided a basis for a common cultural identity among Muslims. Muslims uprooted from their local societies have been particularly influenced by these formulations. A recent study of the behavior of one group of rural Muslims who travel to the city for work demonstrates the importance to them of identification with the high tradition of Islam for securing a place in a new community. In the city they explicitly identified themselves as Muslim in their dress, religious activities, and patterns of association, as they had not in their village. By so doing they found a society to provide companionship and places of residence and congregation.[30] New towns like Roorkee and Simla, one might note, were major centers of Deobandi support, as, significantly, they were of the reformist Arya Samaj of the Hindus.

Adherence to the "great tradition" of Islam was, moreover, a mark of being *ashraf*. Those who wanted to improve their status needed not only to improve their economic position but to acquire such hallmarks of *ashraf* behavior as refined language capable of subtle social distinctions, a taste for poetry cultivated in social gatherings, and some degree of religious learning and interest in patronizing the religious establishment. This process of social mobility, called "ashrafization" or "Islamization" as a parallel to the Sanskritization of the Hindus,[31] has been particularly marked in the modern period, and has produced large segments of each population that shared a relatively homogeneous culture. In the late nineteenth century no fewer than one-quarter to one-third of the Muslims of the United Provinces reported themselves in the census as *ashraf*.[32] Those con-

30. See Mattison Mines, "Toward a New Perspective on Muslim Identity and Integration in Contrasting Social Settings" (typescript, University of California, 1973).

31. For one discussion of "ashrafization" see Cora Vreed-de Steuers, *Parda* (Assen, Netherlands, 1968). The theory of Sanskritization has been developed by M. N. Srinivas, particularly in his book, *Social Change in Modern India* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1966).

32. The number so doing has continued to increase. See, for example, Raghuraj Gupta, *Hindu-Muslim Relations* (Lucknow, 1976), who describes how the small Dehra Dun Muslim population, some three-fourths of it

cerned with their reputations for religiosity would have found Deoband particularly attractive. The school's system of financing made it easy to be a patron, and its publication of the names of donors ensured getting credit for one's generosity. Moreover, the school's reputation for authentic teaching would have drawn the insecure.

The relation of the Deoband movement to its social context is made the clearer by a comparison of it to the Arya Samaj.[33] The particular teachings of each were, of course, shaped by their respective religious traditions. They flourished in the same time and place, however, and appealed to followers who shared many common concerns. Both had a vision of an ideal religion different from the current corrupt version of the faith that was deemed the source of contemporary difficulties. Both proclaimed this presumed pristine faith in public confrontations with missionaries, with their coreligionists, and with each other. Both in this way provided their followers with a source of indigenous pride. In addition, both defined an ideology that fostered new bases of social relations. The Arya Samaji teaching that caste should be based on merit instead of birth made possible interaction among those whose social, as apart from ritual, status was roughly equal. The common emphasis on a simpler ritual and a more rational approach to ceremony also helped to foster this interaction. About three-fourths of the early members of the Samaj were government servants who welcomed an ideology of such clear psychological and social benefit.

Superficially, the movements seem to have appealed to people whose economic and social position were quite different. The Arya Samaj was the movement of the Hindu trading classes whose economic and political position was newly flourishing. The Deoband movement was a product of the declining, embattled landed and service elite. Such a dichotomy is, however, misleading. The two groups shared

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below the poverty line, now almost wholly reports itself as *shaikh*.

33. See Kenneth W. Jones, *Arya Dharm* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1976), and the suggestive paper of Warren Fusfeld, "The Arya Samaj" (University of Pennsylvania, 1977).

the experience of an alien government who looked down on their culture. And they shared the experience of greatly enhanced social and geographic mobility and communication. In fact, moreover, many of the individual supporters of Deoband were also doing very well through the new opportunities offered in government service and trade, or through continued profit from land. The Deobandi ideology offered not only an alternate source of gratification for those who turned away from a world in decline, but also a basis for an active political or economic life for those involved in it. Many famous names leap from the list of donors—landholders such as the Nawwab of Chhatari and Sayyid Mihrban 'Ali of Galaothi; traders such as Shaikh Ilahi Baksh and Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Hakim of Meerut; the great physician, interested in both Western and indigenous medicine, Hakim Ajmal Khan; the Nizam of Hyderabad; the writer and translator for the British, Zaka'u'llah of Delhi.

The period produced many movements of cultural self-assertion with, broadly speaking, similar orientations and parameters. Deoband was one of the movements offering an answer to its followers' concern for the preservation of their culture and the fulfillment of their individual social and spiritual needs. Their followers valued the work of Deoband specifically because of its modus vivendi with the government, its defense of Islam, its commitment to moderate reform that emphasized the universals of the religion, and its innovative institutional style. They had, most importantly, a sense common to all successful reform movements of the day, that Deoband was firmly based in the long tradition of the faith and fulfilled rather than disowned their cherished heritage.

Beyond the *Ashraf*

The ideology of the Deobandis was particularly congruent to the interests of the *ashraf*. Deobandi influence reached, however, to larger circles of people who shared some bond with the original group or who valued particular

aspects of the Deobandi teachings. The early core of supporters were people with influence over colleagues and subordinates. Clearly some of those on the rolls joined because of a relationship to another donor. An extreme example of this is the listing of a handful of such non-Muslims as Christian traders in Simla, who enrolled with several of their Muslim colleagues, and Hindu government servants in Roorkee and Hyderabad. They could not possibly have valued the work of the Deobandis for the complex of qualities associated with them that we have described. They enrolled, without doubt, simply because of loyalty to an associate or deference to a superior who was a Deobandi supporter.

The humble donors to the school were probably, in large part, clients and subordinates of *ashraf* donors. Most villagers, craftsmen, and agriculturalists were from the districts close to the school, however, and some may have had a direct relation to the ʿulama as well. Their presence was of great symbolic importance to the ʿulama, who sought to speak for all Muslims and increasingly had close contacts with Muslims of all classes. Not all Muslim religious leaders welcomed the humble among their followers, and the Ahmadiyyah, for example, indignantly denied that their membership included any but the most respectable.[34] The breadth of Deobandi teaching helps account for their ability to include supporters of varied backgrounds.

The psychological, social and political milieu of the day together encouraged religious revitalization among the Muslim *ashraf*. From them that revitalization spread to all classes of Muslims who took pride in the ʿulama for their learning, their independence of government, and their accessibility to all Muslims. This concern of the religious elite for the faith of the humble—along with the proliferation of popularly supported religious schools, the spread of

34. "Phoenix," *His Holiness* (Lahore, 1958) p. 61, where the founder of the sect denies any association with lower classes.

publishers and shops disseminating religious books and tracts, and the growth of new ideological orientations among Sunni Muslims—all these do not reflect unchanging characteristics of Indian Muslim society but new and significant developments of the late nineteenth century.

Appendix:
The Contributors: A Note on Sources

THE annual proceedings of the Daru'l-'Ulum reported the names of the donors of the school, including, as most numerous, the list of those who had enrolled as annual contributors. I used the lists from the first thirty years of the school's existence for the discussion here. Inevitably, errors have crept into my method of compilation. Since the lists were arranged in order of size of donation, the material had to be completely rearranged to be useful. With the help of Mr. Muhammad Aqil of Deoband, I made a card for each donor, recording whatever information was given: at best, his full name (and titles), his occupation, his residence, his "native place" if that differed from his residence, and the amount of his contribution. I then checked this card against subsequent charts, recording the amount of later gifts and changes in status. I made new cards for people who entered the rolls, making a total of 2,658 cards for the entire period. Even at this level there were, no doubt, errors of faulty copying, and, perhaps, of confusion when a name was recorded differently (for example, with different titles).

I next sorted cards into location, if more than one place was given, taking as decisive the place from which the first contribution was made. When I could not locate dozens of villages from any map or gazetteer, I turned to Professor J. Michael Mahar of the University of Arizona, who generously consulted for me his own maps and surveys of the area. Drawing on them, in conjunction with his own remarkable intuition and knowledge of phonetic principles, he located many places. Some, to be sure, we never located beyond district. But from a list of sixty-odd unknown places, we whittled the mystery spots to a mere handful. Even at that a problem remained—more than one place with the same name. There are, for example, both Rampur the

princely state and Rampur the pargana headquarters in Saharanpur district: I arbitrarily counted as the state all those in princely service; and counted all others from the *qasbah* of Rampur, a place close to Deoband.

I then tried to assess the occupational and social status of the donors. Muslim names in themselves often provide substantial information. Before the given name come various titles, particularly ones indicating learning of various kinds and *ashraf* status (that is, *shah, qazi, sayyid,* or *shaikh*); and the name is often followed by a locative, indicating either residence or place of family origin. However, the indicators of *ashraf* status are not always used, and, like Hindu caste names, can reflect claimed rather than actual status in a period like this one of substantial social mobility. Religious titles can reflect learning or experience, but they can also reflect a family tradition, particularly in titles like *qazi*. Similarly, a *pirzadah* (the descendant of a *pir*) may or may not follow in his forbear's footsteps. Not even as much as a religious title, however, is given for one-quarter of the donors: about them there is at most a title indicative of *ashraf* status or the notation of caste membership like Rajput or Jhojh. Moreover, to make categories of occupation is always misleading. Within a category such as trade and business, or government service, are people of dramatically disparate occupations. Moreover, some job categories are ambiguous: thus a *mukhtar* can be either a court official or a business agent; sometimes a further term specifies which an individual is, but not always. Similarly ambiguous is the term *munshi*. I treated it under religious occupations, an arbitrary choice, for although the term implies traditional learning, its bearer often worked for the government as language teacher or clerk.

Finally, having established a geographical and occupational distribution, I sought within different areas to establish patterns of contributions. My conclusions about the impetus to contribute and the channels for organizing contributors are discussed in the text.

All Contributors by Categories and Province, 1867-1897

	% by Location	Total	No Occupation	Women	*Ra'is/Zamindars*	*Hajji/Hafiz*	Other Religious Title	Craftsmen	Traders and Businessmen	In Service	Government Employees	Princely Employees	Number Who Move	*Hajjis*
Saharanpur	28	736	246	16	32	37	102	74	39	25	163	2	62	11
Muzaffarnagar	27	713	212	99	22	53	77	146	16	12	76		36	18
Meerut	6	166	40	10	14	12	12	37	13	3	25		15	5
Bijnor	5	125	35	1	8	9	41	3	11	1	16		7	2
Other Rohilkhand	1	36	7	1	3		10		2		13		8	
Other Western U.P.	4	117	4	1	24	2	15	4	16	1	46	4	27	
Eastern U.P.	2	54	2	1	4	1	7	2	2	3	32		8	
Punjab	12	316	42	23	12	2	21	12	55	12	112	25	50	4
Bihar	1	25	5		1	12			7					3
Muslim Princely States	4	106	2	2	2	4	12	1	5			78	16	5
Other States	1	16					2					14	4	1
Remote Places	2	66	10	1	8	2	15	2	12	1	15			6
Army	4	101									101			
No Location	2	57	20	3	3	1	4	9	5	1	11		2	
Unidentified Location	1	24	6	2	2	1	1	4		6	2			1
Total		2,658	631	160	135	135	319	294	183	63	612	123	235	55
% by Occupation	100		24	6	5	5	12	11	7	2	23	5	9	2

VII

Alternative Tendencies within Sunni Islam: The Ahl-i Hadis and the Barelwis

I fill the skirt of my garment with flowers from
the garden of the Qur'an and *Sunna*
The use of speculation and personal opinion is
chaff to me;
The analogy of no one will misguide the
Nawwab
For he has taken as proof the Traditions and the
Book.
—Nawwab Siddiq Hasan Khan, Ahl-i Hadis[1]

IN addition to the Deobandis, two other influential groups of Sunni ʿulama, the Ahl-i Hadis and the Barelwi, emerged in the late nineteenth century. All three groups concurred in identifying popularly based ʿulama as the foci of religious leadership, and all three led quasi-sectarian movements among their followers. All three placed issues of the Law, albeit based on different premises, at the forefront of their teachings. The three groups debated a wide range of issues with each other, from theories of jurisprudence to mere polemic.

Initially each group appealed to somewhat different social groups and was identified with a different geographic location. Over time, however, each attracted a more geographically dispersed and more sociologically heterogeneous following. Over time, as well, they evolved similar institutional organizations so that they became more clearly "alternatives" to each other. The geographic centers of each

1. Quoted and translated from the original Persian in Saeeudullah, *The Life and Works of Muhammad Siddiq Hasan Khan, Nawwab of Bhopal* (Lahore, 1973), p. 119.

group of ʿulama (and the centers of other movements discussed in Chapter VIII) are indicated on Map 7.

The differences each group saw in the others were defined primarily in a legal idiom. Each accused the others of faulty jurisprudential principles and of mistakes in the domain deemed subject to legal scrutiny. The groups differed in religious style. They differed initially in social class. And they differed somewhat in their political stance in relation to the colonial power.

The Ahl-i Hadis, like the Deobandis, were committed to revitalization of the Law by reform of custom. To do so, however, they denied the validity of the medieval law schools in favor of the direct use of the textual sources of the faith, the Qur'an and the *hadis*, which were to be interpreted literally and narrowly. Moreover, they eschewed Sufi institutions and techniques of meditation and discipline. The Deobandis accused the Ahl-i Hadis of teaching a radical approach to the Law that made individual responsibility far too great. This approach, they argued, was possible only for the elite and not for ordinary people. At least initially, the Ahl-i Hadis directed their reform to the educated and the well born. United by aristocratic social background and a high and austere standard of religious interpretation, the Ahl-i Hadis were clearly a cohesive sect, spread throughout India, and often on the defensive against criticism. Cosmopolitan in orientation, they identified themselves with similar groups in Afghanistan and Arabia. Some among them sought to retain the old style of dependence by religious leaders on princes and nobility. Given their ties to Muslim countries, their close association with Muslim princes, and their literal acceptance of the legitimacy of jihad, they were, not surprisingly—albeit with individual exceptions—the most opposed of all these groups to the legitimacy of British rule.

The contrast between them and the Barelwis was marked. The Barelwi ʿulama did not emerge out of a desire to transform standards of practice and belief but rather out of opposition to the other two groups. They held fast to Hanafi law, broadly interpreted, and to a custom-laden

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style of sufism, closely tied to the *pirs* of the medieval tombs. Unlike the 'ulama of the other two groups, the Barelwis placed relatively little emphasis on individual responsibility and much more on intercession of the 'ulama and the *shaikhs*. Nothing characterized their teaching more than hierarchy, a hierarchy that elevated the Prophet, the saints, and the 'ulama themselves as benefactors, patrons, and intercessors. The community they defined was more tied to particular shrines and fixed occasions, and tended to be rural rather than urban. True to their concept of hierarchy, they accepted the existence of the colonial authority apparently without question.

The orientation of the Deobandis becomes clearer in the context of these comparable movements. All three were movements of popularly based 'ulama committed to defining what they held to be a correct basis for the Law and for the relation of the believer to it. The Deobandis in so doing fostered personal religious development and individual responsibility in religious matters, as did the Ahl-i Hadis, but, unlike them and to some extent like the Barelwis, they emphasized the importance of a close relationship to one's chosen religious guide. The Deobandis seem to have been least exclusive in their teaching, presenting a repertoire of beliefs suitable for the capacity of both the spiritual elite and of ordinary people. They were also perhaps the most discreet in their political stance, for although they scrupulously maintained a correct attitude on externals, they in fact held the foreign rulers in deep contempt.

The ties within each group of 'ulama were initially reinforced by common origin and social status. Yet, increasingly, each group was primarily defined by the ideology described here. The lines between the groups of 'ulama and their followers resembled those of sects. This was particularly true of the Ahl-i Hadis, who were readily recognizable by their style of prayer and cut of beard. They prayed separately and often had their own mosques. Both the Barelwis and the Deobandis insisted that they were not leaders of sects, but of the mainstream of Sunni Muslims. Indeed, the Barelwis called themselves the 'ulama of the

ahl-i sunnat wa jama'at, the classical name for the Sunni community. Yet they too were exclusive, condemning the reformers as *kafir* and maintaining a distinct style of custom and ritual. Many clues, literally from ceremonies in the cradle to the kind of tombstone at the grave, pointed to whether a person was Deobandi, Barelwi, or Ahl-i Hadis. Not all Sunni Muslims fitted into these categories, but increasing numbers certainly did.

Ahl-i Hadis

The Ahl-i Hadis was one of the most visible of the Muslim intellectual movements of the late nineteenth century both because of its avowedly sectarian character and because of its membership from among the educated and well born. It was, like the Deobandi, a movement of people sensitive to the widespread political and social changes of the day, but its intensity and extremism were far greater and the range of its influence less.

Its leadership was from the well born. In the biographical dictionary of the Ahl-i Hadis for Delhi and the United Provinces, for example, a full one-fifth were noted as *sayyid,* a strikingly high percentage of descendants of the Prophet, and a further 10 percent were of socially eminent families, among them descendants of the Mughals and Oudh *nawwabs* and of wealthy *zamindars*.[2] About one-fourth of the whole were in government or princely service, all in very high positions. Yet many, even those who had found such employment, were of families who had fallen on poor times. This was the situation, in fact, of the two best-known leaders of the early movement. Maulana Nazir Husain's family had been *qazis* who had served the Mughal court but had now declined into poverty. Nawwab Siddiq Hasan Khan was sufficiently poor that he arrived in Bhopal penniless and established himself not by the modest job he secured but by his opportune marriages, first to the daughter of the

2. Abū Yaḥyā Imām Khān Naushaharawī, *Tarājim-i 'Ulamā'-yi Ḥadīs̤-i Hind* (Delhi, 1356/1937?). This biographical dictionary is the source of all information about the Ahl-i Hadis unless otherwise noted.

prime minister and then to the widowed ruler herself. Even though such stratagems could secure individual success, this success was fragile and did not mitigate an abiding sense of social dislocation. Evidence of this sense is evident in the theme of an imminent end of the world that colors the teaching of such leaders as Siddiq Hasan Khan. In his writings in particular there is a pervasive pessimism, a fear of the end of the world, and an emotional commitment to the need for dramatic reform.[3] He saw many portents of the end. He thought that it had been predicted that English rule would signal the final days of the world, and noted the sighting of "a star with a tail" that had appeared in Egypt at the time of the British conquest as evidence of the significance of their power.[4] Above all he saw rebellions and religious disorder among Muslims as evidence of the total decline that could only precede Judgment. For that disorder he particularly blamed the "*Necharis* . . . who can scarcely be called Muslim."[5] He awaited the turn of the fourteenth Islamic century in 1884 as the likely moment for the end to appear.[6] Not all of the Ahl-i Hadis shared this expectation of impending apocalypse, but they did see the world to be in decline and did, above all, fear their own place in it.

For them in particular the psychological satisfaction of religious debate seems clear. Denunciations of the morality of others enhanced their precarious sense of their own worth. Among the Ahl-i Hadis an urgent quest for a single standard of religious interpretation and an exclusiveness and sense of embattlement against all others clearly formed the core of an orientation both religious and psychological. It was their horror of disorder that drove them to desire a true and common standard on which all Muslims could unite. Ironically, in so doing they created the dissensions on which, in fact, they throve. But the desire for unity was

3. Aziz Ahmad, *Islamic Modernism in India and Pakistan, 1857-1964* (Oxford, 1967), pp. 117-18.
4. Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān, *Tarjumān-i Wahhābiyyāt* (Agra, 1884), p. 61.
5. Ibid., p. 96.
6. Ibid., p. 9.

their goal, and to achieve it they insisted on a return to the norms of the original *hadis*. "Those who are sincere servants of God and followers of the Tradition shun matters of dissension and disruption in the same way that worldly people shun matters of piety. . . . On the many new roads [i.e. the Law schools] that appeared approximately three hundred years after the *hijrah* or that day and night are constantly appearing, let no one walk. He who travels the straight path reaches the desired goal."[7] In a pattern common to many movements of reform, the Ahl-i Hadis explicated texts to yield only single meanings, and in their case particularly shunned the esoteric and symbolic meanings offered by mystics. They denied that any verse of the Qur'an had been abrogated. Their opponents called them worshipers of externals, *zahirparast,* but they offered in return, they felt, an end to uncertainty and ambiguity.

The Ahl-i Hadis justified their focus on *hadis* by denying the legitimacy of the classic works of the four major law schools that, with the commentaries and compilations of *fatawa* based on them, had been the standard source of legal guidance for the Sunni community since the ninth century. One clear exposition of this orientation was written by Sayyid Mahdi 'Ali Khan, Muhsinu'l-Mulk, who is best known as the administrative successor to Sayyid Ahmad Khan at Aligarh College.[8] He argued that Muslims ought actively to emulate the practice of the Companions of the Prophet and the founders of the law schools, and seek guidance in the Qur'an and *hadis* themselves. He maintained that this early practice had fallen into abeyance when the number of Muslims grew and disagreements began, so that scholars felt compelled to systematize precedents and law. These compilations, however, were never meant to supercede the original sources and become sources themselves. The *imams* of the law schools were only men who lacked knowledge of all the relevant *hadis*. They knew some

7. Quoted in Aziz Ahmad and G. E. von Grunebaum, *Muslim Self-Statement in India and Pakistan, 1857-1968* (Wiesbaden, 1970), pp. 87-88.

8. Sayyid Mahdī 'Alī Khān, Nawwāb Muḥsinu'l-Mulk, *Taqlīd aur 'Aml bi'l-Ḥadīs̤* (Aligarh, 1906).

of the Companions, to be sure, but even the Companions did not know or even agree in their understanding of all the *hadis*. Learned Muslims ought to turn directly to the *hadis* and ignore those "who consider *fiqh* equivalent to religion."[9] One who follows the law schools is usually called a *muqallid* but, Muhsinu'l-Mulk suggested, the true *muqallid* is one who imitates not the practices of the law books but the behavior of the *imams* and himself follows *hadis*. In a similar reversal of the term, Badru'l-Hasan Sahswani claimed that the Ahl-i Hadis were the real Hanafi, for they conformed to the practice of Abu Hanifa.

The Ahl-i Hadis maintained that, like the *imams* of the law schools, they based their legal thought on the four sources of law sanctioned in *hadis*: Qur'an, *hadis, qiyas* (analogy), and *ijma'* (consensus). In fact, they so wanted precision in interpretation that the scope they gave to these last two was very narrow. *Qiyas* was to be used only if there was no explicit rule and the analogy was very precise. As an example of legitimate *qiyas*, Maulana Sana'u'llah Amritsari analyzed the Qur'anic verse, "You may continue to eat during the nights of fasting until the first rays of the sun." By the exercise of reasoning, *ijtihad*, he argued that there would be no harm to one's fast if one were still reclining in bed after sexual relations at dawn. For if eating and drinking and sexual relations were all legitimate at night, and one could eat until dawn, then one could remain in bed until dawn and only then arise to bathe. Sana'u'llah praised this kind of reasoning as a means of elucidating an obscure point while yet remaining faithful to the text.[10] The limits of *ijma'* were also narrowly defined specifically to those beliefs, such as the obligation of the five pillars of the faith, on which all Muslims concurred.

For the learned at least, the Ahl-i Hadis thus insisted on substantial individual responsibility in interpreting the meaning of the Law. They strongly opposed the position of *taqlid-i shakhsi* fostered by the Deobandis that insisted

9. Ibid., p. 46, following Shah Waliyu'llah.

10. Ṣanā'u'llāh Amritsarī, Abu'l-Wafā, *Ahl-i Ḥadīs̤ kā Maẕhab* (Lahore, 1970), pp. 61-62.

that people adhere not only to the rulings of a single school of law but to the interpretations of those rulings by a single *ʿalim*. Just what they expected the uneducated to do was not clear and initially not of central concern. Their focus was on the religious behavior of the spiritual elite, who were called on to leave behind all intermediaries and guides other than that of the text itself.

In part the context for personal interpretation of the Law was given by the emphasis placed by the Ahl-i Hadis on the personality of the Prophet. All the movements of this period focused on the importance of the Prophet, but there were subtle differences in the extent to which emphasis rested on him as object of devotion, or intermediary with God, or model of human personality. The last, entailing discussion of psychology and motives, was in part stimulated by Western criticism of the Prophet that focused on his character. Muslims who responded to that criticism, like Amir ʿAli, Chiragh ʿAli, and Shibli, introduced new issues into biography of the Prophet. These issues helped form the ideal of individual religious responsibility that was characteristic of the Ahl-i Hadis. Their degree of involvement with the Prophet is clear in their choice of name "Muhammadi," espoused for a time but soon dropped under criticism that it elevated the relation with the Prophet at the cost of the relation with God.[11]

The Ahl-i Hadis felt they had a special access to the Prophet because of their familiarity with *hadis*. Attention to *hadis* as a route to the Prophet was made clear in a dream recorded by Hafiz ʿAbdu'llah Ghazipuri, one of the leading teachers of the Ahl-i Hadis in the late nineteenth century: "I saw a great crowd pressing around the Prophet . . . shaking his hand and receiving blessing from him. I saw a man go forth from the crowd, and I rushed to him, asking permission to touch the hand that had touched that of the Prophet, so that I, too, might receive blessing. He agreed, but said, 'You must take courage and press forward your-

11. Muin-ud-din Ahmad Khan, *A History of the Farā'idī Movement in Bengal* (Karachi, 1965), p. lix. Most, however, preferred the name Ahl-i Hadis, first used in writing by Sayyid Nazir Husain in 1864.

self and gain blessing without an intermediary.' "[12] The interpretation of the dream took the event as a metaphor for the superiority of using *hadis* over using the teachings of the law schools. To the Ahl-i Hadis, the Prophet was both a model for personality and behavior and a focus of emotional attachment. Sayyid Sulaiman Nadwi, writing in this century, credited the Ahl-i Hadis with "a rebirth from the heart of love for the Prophet."[13]

The content of practice and belief defined by the focus on *hadis* clearly distinguished the Ahl-i Hadis from those who followed customary forms of the religion as well as from other reformers. Like the Deobandis, the Ahl-i Hadis opposed the sufism of the shrines and the customs of the Shi'ah. Badru'l-Hasan Sahswani mocked the *taqlid* of the unreformed as conformity not to the rulings of the law schools but as conformity to custom in ceremonies, to the practice of *pirs* in *'urs* and *qawwali*, and to the habits of Timur in keeping *ta'ziyahs*.[14] Muhsinu'l-Mulk, in similar style, wrote, "people favor the word of Zaid and 'Amr [the John Does of legal paradigm] over the word of God and the Prophet. They take greater interest in the sayings and miracles of the saints than in the word of God and the Prophet."[15]

An urgent concern for the Ahl-i Hadis, as for the Deobandis, was that their religion be free of all customs that could be criticized by non-Muslims. Their formulations were born in an atmosphere of controversy and attack. Hence there was among them a desire to purify, to change, what now appeared as accretion and deviation. Muhsinu'l-Mulk wrote, "if we do not cleanse our religion of this sin [*taqlid*], it is unjust for us to criticize those of other religions."[16]

The Ahl-i Hadis, like the Deobandis, opposed the ceremonies that were the foundation of the communities that surrounded the shrines. They prohibited *'urs* and *qawwalli*,

12. Abū Yaḥyā Naushaharawī, *Tarājim-yi 'Ulamā'*, pp. 457-59.
13. Ibid., p. 34.
14. Ibid., p. 477.
15. Mahdī 'Alī Khān, *Taqlīd aur 'Aml bi'l-Ḥadīs̤*, pp. 24-25.
16. Aziz Ahmad, *Islamic Modernism*, p. 116.

particularly opposing the *giyarhwin* of Shaikh ʿAbdu'l-Qadir Gilani. They opposed keeping the flags of saints like Salar Masʿud Ghazi of Bahraich. They prohibited all pilgrimage, even that to the grave of the Prophet at Medina. They insisted nonetheless that they respected the great saints. Such writers as Sana'u'llah frequently cited Shaikh ʿAbdu'l-Qadir's perfections, and some cited him as Ahl-i Hadis himself. The practices of the followers of the saints they deplored. Sana'u'llah himself traveled to the shrine of Piran-i Kalyar in Roorkee and described in shock his observations of the use of candles, the practice of seven-fold circumambulation, and prostration toward the tomb.[17]

Unlike either Deobandis or Barelwis, the Ahl-i Hadis discouraged the institutional forms of sufism. In their emphasis on sweeping reform, they understood sufism itself, not just its excesses, to be a danger to true religion. They felt that sufism encouraged the attempt to seek knowledge of the nature of God, a quest they held inappropriate to the believer. Some did claim to belong to an order, usually the Naqshbandi. Siddiq Hasan Khan, for example, said he was a Naqshbandi; but he insisted that sufism be wholly private, that there be no speculation about God's existence, and that the practice of *rabitah*, the special relation with the *shaikh*, be eliminated.[18]

Like the Deobandis, the Ahl-i Hadis encouraged certain kinds of family reform. They too opposed elaborate ceremonies and took the simple marriage and modest dowry of the Prophet's daughter Fatimah as their model. They encouraged widow remarriage. Such reforms set them apart and emphasized their bonds to each other rather than to their society as a whole.

But the reform that most distinguished them was that of their style of saying the canonical prayer. They also, one must note, were resolute in fulfilling all the fundamental requirements of the faith, encouraging performance of the hajj and scrupulously rendering the required *zakat*. But it was their method of *namaz* that was singled out as the di-

17. Ṣanā'u'llāh, *Ahl-i Ḥadīs kā Mazhab*, p. 50.
18. Saeedullah, *Muhammad Siddiq Hasan Khan*, pp. 150-57.

viding feature between Hanafi and Ahl-i Hadis. The Ahl-i Hadis said "amen" aloud (*amin bi'l-jahr*), lifted their hands at the time of bowing (*raf'-i yadain*), folded the hands above the navel (*zabr-i naf hath bandhna*), and repeated Fatihah aloud along with the *imam* (*fatihah khalfi'l-imam*). The Hanifis claimed that the Ahl-i Hadis in so doing followed abrogated *hadis*. The Ahl-i Hadis of course denied that charge, and claimed that great and learned Muslims of the past, among them Shah Waliyu'llah, had prayed exactly as they did.[19] It was, as discussed below, the issue of style of prayer that brought the Ahl-i Hadis to court against other Muslims.

The method of performing prayer was a highly visible point of distinction—and an important one, for the Ahl-i Hadis in particular feared harm to their own prayer from praying behind someone whose practice was defective. But the issues seemed petty: "A vital question of religion," mocked a British official fearing a riot, "no doubt a most important question . . . 'should Amen be said loudly with the hands crossed over the chest, or should it be said softly with the hands crossed over the stomach.' "[20] Yet, whatever the assessment of the issues, the discussion indicated that Muslims were urgently redefining their religious behavior and community—a development that even the British official might have deemed important.

Because the Ahl-i Hadis stood apart from the mainstream of Muslims much more dramatically, for example, than did the Deobandis, they sought to justify themselves in a number of ways. Above all they argued that they alone continued the tradition of Shah Waliyu'llah. Many of the Ahl-i Hadis were, in fact, of families that had been brought into the reformist milieu by Shah Waliyu'llah and his successors,[21] among them, the two celebrated leaders Siddiq

19. Abū Yaḥyā Naushaharawī, *Tarājim-i 'Ulamā'*, pp. 22-23.

20. Butler to Mather, May 20, 1891. Butler Collection, India Office Library, MSS. Eur. F116/1-3.

21. Among the *khalifahs* of Sayyid Ahmad Barelwi, for example, was Maulana Sakhawat 'Ali Jaunpuri, whose influence was decisive in spreading reformist ideas in the east. One of his students, Muhammad Faizu'llah, was particularly responsible for making the small *qasbah* of Mau, near

Hasan Khan and Nazir Husain. The family of Siddiq Hasan had served the *nawwabs* of Oudh and, like many at the court, had become Shi'i. Siddiq Hasan's father, however, impressed by students of Shah 'Abdu'l-'Aziz, traveled to Delhi, gave up Shi'ism, and became a disciple of Shah 'Abdu'l-'Aziz himself. Sayyid Nazir Husain studied at the reformist center of Sadiqpur in Bihar, and thence went to Delhi to study from Shah Muhammad Ishaq and his associates. Indeed, Sayyid Nazir Husain is held by the Ahl-i Hadis to be the intellectual heir to Muhammad Ishaq in a line that ascends genealogically to Shah 'Abdu'l-'Aziz and to Shah Waliyu'llah on the grounds that he, like them, was known by the title of Miyan Sahib.[22]

Hardly a movement (other than the Barelwi) did not in fact claim Shah Waliyu'llah as its progenitor. The case of the Ahl-i Hadis was strong, for Shah Waliyu'llah had, indeed, brought back from the Hijaz not only an emphasis on the study of *hadis* but the principle of its primacy over the rulings of the law schools. If a ruling of a law school were shown to be in conflict with a correct *hadis*, he had argued, there would be no question but that authoritative *hadis* should take precedence. Shah Waliyu'llah had especially denounced scholars who "cared only for *fiqh* and theoretical sciences, the former for securing governmental posts and the latter for holding verbal duels and hair-splitting

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Azamgarh, a celebrated center of the Ahl-i Hadis by the end of the century. In Benares, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq Muhaddis had been a student of Shah 'Abdu'l-Qadir Dihlawi, had accompanied Muhammad Isma'il on hajj, and, like many of this group, studied *hadis* in the Hijaz. His contemporary in Benares, Sayyid Jalalu'd-Din Ahmad Ja'fari Hashimi, also studied from Muhammad Isma'il and was the progenitor of an important family of 'ulama that made Benares a center of the Ahl-i Hadis for generations. In Aligarh, Shah 'Abdu'l-Jalil spread the teaching of Muhammad Ishaq and Sayyid Ahmad Barelwi. He invited his colleague Muhammad Qasim Nanautawi to Aligarh to instruct his son, Muhammad Isma'il, who later opted for the position of the Ahl-i Hadis. In Rampur, two *khalifahs*, Sayyid Haidar 'Ali and Sayyid Muhammad 'Ali were early proponents of the position of the Ahl-i Hadis.

22. Muḥammad Ibrāhīm Mīr Siyālkōṭī, *Tārīkh-i Ahl-i Ḥadīs̤* (Lahore, 1952), p. 427. Non-Ahl-i Hadis, of course, deny this. See Raḥmān 'Alī, *Taẕkirah-yi 'Ulama'-yi Hind*, translated by Muḥammad Ayyūb Qādirī (Karachi, 1961), p. 410, where it is argued that not he (a loyalist) but 'Abdu'l-Ghani Dihlawi, who also went to the Hijaz, was his successor.

controversies among themselves"; and he compared unquestioning *taqlid* with the habits of ants.[23] This emphasis in his writings was not a dogmatic position, however, and was balanced both by acceptance of many rulings of the law schools that were consulted eclectically, and by a willingness to exercise analogy and reasoning in interpreting *hadis*.[24] None of the leading 'ulama in the late nineteenth century continued this broadly based orientation. The Ahl-i Hadis, on the one side, wholly rejected the rulings of the law schools; the Deobandis and others who followed *taqlid* insisted on allegiance to the ruling of a single law school. Gradually those who emphasized one element or another in Waliyu'llah's thought crystallized as separate groups.

As the orientation of those who rejected the law schools became more defined in the late nineteenth century, they took the name of Ahl-i Hadis, the People of Hadis, to identify themselves with the Ahlu'l-Hadith of classical Islamic times. The original group had emphasized the centrality of the *hadis* texts and had, indeed, collected many of them. They opposed the "living tradition" of the ancient schools and their use of reason and personal opinion. The thesis of the Ahlu'l-Hadith was ultimately accepted by the schools of law. The nineteenth-century group challenged the legitimacy of those schools, and hence opposed what was now the mainstream of Muslim belief.[25] By this century, however, the Ahl-i Hadis had found or created a continuous tradition of their sect in India from Mughal times on, embracing such well-known thinkers as 'Abdu'l-Haqq Muhaddis, Shaikh Ahmad Sarhindi, Shah Waliyu'llah, and Mirza Mazhar Jan-i Janan.[26]

The Ahl-i Hadis also found legitimation to their approach in the fact that they shared a general orientation with contemporaneous reformers in the Hijaz, where Muhammad ibn 'Abdu'l-Wahhab and others had initiated a

23. Muin-ud-din Ahmad Khan, *Farā'iḍī Movement*, pp. xliii, xliv.
24. Aziz Ahmad, *Islamic Modernism*, pp. 114-15.
25. See Fazlur Rahman, *Islam* (New York, 1968), especially pp. 70-71, 108-10, 115; and J. Schacht, "Ahl al-Ḥadīth," *EI*², I, 258-59.
26. This is explicit in Muḥammad Ibrāhīm Mīr, *Tārīkh-i Ahl-i Ḥadīs̤*.

far-reaching movement that emphasized the elimination of customary practices and a return to principles embedded in scripture. Like them they valued greatly the work of Ibn Taimiyya and, in fact, they translated his writings into Urdu. Indians met Wahhabis during the pilgrimage; they read their books, particularly those of Muhammad ibn ʿAli al-Shaukani; and they associated with their ʿulama in the courts of Bhopal, for one of the most influential of the emigré ʿulama was Shaikh Husain ʿArab Yamani in Bhopal.[27] Members of the Ahl-i Hadis often denied the influence of the so-called Arabian Wahhabis, pointing out that the latter group was Hanbali in law, because they did not want to be tainted by their reputation for disruptive political action. They emphasized, rather, their links to Shah Waliyu'llah, and, indeed, that indigenous influence more than the Arabian or the historical was the decisive one in the formation of their thought.

The Ahl-i Hadis took pride not only in their ties to respected figures of Muslim history, but also in their own position as intellectuals. This claim was a valid one. In the *tazkirah* cited above, for example, three-fourths of the ʿulama cited were teachers, and almost half were writers. Theirs was a teaching for serious scholars, for it required skill in the study of Qur'an and *hadis*. The elite style of the Ahl-i Hadis was indicated by the fact that many continued to write in the learned languages of Persian and Arabic rather than in the vernacular of Urdu. Thus, of the extraordinarily large number of works attributed to Siddiq Hasan, some 84 were in Urdu, among them 31 on *akhlaq* or general morals and deportment, no doubt aimed at a general audience. But 54 of his works were in Arabic, including 17 on *hadis*, and 43 were in Persian.[28] Even when the works were in Urdu they were often written for a scholarly audience alone, as Nazir Husain's difficult *Miʿyaru'l-Haqq* ex-

27. Saeedullah, *Muhammad Siddiq Hasan Khan*, pp. 12-13.

28. Abū Yaḥyā Naushaharawī, *Tarājim-i ʿUlamā'*, p. 298. Despite the large number of titles, Saeedullah, at least, judges these numerous works to be limited in range and often excerpted from other works. Saeedullah, *Muhammad Siddiq Hasan Khan*, pp. 91-92.

plicitly noted. The use of Persian and Arabic also, of course, indicated the interest of this group in an audience abroad, an interest particularly important for Siddiq Hasan Khan.

The Ahl-i Hadis were a cohesive group, convinced of their own morality, legitimized in their own eyes both historically and intellectually, and distinct from other Muslims in their style of prayer and even their cut of beard. Their sense of themselves derived above all from their active opposition to those who differed from their beliefs; and they clearly enhanced their own self-esteem by the conviction that they stood forth as embodiments of the authentic faith ready to challenge all who differed from them. They not only opposed the exponents of the religion of the shrines, but fought as well against the Deobandis, reformers like themselves. They, with the Deobandis, were in the forefront of those who took on reformist Hindus and Christian missionaries in debate. Their style as an embattled sect was nurtured, however, not only in confrontation with other religious groups but in confrontation with the British government.

After the Mutiny the British tended to see Muslims as a conservative counterweight to nationalist sentiment, but some among them still feared that Muslims would once again resort to open warfare, as they had in the 1830s.[29] Those who did saw the Ahl-i Hadis as the heirs of the jihad tradition and singled out Nawwab Siddiq Hasan Khan as its exponent. He did, in some of his writings, present the classical view of jihad without the apologetic glosses that had become common. But far from fomenting jihad, he had written the *Tarjuman-i Wahhabiyyat* to prove that the Ahl-i Hadis were loyal.[30] He quoted Lord Northbrook's testimonial to Muslim loyalty. He pointed out that Bhopal had aided the British in the war in Egypt. He cited, as did all writers on this subject, the obligation of Muslims to accept a ruler who had provided security and with whom one had made an agreement. He reiterated his conviction of the

29. P. Hardy, *The Muslims of British India* (Cambridge, 1972), especially Chapter III.
30. Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān, *Tarjumān-i Wahhābiyyāt.*

imminent end of the world, implying that it was pointless to strive for temporal power when the end was so close.

Siddiq Hasan was probably less distrusted for sedition than for his activities as consort within the Bhopal court. No Prince Albert, he was blamed for social climbing, for meddling in family relations, and for spreading his disruptive religious ideas. One local newspaper wrote, "although the ruler of the state is a Muhammadan, no Musalman is allowed to have the Maulud . . . read at his house . . . any stranger who is not absolutely illiterate and is a handsome man has a good chance of becoming a rich man in that state. The noblemen readily marry their daughters to such men, and thus a stranger who comes to the state today as a beggar is called a prince or nawab tomorrow."[31] Another paper was even more cutting: "But as he was originally a mere crier and sweeper at Muhammadan mosques, his sudden elevation to such honors and riches turned his head."[32] The paper went on to make two charges that would have riveted the attention of official readers: that he had imported female slaves, and that he had both used state funds to aid the Mahdi of the Sudan and solicited military help for Bhopal from the Turks. In 1884 the Resident to Bhopal, Sir Lepel Griffin, deprived him of all his titles and official responsibilities on the grounds that he was disloyal. Whatever the motive, the act, to the Ahl-i Hadis, was understood as evidence of the persecution they felt to be their fate.[33]

In 1863 the government undertook a major campaign against the last remnant of the fighters on the frontier. The British were successful militarily, and they then turned to suppressing what they believed to be the supply network

31. *Mehr-i Nimruz* (Bijnor), May 15, 1881, in Government of India, *Selections from the Vernacular Newspapers Published in the Punjab, North Western Provinces, Oudh, and the Central Provinces*, 1881, p. 290.

32. *Hindustani* (Lucknow), November 4, 1885, in Government of India, *Selections*, 1885, p. 787.

33. An excellent account of the court of Bhopal is provided in the work of Siddiq Hasan's wife's daughter and heir: Nawwab Sultan Jahan Begum, *An Account of My Life*, translated by C. H. Payne (London, 1912). See also the article and bibliography of A. S. Bazmee Ansari, "Bhopal," *EI*², I, pp. 1195-99.

of the *mujahidin* in northern India. Trials were held in Ambala and Patna in 1864 and 1865, and continued intermittently until 1871.[34] Among those imprisoned was Sayyid Nazir Husain, who later, his good faith proven, was awarded the title of Shamsu'l-ʿUlama. When trials were concluded, political suspicion of the sect effectively came to an end. The final step in securing the political reputation of the Ahl-i Hadis came in 1887 when Sayyid Muhammad Husain, editor of the newspaper Ishaʿatu's-Sunnat of Lahore, led a campaign to persuade the Punjab government to drop the word "Wahhabi" from all official correspondence. Two years later, he successfully got the provincial governments throughout India to agree to the same policy.[35]

Yet the embattled style of the Ahl-i Hadis continued in relation to other Muslims. Indeed, many of the Ahl-i Hadis saw their fellow Muslims as a greater threat than the government had been. In the proceedings of the Ambala trials, an old Bengali, father of an accused man, epitomized this attitude toward the Hanafis: "A broken down old man, upwards of seventy years of age . . . who appears to have thrown himself into the movement with the zeal of a new convert embraced his son when the sentence of transportation had been passed against him. 'My son,' he cried out, 'never forsake *Amin* and *Rafʿ-i yadain*. Keep firm in the faith. It is not Christians and Jews who have destroyed you, but the Hanafis.' "[36] The Ahl-i Hadis knew that few accepted their ideas; and many seem to have been the kind of people who relished having an unpopular position, people whose beliefs only grew stronger as they met criticism. The verse of Siddiq Hasan at the beginning of this chapter suggests at once his defensiveness and his pride: "no one will misguide the Nawwab."

Over and over again in the biographical notices of this

34. Hardy, *Muslims of British India*, pp. 82-84.

35. *Punjabi Akhbar*, January 20, 1887, in Government of India, *Selections*, p. 80. *Aligarh Institute Gazette*, February 2, 1889, pp. 86-87.

36. Quoted in Muhammad Mujeeb, *The Indian Muslims* (London, 1967), p. 398.

group, one finds examples of perceived or real persecution. Maulana Abu'l-Irshad founded a *madrasah* in Pilibhit, but was so troubled by the "*bida'tis*" that he moved on to Arah, to Lucknow, and to Bhopal, but was never able to escape them.[37] Maulana 'Abdu'l-Bari Machlishahari founded a *madrasah* in Darbhanga, but, because of opposition to his method of reading prayer, he had to leave.[38] Hafiz 'Abdu'llah Ghazipuri encountered opposition to his saying *amin* aloud: "Once Maulana 'Abdu'l-Hayy Farangi Mahalli asked him about his raising his hands during prayer. Tears came to his eyes, and he simply said, 'Maulana, do you also ask?' "[39]

Maulana Hamidu'llah Mirathi's first conflict was with his father, who punished him for disrespect to his *pir*. When Muhammad Sa'du'llah returned home from Bhopal he and his companions were thrown out of the mosque in Mau, and they simply read *namaz* in the jungle. Later, when "short-sighted *muqallidin*" continued their objections, the whole body of the Ahl-i Hadis left off going to the Jami' Masjid and constructed their own mosque.[40] Similarly, Muhammad Usman, scion of a long line of *imams* of the Jami' Masjid in Aligarh, felt constrained to give up his hereditary position and become *imam* of the mosque of the Ahl-i Hadis.[41]

The Ahl-i Hadis were suspect not only in India but in Mecca as well. There were many called before governmental officials, including Nazir Husain himself, who was accused of believing in the legitimacy of marrying aunts, of favoring *zakat* on trade, and of calling unclean flesh clean. "So what if we oppose the whole world," queried Muhsinu'l-Mulk, "we will receive the reward offered those who follow the Book and the *sunnah*. On the day of judgment, one must answer for opposition to God, not for opposition to Zaid and 'Amr."[42]

In his writing, Muhsinu'l-Mulk very much conveyed the sense that he was opposing the whole world. He expressed

37. Abū Yaḥyā Naushaharawī, *Tarājim-i 'Ulamā'*, pp. 473-74.
38. Ibid., pp. 373-74.
39. Ibid., p. 219.
40. Ibid., pp. 419-20.
41. Ibid., p. 229.
42. Mahdī 'Alī Khān, *Taqlīd aur 'Aml bi'l-Ḥadīs̤*, p. 28.

a certain helplessness in convincing people of the correctness of his opinion, lamenting that if the precedent of a famous person be cited, everyone would answer that he was unusual and therefore exempt from the usual requirements; if the precedent of an ordinary person be cited, everyone dismissed the example as irrelevant. This helplessness encouraged an exaggeration of the virulence of the opposition. In his imaginary dialogue between a member of the Ahl-i Hadis and a Hanafi, Muhsin broke the reasonable tone of the discourse and attributed to his opponent this final statement: "So you are a *kafir* and I will write a *fatwa* to that effect and stop eating and drinking with you [in the manner of Hindu outcasting] that you may stop destroying religion and causing dissension."[43] Perhaps this statement could have been made by an opponent; perhaps it was only what Muhsin wished to hear.

The moral superiority and self-righteousness of the Ahl-i Hadis was often accompanied by a certain harshness. Siddiq Hasan Khan, his biographer noted, was not "skilled and tactful" but "rigid" and "emotional." Toward Maulana ʿAbdu'l-Hayy Lakhnawi, a Hanafi opponent, he was "aggressive, full of abuse and bitterness."[44] In Delhi, Sayyid ʿAbdu'l-Hayy's contacts with members of the Ahl-i Hadis—aside from that with Maulana Sayyid Nazir Husain—tended to confirm this impression of harsh argumentativeness.

> A *ghair-muqallid* came to live in Sabzimandi, spending his days with Sayyid Nazir Husain. His wife called a respected school teacher of the *mahallah* and said: "I must escape from my husband; he is a tyrant who seized me by force." The teacher went to the husband and said: "I share your faith, but keep it secret, for the people of this *mahallah* are such that there can be murder and no one even knows of it. There is a married woman here whom I want; but how can I get her lawfully?" He answered: "The Hanafis are among those it is legitimate to kill and their property is booty." The teacher told this story to

43. Ibid., p. 112.
44. Saeedullah, *Muhammad Siddiq Hasan Khan*, pp. 90, 101.

> the elders of the *mahallah*—on the condition that they would not kill the man, but simply turn his statement to the wife's advantage.[45]

At the Jami' Masjid where 'Abdu'l-Hayy went to read the Friday prayer, he found four sermons going on, all by *ghair-muqallids*. Of one he wrote, "he caused a great fuss about the Hanafis, and, opening his heart, slandered them decisively. He took great pride in the fact that he had repented of reading the *Hidayah*. 'Who else today has done such a thing?' he asked, 'And who besides me has undertaken a study of the Qur'an? All others will go to Hell.' He likened the people of Delhi to polytheists and himself to the Prophet!" The other preachers talked in much the same vein, one in particular discouraging the use of *ta'ziyahs*, the veneration of 'Ali, and standing during *maulud*; another discouraged excessive mourning during Mohurram. Sayyid 'Abdu'l-Hayy saw all this with great sorrow, attributing it to the loss of Muslim rule.[46]

Certainly all the opposition was not as virulent toward them as the Ahl-i Hadis claimed. The Deobandis saw them as erroneous in their jurisprudential position, but appear to have exercised substantial moderation in dealing with them. Rashid Ahmad, as we have noted above, argued that their practices were Shafi'i and based on abrogated *hadis*, thus simultaneously denying them the central issue of their position and giving them the benefit of the doubt about their legitimacy. He once commented, "people without knowledge who have seen a translation of the *Mishkat* claim to be acting on *hadis*. They cause disruption within the community. . . . But whoever, out of sincere love of the *sunnat*, with no intention of causing disruption engages in such practices as *amin* aloud and raising the hands, I do not think ill of him. But I think very ill indeed of those who slander our elders."[47] There was, of course, a desire

45. Sayyid 'Abdu'l-Ḥayy, *Dihlī aur us kē Aṭrāf* (Lucknow, 1958), pp. 59-60.
46. Ibid., p. 69.
47. Muḥammad 'Āshiq Ilāhī Mīraṭhī, *Tazkiratu'r-Rashīd* (Meerut, n.d.), II, 175.

to minimize their influence. There was great rejoicing when someone left the *ghair-muqallidi* position as, for example, a student of Maulana ʿAbdu'llah Ghazipuri did when he encountered Hajji Imdadu'llah in the Hijaz.[48] Muhammad Yahya Kandhlawi, when he was sent by his father to study at the Madrasah-yi Husain Bakhsh in Delhi during the 1880s, so feared the pervasive influence of the Ahl-i Hadis in that city that he secreted himself in a cell at the tomb of Nizamu'd-Din and finally went to Deoband.[49] The Deobandis, secure and confident in their own position, seem, however, at times to have taken at least some of the Ahl-i Hadis rather lightly. They found Maulawi Muhammad Husain Batawali, the newspaper editor in Lahore, at best amusing. He once wrote to Muhammad Qasim to lament that he had no one, not even a Deobandi student, to contest with; the Deobandis suggested that he should be told to talk to himself. But when he and Muhammad Qasim met and heatedly debated points about the performance of prayer, they concluded in mutual protestations of respects: "How can a man like you be *muqallid*?" "How can a man like you be *ghair-muqallid*?"[50] But this was not typical, and generally the Ahl-i Hadis stood apart—argumentative and proud.

The gap between Hanafi and Ahl-i Hadis was, in fact, sufficiently great that even British officials were involved in arbitrating differences between them. Such involvement, almost certainly, exacerbated relations among Muslims, for each side sought to use the power of the government to its own advantage, in much the same way as did Hindus and Muslims in their mutual confrontations. Although the British thought they could solve problems, in fact their very presence acted as an incentive to test each side's strength. When a decision was made for one side, that side saw the decision as proof of its strength; the other side saw it as an

48. Ashraf ʿAlī Thānawī, *Karāmāt-i Imdādiyyah* (Deoband, n.d.), pp. 77-78.

49. Muftī ʿAzīzu'r-Raḥmān, *Tazkirah-yi Mashā'ikh-i Dē'ōband* (Bijnor, 1958), p. 311.

50. Manāẓir Aḥsan Gīlānī, *Sawāniḥ-i Qāsimī* (Deoband, 1375/1955), II, 22-23.

invitation to try to assert itself again. No decision could be neutral. In 1891 in Allahabad, for example, a cocky British official described the success of one of his colleagues in stopping a riot.

> "Bustie" stopped what would have been a worse riot than any there has been out here lately. A Benaras Mahomedan had come over here to have a public discussion. . . . [There was to be a monster meeting with at least 5,000 people present.] They would have discussed [*amin*] for about twenty minutes and then got into a religious fury [culminating in a big row]. Bustie had up the leading Muhamedans here and said, "Now I don't want to interfere . . ." [He threatened them with jail and dishonor and urged sending back the Benares delegation.] So back to Benaras these people have been sent. It was a good move.[51]

But the Hanafis, no doubt, felt that they had won a round.

On the other hand, the three decisions handed down by the Privy Council in the late nineteenth century to adjudicate disputes over the usage of mosques were—although hailed as exemplary decisions of neutrality—triumphs for the Ahl-i Hadis.[52] The issue in all three cases was whether members of the Ahl-i Hadis could be banned from mosques. All three decisions took the precedent of Justice Mahmud of the Allahabad High Court, son of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan, who was perhaps influenced by such close associates at Aligarh as Muhsinu'l-Mulk. In the Ramzan case of Benaras, he had held that mosques must be open to all. His decision of 1889 argued that "a mosque cannot be dedicated or appropriated exclusively to any particular school or sect of Sunni Muhammedans. Members of the Muhammadi or Wahabi sect are Muhammadans and as such entitled to perform their devotions in a mosque. But any

51. Butler to Mather, May 20, 1891. Butler Collection, India Office Library, MSS, Eur. F116/1-3.

52. *The Indian Decisions (N.S.); Being a Reprint of All the Decisions of the Privy Council on Appeal from India* . . . (Madras, 1915) Vol. IV, 1885, 319-30; Vol. VI, 1888-1889, 1059-63; Vol. VII, 1891-1893, 269-80.

Muhammadi would commit a criminal offence who, not in the *bona fide* performance of his duties, but *mala fide*, for the purpose of disturbing others engaged in their devotions, made any demonstration, oral or otherwise. . . . *Amin* must be said but there is no rule on whether it is to be said loud or low."[53] The warning about criminal liability for *mala fide*, hardly susceptible to proof, did not modify the thrust of the decision.

The position of the Privy Council was more clearly a victory for the Ahl-i Hadis because the lower levels of the judicial system, presumably motivated by the nervousness of those who were likely to see the results of their decisions, tended to intervene actively to prevent disorder. They usually took the precedent of previous practice and thus ruled for the Hanafis. In the cases that came before the Privy Council, in every instance the first decision had been to fine or exclude those who had caused the disturbance, that is, those who had said *amin* aloud. In two of the cases when the Privy Council reversed that initial decision, there was the suspicion that the technique of reading prayer was a pretext for excluding people with whom there was a dispute over control of the finances of the mosque; there was thus a particular reason for not making a ruling on the practice of prayer.

To reach a decision could be a long process, and the very length of time and the number of levels involved were no doubt a further factor in intensifying competition. In the Jabalpura Benaras case of 1884, for example, the district magistrate had awarded the mosque to the Hanafis, but the subordinate judge, ruling on behalf of the Ahl-i Hadis, declared that the mosque could not be closed to anyone; the district judge and the High Court successively ruled in favor of the Hanafis; and, finally, the Privy Council again declared the mosque open to Hanafi and Muhammadi alike.

Local officials, much like the lower courts, tended to ignore the governmental policy of noninterference and intervened to prevent riots and disorder. In Meerut in 1892,

53. Ibid., VI, 1060.

for example, the magistrate simply divided the mosques of the city: five were turned over to the Ahl-i Hadis; the rest were left to the Hanafis.[54] In Etawah, much the same arrangement was made after the sessions judge and High Court had declined the request of the Ahl-i Hadis to make a decision. This action was interpreted as a victory for the Hanafis, since the Ahl-i Hadis preferred to have all mosques open to themselves.[55] In 1889 in Agra, a similar victory transpired when a quarrel arose at the Shahi Masjid over the pronouncement of *amin*. On that occasion the Ahl-i Hadis turned to the district magistrate, who deferred to the deputy collector, who ruled that *amin* was not to be pronounced aloud. The Ahl-i Hadis then ceased to use the mosque.[56]

The British officials at this level were not so much partisan to the Hanafis as eager to maintain order. Thus in Moradabad, the district superintendant of police, at the request of the Ahl-i Hadis, asked a traveling *maulud-khwan*, a reader of poems for celebrating the Prophet's birth, to leave the town, for the Ahl-i Hadis persuaded him that the reading would lead to disorder. The preacher petitioned the deputy magistrate for redress; and one of the leading papers of the town took up his cause.[57] But in this case the decision was made for the Ahl-i Hadis.

A paper reported that in Delhi in 1882, "a reconciliation has recently been effected between two sects of Musalmans, called the Ahl-i Hadith and the Ahl-i Fiqh. . . . The two sects of Musalmans, owing to a difference of opinion on some minor points of their belief hate each other. But the leaders of the two classes at Delhi lately executed and signed a deed of compromise in the presence of the Commissioner. According to this agreement the members of the two sects are not to hate each other, but to treat each other as friends and can offer prayers at the same mosque."[58] As we know

54. Government of India, *Selections*, *Najmul-Akhbar* (Etawah), September 19, 1892, p. 319.
55. Ibid., March 31, 1893, p. 137.
56. Ibid., *Sorma i Rozgar* (Agra), July 8, 1889, p. 441.
57. Ibid., *Jami ul-Ulum* (Moradabad), October 28, 1891, p. 587.
58. Ibid., *Ataliq-i Hind* (Lucknow), October 19, 1882, p. 719.

from the descriptions of ʿAbdu'l-Hayy a decade later, this optimistic attempt was to little avail, and may well, like the other efforts, have caused more dissension than accord.

In addition to these tensions, there was a bitter internal dispute that culminated at the end of the century in the creation of a splinter group, the Ahl-i Qur'an. Led by Maulana ʿAbdu'llah Chakralawi in Lahore, its influence was mostly limited to the Punjab. Jurisprudentially, it was even more extreme than the Ahl-i Hadis, denying the excessive emphasis that they put on *hadis* and accusing them of creating two kinds of revelation. The Ahl-i Qur'an opted to use only the revealed statements of the Qur'an, treating the *hadis* as relevant only to the human situation of the Prophet, and taking only the injunctions of the Qur'an as compulsory.[59] Socially, they were more exclusive than the Ahl-i Hadis, not merely raising the question of whether one should pray with other Muslims, but evolving their own prayer ritual: eliminating the call to prayer, repeating the phrase "God is great" silently, including only the required portion of the prayer, and excluding both recommended and optional segments (*rakʿat*). They knelt on only one knee for prayer. They prayed only in their own mosques. They eliminated funeral and ʿId prayers, and denied the utility of prayers and alms offered for the sake of the dead.[60] The debate on these subjects between Muhammad Husain Batalawi and Chakralawi was so intense that the government had to intervene to protect the latter's life. The effect of the debate, however, was a perceptible shift in emphasis in the writings of the Ahl-i Hadis toward the Qur'an. The centrality of *hadis* continued, however, for as Maulana Sana'u'llah Amritsari argued, the Qur'an itself recognized the *hadis* both as an explanation of the divine word and as a source of law in itself. The challenge may have modified certain points in the beliefs of the Ahl-i Hadis, but far from weakening the group it made it, if anything, the more cohesive and resolute.

The Ahl-i Hadis were also strengthened by family and

59. Aziz Ahmad, *Islamic Modernism*, pp. 120-21.
60. Murray Titus, *Islam in India and Pakistan* (Calcutta, 1959), p. 197.

clan ties among them. This, of course, was true for all the groups of ʿulama, for the core at Deoband, as described above, were primarily Usmani and Siddiqi *shaikhs*, and the ʿulama of the Barelwi group were Pathan. Sons tended to follow their fathers. Influence often spread by kin so that, for example, the entire Sherwani *baradari* of Aligarh under the influence of Muhammad Yunis Khan, *ra'is* of Datawali, became for a time Ahl-i Hadis.[61] Moreover, each group was concentrated geographically, though this was less true for the Ahl-i Hadis than for the Barelwi or even for the Deobandi. The Ahl-i Hadis were dispersed over a wide area in Delhi, in towns in the Punjab and the eastern United Provinces, and in Bhopal. They also had ties to similar groups in Afghanistan and the Hijaz.

An important unity among the Ahl-i Hadis came from the widespread respect given a single dominant leader in the late nineteenth century, Maulana Sayyid Nazir Husain, and the consequent focus given his center in Delhi. He had, as noted above, been influenced to follow the fundamentalist position in jurisprudence by his early teachers, among them Wilayat ʿAli at Sadiqpur in Bihar. From there he moved to Chiryakot, where he studied from a scion of a famous learned family of that town; thence to Allahabad to study grammar; and finally, in 1826, to Delhi, where he was to spend the rest of his life. He first taught in the Masjid-i Aurangabad, whose guardian's daughter he married, but after the Mutiny he shifted to the Gate of Habash Khan, where his son had built a mosque and *madrasah* as a center for him. He was a revered teacher, accorded the title Shaikhu'l-Kull because so many of the Ahl-i Hadis held certificates (*sanad*) in *hadis* from him or from his pupils. He wrote extensively, publishing a collection of his *fatawa* and a celebrated refutation of *taqlid*.

Sayyid ʿAbdu'l-Hayy's account of Nazir Husain, whom he met during his travels of 1894-1895, reveals a man of cheerful personality, fond of quoting poetry. He was given to tales of his reformist forebears, telling on one occasion

61. Abū Yaḥyā Naushaharawī, *Tarājim-i ʿUlamā'*, p. 231.

an anecdote about a police official who went to arrest Muhammad Isma'il but was instead converted by him; and, at 'Abdu'l-Hayy's request, recounting his meeting with Sayyid Ahmad Barelwi. He gave a daily audience—to which 'Abdu'l-Hayy often returned during his stay in Delhi—where he gave opinions on personal problems and taught *hadis*. He led the prayer; and most, but not all of those present, recited in the fashion of the Ahl-i Hadis. 'Abdu'l-Hayy remarked on Nazir Husain's respect for the offspring of the Mughals, always standing in their presence and offering them *nazar*, however low their position may have fallen. Some of his circle in Delhi were actually of that family; some were people patronized by latter-day Mughals. Nazir Husain was respected for his high birth and courtly behavior, but, above all, he was respected for his knowledge of *hadis* and his devotion to spreading the position of Ahl-i Hadis.[62]

Outside Delhi the Ahl-i Hadis had substantial influence in the eastern part of the United Provinces. In the *tazkirah* for the United Provinces almost all of the 'ulama described were, in fact, either from Delhi or from eastern cities. There were a few notable exceptions: fifteen 'ulama from the single *qasbah* of Sahswan in Rohilkhand, for example, seven in Rampur, and seven in Aligarh. But in the east there were concentrations like thirty-four 'ulama in the small *qasbah* of Mau near Azamgarh and seventeen others from Azamgarh itself. There were eighteen 'ulama of this group in Benares. Indeed, both Nazir Husain and Siddiq Hasan were originally from the eastern cities of Monghyr and Qanauj, respectively. One can speculate that the far-reaching character of the reform movement was a reaction to the exuberant, custom-laden Shi'ism that flourished in this

62. 'Abdu'l-Ḥayy, *Dihlī aur us kē Aṭrāf*, pp. 22-55. Although later described in the *tazkirah* of the Ahl-i Hadis (described above), 'Abdu'l-Hayy did not consider himself one of them at the time of his tour. He did, however, make Nazir Husain the first person he went to see when he arrived in Delhi, having been drawn to him because of his reputation as a scholar of *hadis*, because of Nazir Husain's acquaintance with 'Abdu'l-Hayy's relative Sayyid Ahmad Barelwi, and because—perhaps—of their shared descent as Husaini *sayyids*.

area under the court of Oudh. Several of the leading ʿulama were of Shiʿi families or were converts from Shiʿism, and they particularly emphasized the elimination of customs associated with that sect.

There were also active members of the Ahl-i Hadis in Punjab, among them ʿAbdu'l-Minan Wazirabadi, called Ustad-i Panjab. Born at Jhelum and blinded as a child, he nonetheless traveled to Bhopal and thence to Delhi, where he studied from Nazir Husain. Like many of the Ahl-i Hadis, he appears to have encountered substantial opposition to his teaching, reporting that in Wazirabad, where he was ultimately to settle, people had initially so opposed him that they would bind his arms and feet and throw him in fields outside the town. Like Nazir Husain, he was deemed so wise that the *jinn* were among his pupils.[63] Other influential figures in the Punjab included, of course, the newspaper editor Muhammad Husain Batalawi, who engaged in controversy in his columns and in person with all opponents; and Sana'u'llah Amritsari, once a student at Deoband. Maulana ʿAbdu'llah Ghaznawi was also influential in this area. Although born in Afghanistan, he traveled often to the Punjab and Delhi, and ultimately settled in Amritsar. Disciples of Maulana Muhammad Ismaʿil and of other reformers had, in small numbers, found their way to Afghanistan; and as a child ʿAbdu'llah had studied the *Taqwiyatu'l-Iman* and adopted the reformist orientation toward custom. Expelled for so doing by the *amir*, he traveled to Delhi to study *hadis* from Nazir Husain. Twice he returned home, each time only to be expelled, on the last occasion after being beaten and jailed for two years. His progeny included fifteen daughters and twelve sons, many of whom continued their father's tradition of religious reform.[64]

The ʿulama of the Ahl-i Hadis sought to create a community of religiously responsible individuals, attentive to the letter of their religious requirements. By the late nineteenth century, they had defined a position for themselves,

63. Muḥammad Ibrahīm Mīr, *Tārīkh-i Ahl-i Ḥadīs̤*, pp. 453-56.
64. Ibid., pp. 445-47.

much like that of the Deobandis, operating as a religious leadership at once removed from political concerns and from the old networks of the *pirs* of the shrines. There were, however, among the Ahl-i Hadis some whose social and political style harkened back to other strategies of the ʿulama. Some, despite all the disclaimers, no doubt still cherished Sayyid Ahmad Barelwi's vision of a religious leadership that would carve out, militarily if need be, a new and autonomous society based on the Law for a group of the pious. Some, at a less dramatic level, still sustained the style of the elite ʿulama who had worked through the nobles and the courts. Nazir Husain, for example, always had warm relations with the old nobility of Delhi, however depressed, and was patronized formally and informally by them.

Such relations were, of course, even more evident in the case of Nawwab Siddiq Hasan Khan who used his courtly position and his associations with the nobility of Bhopal to spread his religious position. He brought many ʿulama of his sect from north India to staff the state's bureaucracy, among them Nazir Husain's former student Maulana Salamatu'llah Jairajpuri, who became director of the Jamiʿ Masjid and supervisor of all the *madrasahs* of the state. Moreover, Siddiq Hasan tried to enforce his ideas through the power of the court. He prohibited such elaborate ceremonies within the royal family as the firing of a cannon and the holding of a *chattah* ceremony upon a child's birth. He had those frequenting prostitutes summoned for reproach. He founded *madrasahs*, including one for orphans. He established his own printing press and distributed his books—said to be some 223 titles—free of charge both in Bhopal and, through agents, in British India. But, as described above, in 1885 he was demoted from his influential position.[65] His career suggests the frustration of trying to maintain the style of working through the nobility to disseminate religious ideas in a period when the nobles were under the control of a colonial power.

65. Sultan Jahan Begum, *An Account of My Life.*

Ultimately the ʿulama of the Ahl-i Hadis organized themselves much more in the style of the Deobandis. Significantly, the initial impulse to that form of organization came from Muhammad Ibrahim Arawi, who had been a student of Deoband but subsequently aligned himself with the Ahl-i Hadis.[66] He founded the Madrasah-yi Ahmadiyyah in Arah in Bihar, a school that held an annual convocation and generally shared the institutional features of the Deobandi schools.[67] There were many distinguished teachers at the school besides Ibrahim, among them Maulana Shamsu'l-Haqq, noted for distributing books of *hadis*, and Maulana Hafiz ʿAbdu'llah Ghazipuri, mentioned above. Maulana Ibrahim not only founded this school, but propagandized the idea of reform in Arabic education among the Ahl-i Hadis.[68] A second step to formal institutional organization was to come from yet another sometime-Deobandi, Abu'l-Wafa Sana'u'llah, who took a leading part in organizing the All-India Ahl-i Hadith Conference in Delhi in 1912.[69]

The ʿulama of the Ahl-i Hadis preached and led prayers, issued *fatawa*, and wrote extensively. They never had the popular appeal of the Deobandi or Barelwi ʿulama because of the extremism of their jurisprudential position and because of their opposition to acting as Sufi *shaikhs* to their followers. There were however, ʿulama, even early on, known for their popular influence: an *imam* who influenced his whole *mahallah* to be faithful in prayer, a *mufti* accepted by large numbers in a certain city, a teacher known for "his love of the poor and horror of the rich."[70] Muhammad ʿAbdu'llah "Jhao" Ilahabadi rejected his ancestral property to work among the humble weavers of Allahabad, Azam-

66. Hence he is little discussed in Deobandi writings. And, because the father of the author of the *tazkirah* of the Ahl-i Hadis broke with him for personal reasons, leaving Arah to found his own school in Benares, he is barely mentioned there.
67. Abū Yaḥyā Naushaharawī, *Tarājim-i ʿUlamā'*, p. 452.
68. Sayyid Sulaiman Nadwi in introduction, ibid., p. 36.
69. Sh. Inayatullah, "Ahl-i Hadith," *EI*², I, 259.
70. Abū Yaḥyā Naushaharawī, *Tarājim-i ʿUlamā'*, p. 417.

garh, and Bhopal.[71] In the words of an old man from Gujranwalla, "Up to sixty years ago [i.e. 1864] in this district and city the name of the Ahl-i Hadith was not known to anyone. Polytheism, innovations, and the customs of the infidels were so common among Muslims that it was impossible to distinguish them from non-Muslims, except in the very special matter of religious observances. Islamic duties were performed, but in a wholly perfunctory manner, and very little attention indeed was paid to their inner truth and meaning."[72] Still, there was always some ambiguity on the issue of just how the uneducated were to adhere to *hadis*, since they could not consult the sources. The ʿulama, when challenged, insisted that they did not expect everyone to be able to consult *hadis* but to defer to various of the learned or, even, to the law schools.[73]

Numbers aside, the intellectual influence of the Ahl-i Hadis was of great importance. Not only did they stimulate the movement of the Barelwi ʿulama but they positively influenced the Ahl-i Qur'an, the Ahmadiyyah, and the modernists, all of whose jurisprudential styles derived from theirs.[74]

Those who joined the Ahl-i Hadis practiced a style of religion far different from the mediational religion of the shrines. They were, as Geertz has written of other Muslims in this period, Muslims by conviction, not merely by birth.[75] As in other reform movements, those so united acquired both an enhanced sense of their individual worth and a deepened feeling of solidarity within their group. Much of this sense depended on the oppositional character of the sect. Among Muslims, the Ahl-i Hadis added an important element to the rivalries of the day and to the movement of religious revitalization in general. And their ʿulama, with

71. Ibid., pp. 340-41.

72. Titus, *Islam*, pp. 196-97.

73. See, for example, Sayyid Abū Bakr Ghaznawī, *Ḥazrat Maulānā Dā'ūd Ghaznawī* (Lahore, 1974), pp. 373ff.

74. Muḥammad Ikrām, *Mauj-i Kauṣar* (Lahore, 1968), p. 80.

75. Clifford Geertz, *Islam Observed: Religious Development in Morocco and Indonesia* (New Haven, 1968), especially chapters I and IV.

others, marked the new style that religious leadership had in large part taken.

The Barelwis

The Barelwi ʿulama, the last of these three groups of ʿulama to crystallize, is always described by supporters and opponents as a reaction to the other two. They did, however, operate, as did the other ʿulama, as a popularly supported leadership, detached from political activity, offering social and religious guidance to their followers. Like them, too, they were committed to what they deemed a correct interpretation of the Law. What made them unique was that they used their position and their legal scholarship to justify the mediational, custom-laden Islam, closely tied to the intercession of the *pirs* of the shrines, that was characteristic of the area. They believed, wrote a member of the Ahl-i Hadis, "in reading Fatihah; in holding observances on the fortieth day after a death and on its anniversary; in celebrating the *giyarhwin* of Shaikh ʿAbdu'l-Qadir and the *ʿurs* of other saints; in meditation on the image of the *shaikh*; in standing during the celebration of the Prophet's birthday; and in calling on saints for help."[76] Like the other ʿulama, they opted to turn inward, cherishing religion as an ever-more important component of their identity. But in a period widely held to be threatening to their culture, they blamed not only the colonial ruler but—perhaps even more—the reformist Muslims. They wanted to preserve Islam unchanged: not Islam as it was idealized in texts or the historical past, but Islam as it had evolved to the present. They were, thus, an oppositional group as much as were the reformers, not even—as one might think—representing a continuity with the past but rather, in their very self-consciousness, representing a departure from it.

Confrontation and refutation were, indeed, the motive of much of their work. Their targets were other Muslims rather than Arya Samajists or Christians. Their debate with

76. Abū Yaḥyā Naushaharawī, *Tarājim-i ʿUlamaʾ*, p. 484.

the Ahl-i Hadis was particularly intense and, even though they were adherents of the law schools and participants in the Sufi orders, their debate with the Deobandis was scarcely less so. Such debate, as we have seen in the case of the other groups, clearly contributed to the participants' sense of self-worth and the group's intensity of cohesion.

The core group of Barelwi ʿulama were Pathans from the major cities of Bareilly and Budaun in Rohilkhand. Support came primarily from the small towns and rural areas of the United Provinces and the Punjab.[77] The movement offered its followers both the experience of participating in a purposeful oppositional group and, as the reformist movements did not, a hierarchy of mediators ranging from the Prophet to the saints and *pirs* of the shrines, to the towering central figure of the movement, Maulana Ahmad Riza Khan Barelwi himself. The Barelwi orientation thus made less of a demand for individual responsibility upon its followers and this, perhaps, accounts for its greater appeal among the less well educated.

The intellectual orientation of the Barelwis was foreshadowed in the debates of the mid-nineteenth century between Maulana Muhammad Ismaʿil Shahid and Maulana Fazl-i Rasul Bada'uni on the nature of God. The reformers, as we have said, felt that their beliefs alone preserved power to God, while the opposition, particularly on the issue of *imkan-i nazir*, (the possibility of an equal to the Prophet), wanted to preserve the high status of the Prophet.[78] These debates were only those of individuals, however, and were limited to particular theological issues. The debate at the end of the century had substantial popular participation and represented a far more encompassing intellectual and emotional orientation. It was Ahmad Riza Khan (1856-1921) who gave coherence to a distinct group, both intellectual and social. By the end of the nineteenth century, he had formed with his students, disciples, and associates a group that held itself to be so true to Islam that it identified itself alone as the *ahl-i sunnat wa jamaʿat*.

77. Titus, *Islam*, p. 78.
78. See above, Chapter I.

Ahmad Riza's family were Pathans or Rohillas, Afghans who had migrated to the Mughal court in search of employment, in this case obtaining land in *jagir* first in Lahore, then near Delhi, and finally in Bareilly.[79] Members of the family continued in princely service in the nineteenth century. His grandfather, Maulawi Riza ʿAli Khan, was particularly distinguished for his skill in the family's great specialty of *fiqh* and for his piety. His biographers tell of him the kind of stories characteristically recounted of the pious: he converted a courtesan; miraculously kept a young man from ill deeds; was invisible to the British during the Mutiny. His son, Maulawi Taqi ʿAli Khan (d. 1880), a prolific writer, was known more for his intellectual endeavors, above all for his opposition to the reformers. He wrote a refutation of the *Taqwiyatu'l-Imam* and published, in 1876, a work on *imkan-i nazir*.[80] At about that time he was also initiated with his son into the various orders, particularly the Qadiri, at the hand of Shah Al-i Rasul of Marahrah. The great-grandfather of this *shaikh*, Shah Barkatu'llah (d. 1729) had played an active spiritual and political role in the eighteenth century and his tomb became, according to Ahmad Riza's biographer, the most important center of the Qadiri *silsilah* in India in the modern period.[81] At once scholars, landowners, and government servants, the family was like many of those of the ʿulama. Unlike many, it was sufficiently prosperous that its wealth received comment.

Its ties were more to the ʿulama of Budaun and Khairabad, specialists in the rationalist studies, than to the *hadis* scholars at Delhi. An important associate of the family at mid-century was Maulana Fazl-i Rasul Bada'uni, a close friend of Fazl-i Haqq Khairabadi and a student of Farangi Mahall. His family had been known for its intellectual brilliance for generations; but, again under the influence of the Qadiri family of Marahrah, his father had acquired an

79. Maulānā Ẓafaru'd-Dīn Riẓwī, *Ḥayāt-i Aʿlā Ḥaẓrat* (Karachi, 1938). This is the source for all material for this section unless otherwise noted.

80. Raḥmān ʿAlī, *Taẕkirah-yi ʿUlamā'-yi Hind*, pp. 530-31.

81. E. R. Neave, *District Gazetteers of the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh*, XII, *Etah* (Allahabad, 1911).

interest in inner learning as well. Fazl-i Rasul was briefly involved in the Mutiny, but many of his students were distinguished governmental servants and he himself later served as a government office superintendent. His real interest was in opposition to the "Wahhabis." His most famous student was to be Ahmad Riza. Another important associate of the family was Maulana Irshad Husain who acted as a spiritual adviser in the court of Rampur to Nawwab Kalb ʿAli Khan, the single Sunni ruler of that line. Thanks to him, Ahmad Riza had good relations with that princely state throughout.

Born into this setting in 1856, Ahmad Riza proved a worthy heir to his heritage. His birth was held to have been favorably attended by many astrological and numerical predictions. He was distinguished from the beginning for his unusual intellectual skills, particularly an extraordinary memory and a mind that delighted in mental games (later manifested in his uncanny ability to create *abjad* phrases instantaneously),[82] an enthusiasm for puns and plays on words (often directed against his opponents), and intuitive skill in mathematics. Endless episodes illustrating his skills were recounted by his followers. He is said to have solved, for example, problems in mathematics for Ziya'u'd-Din Ahmad Kamboh at Aligarh, who otherwise would have traveled to Germany in search of solutions and who thus was both saved a trip and inspired to renewed attention to his religious duties. Ahmad Riza's mental agility, of course, was considered secondary to his religious learning, but the same style of mind permitted him to achieve a great reputation in *fiqh*, deriving in large part from his phenomenal memory. He knew the books of law by heart, for, he explained, "in the grave [he would] be asked problems and [would] have no book then."[83] His first teacher was so impressed

82. In *abjad* each Arabic letter is considered to have a numerical value. Words are chosen, the sums of whose letters are equal to the date of a birth, the foundation of a building, the composition of a work, and so on. Skill is judged by the aptness of the name.

83. Ẓafaru'd-Dīn, *Ḥayāt-i Aʿlā Ḥaẓrat*, p. 138.

with his skill that he asked his young pupil if he were a *jinn*.

His followers found in the events of his early life many proofs of his greatness. At the age of four he read a poem for *maulud* from the pulpit of a mosque; and, also at a young age, he was said to have demonstrated remarkable religious obedience, keeping the fast of Ramazan as a child, and once correcting a *maulawi*'s greeting of *jite raho* in favor of an Islamic greeting.[84] By the age of fourteen, his father had entrusted him with responsibility for writing *fatawa*. At the age of about twenty he accompanied his father on hajj. On that occasion the *imam* of the Shafi'i school took him by the hand, gazed long at him, declared he saw God's light on his face, and gave him *ijazat* in the Qadiri order. At about the same time he was invited to Rampur, where he refused the Nawwab's invitation to sit on a silver chair, but sucessfully demonstrated his knowledge of the most advanced book of logic before its chief scholar of that day, Maulana 'Abdu'l-Haqq Khairabadi. When asked about his pursuits, he answered that he wrote *fatawa* and engaged in refutation of "Wahhabis." And, he added, pointing to a major theme in all he did, "I defeat those who denigrate the Prophet."[85] Thus, by an early age the direction of his subsequent career was firmly laid: defense of customs and beliefs that elevated the stature of the Prophet and the saints; distinction in rational studies and *fiqh*; and vigor and tenacity in challenging those he opposed.

Both his religious and social thought were characterized by hierarchical notions of respect. He particularly emphasized the preeminent position of the Prophet, writing some sixteen books on his life and composing praises of him in Urdu verse. He also wrote on *hadis* and on the Prophet's family and companions. In his writings and sermons he often focused on the Sufi doctrine of the *nur-i muhammadi* which, he claimed, was denied by his opponents. The doctrine was that there existed a "light of Muhammad" that

84. "May you live," often accompanied by raising the hand to the height of an adult.

85. Ẓafaru'd-Dīn, *Ḥayāt-i A'lā Ḥaẓrat*, pp. 31-34.

had derived from God's own light and had existed, like the Word in Christian theology, from the beginning of creation. It had acted as an intermediary in that creation, he explained, enlightening the world just as the full moon, reflecting the sun, lights the world. He denied the charge of the "Wahhabis" that this theory compromised the unity of God. He insisted that one must recognize the place of the Prophet for whom the very world had been created: it was designed for his glory. The Prophet was himself light, present and observant (*hazir o nazir*) in all places. As light, he had no shadow. He was human but his humanity was of a different order from that of other men.[86]

Ahmad Riza also believed that the Prophet had unique knowledge of the unknown, of *'ilmu'l-ghaib.* The reformers, anxious to preserve God's uniqueness, had denied that the Prophet had this knowledge except in special instances, when it was granted by God. The Barelwis, by contrast, felt that he had full knowledge of spiritual matters (*haqiqat-i ruh*); of the meaning of all metaphorical passages in the Qur'an; and of the past and future. Thus Ahmad Riza justified calling on the Prophet as intercessor—and indeed today lithographs with the motto *ya Rasul* indicate a person's sympathy for the Barelwi perspective.

Ahmad Riza himself showed his respect for the Prophet in a number of ways. He gave great importance to the celebration of *maulud,* the very holiday the reformers opposed, and made that occasion one of the three times in the course of each year when he regularly delivered a sermon. He preached twice on that day, at the home of his brother, Maulana Hasan Riza Khan, before an audience of the elite of the city who had received printed invitations. He would arrive to speak at the time of *qiyam* (the period of standing, when it was believed that the Prophet was present) and, that concluded, would begin a scholarly sermon. Not only the ceremony—on a fixed day, with *qiyam,* with people wearing new clothes and distributing sweets—

86. Ẓuhūr Aḥmad Aẓhar, "Barēlwī," *Dā'irah-yi Ma'ārif-i Islāmiyyah* (Lahore, 1962-) II, pp. 485-87. See this article also for its useful bibliography.

but the whole style of a select gathering was markedly different from the practice of the Deobandi ʿulama.

Another demonstration of his respect to the Prophet was his practice of beginning his letters not only with the customary inscription of *bi'smi'llah*, but with a rhyming phrase in praise of the Prophet. He so loved the Prophet, he once said, that were one to extract his heart, he would find on one side the first phrase of the attestation of faith, "There is no god but God," and on the other the attestation that "Muhammad is the Prophet of God," significant because the symbolism of imprinting words on the heart more typically sought only to imprint the name of Allah. He would kiss the feet of any returning *hajji* who had been present in the mosque where the Prophet was buried.

Ahmad Riza's respect for the Prophet carried over to a profound respect for all *sayyids*, his descendents. He would kiss the hand of the first *sayyid* to greet him on ʿId; he and his family gave *sayyids* a double share of sweets on the occasion of reading poems celebrating *maulud*; he reproved a person who dared criticize the ruler of Mecca on the grounds that he was a *sayyid*; when a *sayyid* inadvertently walked into the women's quarter of his house, instead of killing him he assured him that he was its master; at the *toshah* ceremony of offering food to a dead saint, he always put *sayyids* in the first line.

He also emphasized the importance of the saints. Ahmad Riza justified many of the ceremonies the reformers disapproved of by the importance he gave to their role as intermediaries. On the issue of *sama*ʿ, of whether the saints after death could hear believers' prayers, he held that they could not only hear, but that their powers of *tasarruf* and *karamat* continued after death as they had in life, and that the saints maintained not only a spiritual but a bodily life after death.[87] In his book *Hayat-i Maut* he explained that the saints could see with the light of God (*nur-i khuda*). They could be solicited for their help not only at their graves but everywhere. Their powers of communication were espe-

87. ʿAbdu'l-Ḥakīm Khān, Akhtar Shāhjahānpūrī, *Aʿlā Ḥaẓrat Barēlwī kā Fiqhī Maqām* (Lahore, 1971), p. 32.

cially strong on Friday nights, he explained, and then, indeed, even the ordinary dead could speak. In another work, *al-Aman wa'l-'Ala*, he elaborated his belief in the secret hierarchy of saints whose presence in every age sustains the universe. Not only the dead but the living could be intermediaries. He told, with approval, an anecdote of a weeping child, known for his visions, who saw his mother being led to hell; a *shaikh*, who had 70,000 *durud* (of praise to the Prophet) in reserve, transferred them to the mother, and the child, joyous, saw her in heaven. Such a story, though perhaps acceptable to some Deobandis, would certainly not have been to the Ahl-i Hadis or Ahl-i Qur'an. He disapproved of abbreviations of the words of blessing that follow the names of saints and prophets, and always wrote them out in full.

Ahmad Riza faithfully observed the *'urs* of a number of saints, including that of Shah 'Abdu'l-Qadir Bada'uni, whom he particularly revered; and that of the great forebear of the Qadiri line of Marahrah, Shah Barakatu'llah. The latter he made the occasion of another of his annual sermons. He revered many elders of the past, above all 'Abdu'l-Qadir Gilani. He not only celebrated the eleventh of each month in his honor, but particularly celebrated *toshah*, the offering of fixed amounts of food accompanied by specified readings in the hope of gaining some particular desire. He accepted with great reverence food that had been offered in *giyarhwin*, the celebration of the *'urs* of 'Abdu'l-Qadir. The emphasis on 'Abdu'l-Qadir appears analogous to some of the teachings espoused by the more reformist 'ulama in that it focuses on practices of potentially wide geographic provenance. The celebration of *giyarhwin* was held anywhere and on the occasion of the eleventh of each month, so that it bound one to a particular time and place much less than the usual annual *'urs* associated with a *pir*, which was held only at the saint's tomb and only on one date in the year.

Ahmad Riza also shared the concern of the reformers for disseminating instruction in the performance of religious obligations. The role of the 'ulama, he said, was to

act in accord with the *shari'at* and to teach Muslims their duties. Ahmad Riza's position on various points was bolstered by an armory of erudition. His followers held him to be the outstanding scholar of *fiqh* of his age, citing his *fatawa* in particular for their extensive discussions of the jurisprudential foundations of the Law. He handled large numbers of queries both in his daily afternoon audiences and, with the aid of students and associates, through the mail. His published *fatawa* compose a dozen volumes, each running to a thousand pages; an answer to a single point often covered a hundred pages, with myriad references and citations.[88] Some of his attempts to spread correct practice led to controversy, for example his insistence that the call to the Friday prayer had to be performed only outside the mosque, not inside. But he also insisted on fidelity to the basic duties of the faith on which all the 'ulama agreed. He urged people to perform the required prayer. He would not grant initiation to a person unless he was bearded to precisely the appropriate degree. He respectfully corrected the *sajjadah-nishin* of Marahrah for wearing a gold ring. He thus conveyed the sense that the *sunnat* was being seriously followed.

In addition to concerns shared with other religious leaders, Ahmad Riza enjoined a wide range of customary practices they deemed illegitimate. To thwart reformist criticism, he claimed that even Shah Waliyu'llah had encouraged customary practices, many, presumably of the character of *'amaliyyat* and *ta'wiz*.[89] Moreover, he made two theoretical arguments in their defense. First he argued that it was laudable to act not merely on authentic *hadis* but on weak *hadis* as well, so long as they were not contradicted by authentic *hadis*. He explained that *hadis* could pass from one of the technical classifications to another if educated people act on it: a weak *hadis*, in other words could achieve the level of being strong or good, so long as it had a minimum of two chains of authority, if it were regularly acted on. On the basis of weak *hadis*, for example, he considered laudable

88. Ibid., p. 21.
89. Ibid., pp. 25-31.

the practice of kissing the thumbs and placing them to the eyes upon hearing the name of the Prophet in the call to prayer, a practice held conducive to visions of the Prophet. He similarly justified a number of other practices such as keeping a white chicken, drawing blood on Saturdays, and repeating *durud* when plucking a flower. Second, he maintained that unless a customary practice were specifically opposed by a *hadis*, it was legitimate. Thus since there would be no specific *hadis* saying that one should not drive four nails into the corner of one's house to keep out evil *jinn*, the practice was permissible, even though some might find such behavior prohibited on the basis of analogy or general principles in the *hadis*.

The result was that his definition of correct behavior was often inclusive and detailed. He emphasized, for example, the importance of tying one's turban with the right hand, not the left—as did the devil; and the necessity of writing the *abjad* equivalent of *bi'smi'llah* from the right to the left, that is in the same direction as one would write the letters. He was fascinated by ways of determining the correct times for offering the required prayers, a concern derived both from his attention to obedience to the law and from his bent for playing ingenious mental games. He was said to be able to set a clock by looking at the stars. These characteristics of his religious thought and practice were widely respected. His followers held him to be a perfect exemplar of the *sunnat* and revered him, as well, for his ratiocination and productivity.

To some extent the respect accorded him is a corollary to the respect he insisted be accorded the Prophet and the saints. He himself suggested his position by a bit of advice he offered to the people of the town of Rojhat, near Gaya, where the Ahl-i Hadis (the "Wahhabis") were influential. A follower there asked how he should tell a Sunni from a Wahhabi. "Just mention my name," he answered, "and you will know by whether the person looks happy or worried."[90] Just as he held that saints continued their work after death,

90. Ibid., pp. 62-63.

his followers have held him still to be their leader. The author of a recent work on his jurisprudential thought, for example, has interspersed frequent poetic verses addressed to him as if he were continuously present.[91] His followers speak of him never by name but by the title of Aʿla Hazrat, "the exalted or most high presence."

His style was aristocratic. He preferred solitude, and, when he did appear people would rush to touch him, coming to kiss his hand or feet. He acted as a patron, a quite different role from that of the Deobandis, who did not have the means nor the inclination to dispense largesse. He gave ʿId gifts to his students; he gave feasts on such personal occasions as the birth of a grandchild, a practice the Deobandis disapproved of. Around him clustered students from across upper India, for on such occasions he prepared, his biographer noted, fish for Bengalis; sweets, rice dishes, and kababs for Biharis; roasted meats and oven-baked bread for Punjabis and Afghanis. He outfitted his relatives and associates on ceremonial occasions, as well. He seemed to have a "bottomless box," as his biographer wrote, never exhausted when he wanted to give gifts to his family or subsidies to his students. Not surprisingly, given his veneration for *sayyids*, he was especially generous to members of that group. On one occasion he had laid aside two hundred rupees for monthly expenses, and when an impoverished *sayyid* came to him, he offered him the whole. He, Ahmad Riza noted approvingly, being an offspring of the Prophet, took only what he needed. He also patronized poets. He was described, moreover, as were the Deobandi ʿulama, as generous to a fault, giving away whatever he possessed. And if he did not take a stand in favor of widow remarriage, as did the reformers, he at least showed generosity toward widows. For these various expenses he drew on both family resources and on contributions. Once, for example, when he decided to take two disciples with him on hajj he simply sent out telegrams to wealthy followers who responded with

91. Ibid.

contributions, and thus secured the blessing of having the hajj performed for their sake.

Another dimension of his personal authority, of course, was his position as a *shaikh* in the Qadiri *silsilah.* He handled all correspondence dealing with sufism himself, except on the specific issue of *taʿwiz,* which he delegated to his son Hamid and his biographer Zafaru'd-Din. As a *shaikh* he seems to have concentrated on intercession, divination, and amulets rather than on instruction in spiritual development. He was particularly skilled, it was held, in divination by such means as examination of entrails, so that he could predict events in a person's life or events in the history of the world such as the coming of the *imam mahdi* (which he set at A.H. 1900). He was also considered a master of *taksir,* the making of numerical charts to serve as amulets.[92] He gave instructions on such matters as appropriate formulae for repetition to secure blessings—the vision of the Prophet, for example. In the style of good *shaikhs,* he was kind to the poor: inviting a barber to sit with him, accepting invitations from the humble, even, on one occasion eating beef when it was offered although—perhaps from Hindu influence[93]—he did not normally eat it.

To some extent, Ahmad Riza Khan participated in defense of Sunni Islam against the militant Hinduism of the Arya Samaj, on one occasion—apparently—converting an Arya Samaji by his answers to his questions. He also published responses to polemical works of the Arya Samaj. He did not, however, join in the debate with the Christian missionaries, perhaps because of his great concern to avoid giving offense to the government. Like the Deobandis and the Ahl-i Hadis he wrote extensively against the Shiʿah. He cited as appropriate behavior the precedent of Maulana Nur of Farangi Mahall, who would not even greet a Shiʿah, and he did not permit his followers to wear the black or

92. Ẓafaru'd-Dīn, *Ḥayāt-i Aʿlā Ḥaẓrat,* pp. 157-69, gives many examples of this skill.

93. Or perhaps he did not like beef; or perhaps he was influenced by Arabian practice: "Beef throughout the East is considered an unwholesome food." Sir Richard F. Burton, *Personal Narrative of a Pilgrimage to Al-Madinah and Meccah* (New York, 1964 reprint), II, 17.

green of mourning during Mohurram. His greatest concern, however, was not to defeat spokesmen of other religions or even the Shiʿah but rather the reformist Sunni.

Both the impetus and continuing motive of his work was opposition to the Deobandis and the Ahl-i Hadis. He wrote *fatawa* against his opponents, published letters, engaged in debates, and sent his students and associates to debate, as well. A newspaper, the *Dabdaba-yi Sikandari* of Rampur, also helped propagandize his position. He demurred from using the British court against his opponents, as had the Ahl-i Hadis with their more cognizable legal case; "we cannot reward or punish," he wrote to a disciple who wished to initiate court action.[94] Rather, he used the religious sanction of exclusion, of refusal to pray together. He would not, for example, meet Maulana ʿAbdu'l-Haqq Khairabadi because the latter eliminated certain phrases in praise of the Prophet when reciting *durud*; nor would he enter the Jamiʿ Masjid Buda'un because he disagreed with the beliefs of the *imam* there. His vituperative pen was his chief weapon. He was given to such "intellectual jokes" as renaming the works of his opponents, a habit many found unbecoming.[95] But that aside, his writings were characterized by an argumentative style, a piling up of reference upon reference to show simultaneously his intellectual superiority and the deficiencies of his opponents. On the point of joining two *namaz* in a time of difficulty or on a journey, for example, a practice whose legitimacy he vehemently denied, he mocked Miyan Nazir Husain as having less education than an ordinary student, and continued, "he cited five precedents of Companions; I will cite thirty. He only quoted four *hadis*, none of which helped him—and he could not even come up with the name of a verse of the Qur'an in proof. I will cite eight verses and forty *hadis*."[96] He blamed his opponents for lack of learning and taunted them for ignoring

94. Ẓafaru'd-Dīn, *Ḥayāt-i Aʿlā Ḥaẓrat*, p. 69.
95. This was an exercise well suited to the Arabic alphabet, since the mere change of a dot or vowel mark could change a whole word.
96. ʿAbdu'l-Ḥakīm Khān, *Aʿlā Ḥaẓrat Barēlwī kā Fiqhī Maqām*, p. 38.

the precedent of their own elders: Shah ʿAbdu'l-ʿAziz, he claimed, "followed the *sunnat*" in such matters as acknowledging the *sama*ʿ of the saints; and Shah ʿAbdu'l-Ghani Naqshbandi approved of *qiyam* (standing during celebration of the Prophet's birth).[97] He accused them of causing discord by raising such sensitive issues as *imkan-i kazb* (the possibility that God could lie), an issue which, he claimed, would have been "buried alive" if Rashid Ahmad and Khalil Ahmad had not taken it up.[98] He said they emphasized minutiae.

But far more serious a charge than all this—and the reason for the range and tone of his denunciation—was his claim that his opponents were not Muslims but *kafir*. No language was too strong to warn people "of the infidelity of those *kafirs* who have hidden behind the veil of the name of Islam."[99] In 1903 Ahmad Riza published the *Hussamu'l-Haramain* as legitimation for his issuance of a *fatwa* of infidelity. Not only was this *fatwa* confirmed by some of his supporters in India, such as Maulana Nazir Ahmad Khan Rampuri, but thanks to a successful campaign conducted by Ahmad Riza himself, by ʿulama in the Hijaz as well.

In his pamphlet Ahmad Riza specifically denounced the Ahmadiyyah and three kinds of "Wahhabis" as *kafir*. Of the "Wahhabis," each was led by a specific reformer. Muhammad Qasim (along with Nazir Husain Dihlawi, Amir Hasan [Amrohawi?], and Amir Ahmad Sahsu) were called the *wahhabiyyah imsaliyyah* and *khawatamiyyah* who deny the uniqueness and finality of the Prophet. Muhammad Qasim's pamphlet, the *Tahziru'n-Nass*, was cited extensively in illustration of this point. Second, Rashid Ahmad, "following his *pir* the *ta*ʿ*ifah* [band of musicians and dancing girls] of Ismaʿil Dihlawi,"[100] was of the *wahhabiyyah kazzabiyyah*, who hold that God can lie. Third, Rashid Ahmad—again—

97. Ẓafaru'd-Dīn, *Ḥayāt-i Aʿlā Ḥaẓrat*, pp. 73, 79.
98. ʿAbdu'l-Ḥakīm Khān, *Aʿlā Ḥaẓrat Barēlwī kā Fiqhī Maqām*, pp. 50-78.
99. Aḥmad Riẓa Khān, *Ḥusāmu'l-Ḥaramain* (Lahore, 1975 reprint), p. 15. I have used an excellent rough translation prepared by Warren Fusfeld as guide to this work.
100. Ibid., p. 21.

along with Khalil Ahmad and Ashraf ʿAli Thanawi were *wahhabiyyah shaitaniyyah*, who, on the issue of *ʿilmu'l-ghaib*, said the Prophet's knowledge on some points was exceeded by the knowledge of other creatures, even Satan. For this, Rashid Ahmad, an old man near death, was repeatedly mocked for his blindness. "And now God has blinded the eyes of him whose eyes were impaired from the start."[101] And Ahmad Riza warned, "Arise oh Muslims, arise oh those who place their faith in the Prophet. Look at him who argues he is on a high footing in knowledge and in skill . . . [look] how he curses Muhammad with his mouth full and has faith in the vastness of the knowledge of his *pir*, Iblis."[102]

The Deobandis claimed that those Meccans and Medinans who affixed their signatures were misled by this pamphlet and wholly uninformed about the nature of Deobandi beliefs. However, this campaign caused substantial embarrassment to the Deobandis, for the very name of Wahhabi, whether used legitimately or not, was deeply feared as politically disruptive. When Maulana Khalil Ahmad came to Medina in 1906, for example, although he was lionized by the students of Husain Ahmad Madani, others objected to his visit and after two weeks he had to leave. The *fatwa* engendered a "*fatwa* war," and, in the early decades of the twentieth century hundreds of signatures were collected from "the ʿulama and *shaikhs* of Tonk, Bhopal, Bahawalpur [the three major north Indian Muslim princely states], and Hindustan from people who knew the *shariʿat* by heart and testified that the Deobandis were Sunni Hanafi Muslims."[103]

The Deobandis, of course, answered Ahmad Riza point by point. The *Tahziru'n-Nass*, they explained, not merely confirmed the finality of the prophethood of Muhammad, but argued that that finality had three dimensions: the perfections of his qualities; the time of his succession; and his presence in Arabia, which, it was argued, was the best land.

101. Ibid., p. 22.
102. Ibid., p. 24.
103. Muḥammad ʿAbdu'r-Ra'ūf Jagānpūrī, *Barā'tu'l-Abrār ʿan Makā'id-u'l- Ashrār* (Bijnor, 1933).

Khalil Ahmad, they insisted, consistently strove to assert the difference between the knowledge held by man and that held by God, affirming that any knowledge of the unknown, *ʿilmu'l-ghaib*, was a gift from God. Moreover, while the Prophet had been granted greater access to that knowledge than any other person, still, in secular matters there were others who knew more than he. Finally, Rashid Ahmad had, in a *fatwa*, declared the opposite of their charge: that anyone who said God was a liar was a *kafir*. The charges of Ahmad Riza and the responses of the Deobandis rapidly became the standard exchange in their debates, which, like those discussed above, were more exercises in communal solidarity than intellectual exchanges.[104] In general the Barelwis preferred written exchanges to oral. According to their accounts, oral debates were likely to come to naught, for anyone confronting Ahmad Riza was likely to flee. Thus "in 1882 a group of *Tafzilis* [Sunnis who venerated ʿAli as a central tenet of their belief] came from Bareilly, Sambhal, and Rampur to seek a confrontation but they fled when they saw Ahmad Riza's questions."[105] In the pattern we have seen above, Ahmad Riza claimed success in all debates—silencing his opponents, causing them to flee without answering.

The degree to which the beliefs of Ahmad Riza represented an orientation among other Sunni ʿulama in the late nineteenth century is not clear. Writers focus on Ahmad Riza himself, not on his links to educational centers or—as one assumes may well have existed—to Sufi shrines. In the late nineteenth century there do not seem to have been networks of schools or other institutions that were self-consciously Barelwi. Many ʿulama were, of course, untouched by the reformist position, but that was not sufficient to make them Barelwi: only an identification with the

104. Ibid., p. 63. Identical answers to these three questions were also given in Muḥammad Manẓūr Nu'mani, *Dē'ōband aur Barēlwī kē Ikhtilāf-i Nizaʿ par Faiṣalakun Munaẓarah* (Sanbhal, 1966), a written debate giving the Deobandi side after the Barelwis failed to appear for a debate that was to have been held in Lahore. The Jaganpuri volume was part of a debate held between the two sides in Burma.

105. Raḥmān ʿAlī, *Taẕkirah-yi ʿUlamā'-yi Hind*, p. 101.

oppositional stance of Ahmad Riza did that. Indeed, initially only Ahmad Riza seems to have served as a focus for the loyalty of religious leaders and followers, and little value seems to have been given to establishing schools in the new style.

A number of attempts to found schools seem to have faltered. In 1872 Ahmad Riza's father founded a *madrasah* in Bareilly, the Misbahu't-Tahzib, but soon, with its name changed to the Misbahu'l-ʿUlum, it came under Deobandi control, supported by substantial traders and patronized by Maulana Muhammad Ahsan Nanawtawi. In 1894, another school was founded, the Ishaʿatu'l-ʿUlum, under the direction of Maulana Muhammad Yasin Panjabi, a former student at Deoband. In 1909, however, when Yasin attended the huge Deobandi convocation for former students, he began to drift away from belief in Ahmad Riza and back toward the Deobandis. In 1915, Ahmad Riza described a large *waqf* yielding 16,000 rupees a year for another school, the Madrasah-yi Shamsu'l-Hadi, and he urged great care be taken lest that school and its finances also fall into Deobandi hands.

The Barelwis did, ultimately, succeed in founding a number of schools of their own, particularly a major *madrasah* in Bareilly itself, the Jamiʿat-i Manzir-i Islam, and another in Pilibhit, both of whose annual meetings Ahmad Riza attended. There were also schools in the Punjab, notably the Daru'l-ʿUlum Nuʿmaniyyah in Lahore, founded in 1887, which had a perspective similar to that of Ahmad Riza and came to identify itself with him as Barelwi; and even more important, in this century, the Daru'l-ʿUlum Hizbu'l-Ahnaf founded in 1920 by his disciples.[106]

Ahmad Riza, superficially so unlike the reformers, was at one with them in standing forth against what he perceived as threats, both alien and internal, to Islam. He, too, saw that the sphere of religion had, of necessity, narrowed under colonial rule, and, indeed, his aloofness from politics

106. Ḥāfiẓ Naẓar Aḥmad, *Jā'izah-yi Madāris-i ʿArabiyyah-yi Maghribī Pākistān* (Lahore, 1972), pp. 27-29; I am grateful to David Gilmartin for this information.

seemed to some opponents little more than toadyism. In his final years he virulently opposed the Khilafat movement and cooperation with Gandhi and the Congress.[107] Ignoring politics, he sought to make religion vital in personal life; and the religion he espoused was largely that of custom, of the shrines, and of mediation, now sanctioned by erudite volumes of *fatawa* and Law. The need for sanction and the defensiveness of his thought made him one with the self-conscious reformers; and his followers thought of him as a *mujaddid*, just as the reformers thought of their own leaders.

Barelwi influence has been regarded as largely rural, as, one assumes, that is where the legitimacy given parochial cults and the mediational style of the leadership has been valued. Certain Barelwi tenets, such as reliance on the universally known saint Shaikh ʿAbdu'l-Qadir as well as espousal of the Law, provided a diverse repertoire of possible emphases, however, some of which would be meaningful to the more urban and mobile. One assumes that the vituperative righteous rage of their leader against the reformers has been a source of satisfaction and self-justification to all; and his acceptance of the eclectic customs and beliefs of themselves and their forebears has given them a sense of fidelity to what has seemed an endangered culture.

The three main groups of Sunni ʿulama thought of themselves as rivals, both intellectually and socially. Each represented a different stance within the faith, emphasizing different branches of learning, adhering to different jurisprudential positions, and striking different balances between a primary role as mediator and one as instructor in religious responsibility for the believer himself. Overall, the Deobandi and Ahl-i Hadis, who rejected customary practices and parochial cults, appealed to the more urban and educated, whereas Barelwi support was largely among the rural and less well educated. Moreover, each group of

107. See his letters to a leader of the Khilafat movement, Maulana ʿAbdu'l-Bari Farangi Mahalli, in Ẓafaru'd-Dīn, *Ḥayāt-i Aʿlā Ḥaẓrat*, pp. 290, 298-99, 302-305.

ʿulama was distinguished not only by an intellectual position but by shared roots in a specific geographic area, by membership in a *qaum* of the north Indian *ashraf*, and in two cases by ties of Sufi brotherhood.

In fact, however, all these groups were concerned with the Law and with devotion to the Prophet; and all expressed their beliefs in a self-conscious oppositional style. Although all offered a characteristic set of teachings, the ʿulama of each group were many things to many men. Villagers near Deoband regarded its ʿulama simply as good and holy men—as suggested by the death of one of Rashid Ahmad's most devoted disciples, oblivious of reformist concerns but dedicated to a holy man, during *samaʿ* at Ajmer. There were, similarly, not only simple villagers among the supporters of the Barelwis, but government servants as well. Institutionally, too, the edges between the groups tended to blur. All were popularly based and all came to share the modern institutional forms that the Deobandis pioneered. Formal educational institutions, annual conferences, and deputations for proselytization were standard by the beginning of this century. The groups perceived themselves, however, as radically different from each other, and the resulting competition among them provided the motive for what was in fact their common work of religious revitalization and redefinition.

VIII

Further Alternatives: Aligarh and Nadwah

> An illuminated heart is Deoband;
> And Nadwah is a clever tongue;
> You seek to know what Aligarh is like?
> A distinguished stomach, call it right.
> A stomach does take precedence, my friend,
> But the main point is thought about our end.
> —Akbar Ilahabadi (1846-1921)[1]

IT IS with the schools at Aligarh and Nadwah that the continuities among the new educational institutions of the late nineteenth century become clear. The emphasis in comparison of the Nadwatu'l-'Ulama, the Muhammedan Anglo-Oriental College, and Deoband has been on their differences, though some opponents saw what they had in common, and even the metaphor in Akbar's verse makes clear that all three were indeed members of a common body. All contributed to the substantial religious self-consciousness of the period; all reflected and encouraged the growing sense that Muslims resident in British India were tied together in a separate community; and all fostered the use of Urdu among educated Muslims. Aligarh and Nadwah were, however, notable in seeking an active political role in relation to the colonial government, a role that most 'ulama in the late nineteenth century either shunned or ignored.

Aligarh was a private college, opened in 1875, designed to provide English education and inculcate a European

1. I am grateful to C. M. Naim for sending me—from memory—the text of this poem. It may be spurious, but is so widely known (and attributed to Akbar), that I felt justified in including it.

style of behavior in the scions of well-born Muslim families.[2] It was, explicitly, an attempt to protect the interests of those Muslim families who had long had a role in governing institutions and who saw now that new skills were required to preserve that role. It was assumed that graduates would secure a trusted place in the administration, full partners with the British who now held the country in firm control. The cost, initially, seemed great. Indeed, the school's founder, Sayyid Ahmad Khan (1817-1898), seemed to measure a correct understanding of Islam by the degree of acceptance of a British cultural style and by participation in British institutions. This orientation of the school accounts for Akbar's choice of "stomach" as fit metaphor.

Nadwah, "the clever tongue," sought a political role but of quite different sort from that of Aligarh. An association of ʿulama based in Lucknow, its objective was to consolidate a single leadership for all Muslims, guiding them in religious matters and mediating between them and the government. Founded in 1893, it was influenced by the political strategy of Sayyid Ahmad as well as by the popular position of the ʿulama. It opposed the educational institutions of both.[3] Its political goal unrealized, Nadwah operated as a Sunni religious academy, seeking its legitimacy by its cultivation of a high standard of scholarship in Arabic language and literature and its sense of a larger Muslim world, both historically and in the present.

Aligarh and Nadwah thus represented different accommodations to the changed political circumstances of the late nineteenth century from that of the inward-looking, politically aloof revitalization of the ʿulama. Yet along with them they both participated in the growing self-consciousness

2. This comment and much of what follows draws on David Lelyveld, *Aligarh's First Generation: Muslim Solidarity in British India* (Princeton, 1978).

3. Ikram suggests that Nadwah's opposition to both these institutions rested in part on the differences between the eastern and western United Provinces. The east, he wrote, is characterized by emphasis on external form and structure, a style in literature known as *lakhnawiyyat* (that is, the style of Lucknow), but one that has influenced religion and cultural habits as well. Shaikh Muḥammad Ikrām, *Mauj-i Kauṡar* (Lahore, 1968), p. 212.

and religious renewal that was the salient feature of Muslim history in this period.

Aligarh

The Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College and the Aligarh movement associated with it both bore, above all, the imprint of the personality of Sayyid Ahmad Khan. That personality was decisively shaped by the same milieu, with its dual currents of religious reform and exposure to British institutions, that influenced the ʿulama in the decades before the Mutiny. Sayyid Ahmad's family, especially on his mother's side, had deep ties to the line of the Naqshbandi Mujaddidi that was represented in Delhi by Shah Ghulam ʿAli (d. 1824). This line had been known for its commitment to sobriety in the Sufi path. Ghulam ʿAli was considered even more strict than Shah ʿAbdu'l-ʿAziz in opposing customary practices; he, however, did not share ʿAbdu'l-ʿAziz's concern with reaching beyond the spiritual elite.[4] Sayyid Ahmad was clearly influenced by the moral and spiritual vitality of both lines and by the popular concerns of the Waliyu'llahi line, as well.

His reformist orientation was evident in a series of early writings. In 1841 he published one of the most interesting, the *Jila'u'l-Qulub bi Zikri'-l Mahbub* (Polishing of the Hearts by Memory of the Beloved), a *maulud* pamphlet meant to be recited in honor of the Prophet's birthday. Such works were typically uncritical biographies, but this one was distinctive in its concern to eliminate spurious miracles and, even more, in its depiction of the Prophet as moral exemplar, not simply as mediator or as disembodied agent of revelation. Of similar importance was the *Kalimatu'l-Haqq*, which—in an attempt to eliminate what were deemed to be abuses of sufism—argued that the whole of the Law was personified in the Prophet and that he alone was a true *pir*. In the *Rah-i Sunnah dar Radd-i Bidʿah* he followed Maulana

4. This suggestion is made by Christian W. Troll, *Sayyid Ahmad Khan: A Reinterpretation of Muslim Theology* (New Delhi, 1978) pp. 30-32. See also his chapter I for a discussion of Sayyid Ahmad's early writings.

Isma'il in eschewing *taqlid* in order to define types of reprehensible innovations. Sayyid Ahmad also translated parts of al-Ghazali's *Kimiya'u's-Sa'adah,* and encouraged others to translate classic works into Urdu. He pursued historical studies and edited a number of Mughal works, including the *A'in-i Akbari,* the *Tarikh-i Firoz Shahi,* and the *Tuzuk-i Jahangiri.* His best known work was his *Asaru's-Sanadid,* a guide to the historical monuments of Delhi with biographical notices of the 'ulama and literary figures associated with them. He was acutely sensitive to the ending of Mughal dominance, and hoped through religious reform to restore at least the pride of the formerly ruling classes.

During these years in the capital, Sayyid Ahmad had known Europeans through Delhi College and through his family's ties to the East India Company.[5] His maternal grandfather had held a prestigious position in Company service, and Sayyid Ahmad himself joined the Company in 1837. He subsequently rose from record keeper, to subordinate judge, to chief assessment official, and was posted in Bijnor at the time of the outbreak in 1857.[6] Like many religious people, Sayyid Ahmad had been troubled by serving these non-Muslim rulers, yet in the Mutiny he decisively threw in his lot with the British, risking his own life to save English lives, and actively opposing the rebels. Among those rebels were his closest associates, and among those who suffered were his kin and friends.[7] He saw Muslim families ruined, their lands confiscated, the king disgraced. Delhi, which he so loved, was occupied; large areas razed; his favorite buildings destroyed. The psychological turmoil that this experience engendered was for a time so overwhelming that Sayyid Ahmad contemplated emigration, leaving India

5. His was apparently "a family that took for granted that the British had succeeded." Margaret Case, "The Aligarh Era: Muslim Politics in North India, 1860-1910" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Chicago, 1970), p. 15.

6. He wrote an account of the outbreak, recently translated as Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan, *History of the Bijnor Rebellion,* translated by Hafeez Malik and Morris Dembo (Lansing, Mich., 1972).

7. Case, "Aligarh Era," p. 37. His own house was sacked, his mother's servant killed before his eyes, his maternal uncle killed. His mother herself died shortly after the Mutiny from natural causes.

to retreat, as had some of his teachers in Delhi, to the Hijaz. Gradually he became convinced that British rule was long to stay, and that those Muslims aligned with it would be both true to their religion and prosperous. He had to convince his fellow Muslims of the truth of this position, and he had to show them—as well as himself—that the British, despite their barbarities and arrogance, were admirable. To the British he had to show that the Muslims were both loyal and important to the stability of their rule. It was his driving psychological need to effect intellectual and political reconciliation that moved Sayyid Ahmad's course apart from that of his sometime fellow reformists. His efforts—if not his religious thought—were to be welcomed by many Muslims of his day.

First of his efforts was an attempt to propagate two related positions: one, that the Muslims, despite the accusations made by many government officials, were largely loyal during the uprising;[8] and second, to show that Muslims and Christians had a unique bond in their common Semitic faith, an important basis on which to build a firm alliance of mutual benefit between the two. Immediately after the Mutiny he wrote *An Essay on the Causes of the Indian Revolt*, published both in Urdu and in English, to express his resentment at the racist deprecation of the British: "[Their dishonoring us] is a thing that without producing any perceptible injury builds malice and enmity in the heart, and wounds so deeply that nothing heals the heart."[9] He urged the British to recognize their lack of communication with their subjects, and proposed the establishment of consultative councils, essentially of people like himself, who would interpret the regime to ordinary people and in turn express the people's needs and interests to the rulers. In this view of good government he was still a Mughal.

He knew, of course, that the Mughal culture that had

8. Peter Hardy, *The Muslims of British India* (Cambridge, 1972), chapter III, shows that British officials at the highest levels did not participate in the general accusation of Muslims.

9. Sayyid Ahmad Khan, *An Essay on the Causes of the Indian Revolt* (London, 1860), p. 46.

bound rulers and notables of all backgrounds no longer served, but, he argued, a shared culture did exist between the rulers and one group of Indians—the Muslims—because of religious bonds. In a strikingly original undertaking, he sought to demonstrate those bonds by preparing a major commentary on both Testaments of the Bible, his *Tabyinu'l-Kalam*.[10] Rather than dismiss the Bible as corrupted, he accorded it "a permanent and positive place in the life and teaching of Islam."[11] But he did not seek to incorporate Christian values into Islam as much as to interpret Christian beliefs as Islamic, thus translating Biblical passages in such a way as to avoid any appearance that Christians believed in the divinity of Christ. Given this presumed identity of belief, he further tried, through his scholarly writing, to deny the validity of two practices that suggested Muslim disdain for Christians: the use of the term *Nasarah* ("Nazarene") for Christians; and the refusal of Muslims to eat food prepared by them.[12]

Sayyid Ahmad also ambitiously undertook an investigation into the sources of Western power. He sought that key initially not in cultural values but in the techniques of the British: the gadgets and inventions that had made them powerful. In this he was in part the heir of the atmosphere that had surrounded Delhi College, where the focus had been on technical learning and scientific experiments. In 1864 he founded the Scientific Society, later called the Aligarh Institute, to translate useful Western works into Urdu and to provide practical demonstrations of Western inventions. The translations had few purchasers, and the scientific experiments were of little value.[13] Indeed, the influ-

10. See Troll, *Sayyid Ahmad Khan*, which includes an analysis of the *Tabyin* and translations of substantial sections from it.

11. Ibid., p. 100.

12. He summarized his argument in the *Aligarh Institute Gazette*, May 2, 1870, quoted in Government of India, *Selections from the Vernacular Newspapers Published in the Punjab, North-Western Provinces, Oudh, and the Central Provinces*, 1870, pp. 217.

13. In 1873 the Director of Public Instruction wrote, "their translations find very few purchasers and would still cumber the printing office were it not that the Education Department takes Rupees 500 worth year by year" (DPI to Secretary to Government, NWP, April 22, 1873, in *Pro-*

ence of the society was largely negative: to persuade Sayyid Ahmad of the futility of translations, and to convince him that his concerns were not served by technical education. Yet the society did provide Sayyid Ahmad with an opportunity to organize one of the new voluntary associations of the period, typically—as was this one—composed of members of the service elite. He thus laid a foundation for future associations, especially by his cultivation of close relations with a number of British officials.[14] He also began a newspaper, the *Aligarh Institute Gazette*, which, even after the society disbanded, continued as an important organ for his views.

The work of the society was predicated on the assumption that the British were technically superior to the Indians. But there was also a suggestion in the work of the society that they were personally superior. In a letter to a European firm, Sayyid Ahmad had written, "when one Machine has two structures—one gigantic and expensive and the other light and economical, the latter should be preferred, since the natives of this country are not intelligent and ambitious enough to make use of the former."[15] The theme of self-deprecation that had crept in was perhaps the only way that Sayyid Ahmad could reconcile his admiration of the English with their evident disdain of him and his countrymen.[16] His acceptance of their image of Indians became far more pronounced after his trip to England to place his son in school in Cambridge. This trip marked another major turning point in his life.

Sayyid Ahmad's sometime optimism that Indians could

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ceedings in the General Department, Lucknow Secretariat). As for the experiments, the demonstration plot was soon returned to the government and such devices as new pumps were treated as "museum pieces." Sayyid Ahmad Khan to A.L.M. Philips, Member of the Directing Council, November 28, 1867 in Yusuf Husain, ed., *Selected Documents from the Aligarh Archives* (Bombay, 1967), pp. 81-83. See also his memo about the plot, pp. 120-24.

14. Husain, *Selected Documents*. See letters to Kempson, Colson, Claremont Daniel, Williams, and Prinsep. He requested the lieutenant governor to lay the foundation of the Institute.

15. Ibid., p. 39, to Messers. Smith, Elder, and Co., July 1864.

16. Case, "Aligarh Era," p. 70.

master modern technology and quickly reach the economic level of the British dramatically gave way during his trip to England. In notorious letters published in the *Aligarh Institute Gazette*, he judged his fellow countrymen to be in need of total reform:

> We in Hindoostan look upon the English as possessing evil disposition . . . saying that they look upon Hindoostanees as animals, or beasts, and consider them low to a degree. . . . They do not understand us; and, moreover, I say in truth that we are so. I say without exaggeration and in all sincerity, that all Hindoostanees from the highest to the lowest, the richest and the poorest, the merchants and the labourers, the best educated and the most ignorant—we are, in comparison with the breeding and affability of the English, as dirty, unclean wild beasts in the presence of beautiful and worthy men. . . . I know my countrymen will take this as hard thing from me.[17]

Previously convinced of the shared values of Muslim and Christian civilization, he was stunned by the gap he now perceived. Turning again to the fundamental solution he knew, he devoted his thoughts to religious reform.

Sayyid Ahmad was not a worldly man who tried to exploit religion; he was, rather, a deeply religious man who felt with other reformers that Muslims, as recipients of the final revelation, would prosper in this world as well as the next if they were faithful to that revelation. Indeed, it seemed to him that if Muslims did not prosper it was a proof that their understanding of Islam and their adherence to it were seriously awry. As we have seen, his religious perspective was largely in the Waliyu'llahi tradition, and was in particular close to that articulated by the Ahl-i Hadis. Like them he rejected the law schools, he denied the abrogation of verses of the Qur'an, and he insisted on the literal meaning of texts. Like them, also, he refused to speculate on the nature of God, and stressed the limitation of man's ability to understand such issues. Like the Ahl-i Qur'an, he denied

17. *Aligarh Institute Gazette*, November 19, 1869, quoted in Government of India, *Selections*, 1869, pp. 551-55.

the validity of the *hadis* collections, deeming many to be fabrications. He never wavered in his absolute belief in God, the authority of the Qur'an, the mission of the Prophet, and the obligatory nature of Muslim religious duties. Sayyid Ahmad's "modernism," as it is often called, was not a simple imitation of Western ideas but had its roots in indigenous movements of reform. Indeed, it was largely as a "Wahhabi" or *ghair-muqallid* that he was seen—and opposed—at the time.

He did, however, part company with other reformers in his writings of the 1870s and after. He set forth his renewed concern with theology in two works: a classic one, a commentary on the Qur'an; and a modern one, a journal modeled on the British *Tatler* and *Spectator*, the *Tahzibu'l-Akhlaq*. In them, he argued that Western learning, and science in particular, was not inimical to Islam, but actually intrinsic to it; to study them was to study Islam itself. As discussed above, his slogan was that the Word of God and the Work of God—using the transliterated English words—were identical.[18] It was this characteristically nineteenth-century preeminence he gave to the Laws of Nature that won him and his followers the derogatory name of *Nechari* (Nature-ist). In his scheme God was a Deist First Cause, a remote impersonal God who did no more than set in motion laws that then worked themselves.[19] He denied the efficacy of prayer, for, logically, in such a system nothing could change the predetermined course of events. He therefore interpreted miracles naturally, making such an event as the parting of the Red Sea into a simple period of low water; the Prophet's night ascension into a dream; the *jinn* into mountain dwellers. Prophethood he deemed a natural faculty, present in some with highly developed sensitivities, men who had no need of angelic messengers—whom he understood as symbols. The contradictions arising from this view of God in a religion that conceives of a personal God ac-

18. See above, Chapter III.

19. See Troll, *Sayyid Ahmad Khan*, for a systematic presentation of Sayyid Ahmad's thought in relation to classical systems of *kalam*.

tively involved in the world were never resolved in Sayyid Ahmad's thought.

A second dimension of Sayyid Ahmad's thought was to distinguish between those injunctions of the Qur'an that related to social affairs and those that related to religion. He argued that those relating to religious matters formed the consistant message of all prophets; those relating to social matters changed from age to age. Still Sayyid Ahmad, along with such associates as Chiragh 'Ali, felt constrained to show that certain Muslim social practices had met nineteenth-century standards throughout. Thus Sayyid Ahmad argued that polygamy, although a natural state for man, had only rarely been practiced; that only preexisting slavery had been sanctioned by the Qur'an; that interest had been forbidden only if taken from the poor; that the punishment of chopping off a thief's hands was legitimate only in countries too poor to maintain prisons; and that jihad was only defensive.[20] Sayyid Ahmad believed he had in all this defined true Islam; but he took his standards for analyzing his religion from outside—and sought approval for his work from outside, as well.[21] About the *Tahzibu'l-Akhlaq* he expressed the hope that "it shall remove the contempt with which civilized people regard the Muslims and the latter shall become reckoned among the respected and civilized people of the world."[22] Indeed, his writings were taken up by Western and Middle Eastern readers more than by his fellow countrymen. Only his defense of the Prophet (*Khutabat-i Ahmadiyyah*), written in England, was at all popular in India.

Opposition to him came neither from opponents of mod-

20. J.M.S. Baljon, *The Reforms and Religious Ideas of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan* (Lahore, 1958), pp. 36-40.

21. He also took something of his style and specific points from outside, notably from European works that defended Islam. He translated two such: Godfrey Higgins, *An Apology for Muhammad* (Lahore, 1972 reprint), and John Davenport, a work with the same title, originally published in 1869 and "condensed . . . retaining the words of the author" in *Muhammad and Teachings of Qur'an*, ed. Muhammad Amin (Lahore, 1964).

22. Lini May, *The Evolution of Indo-Muslim Thought* (Lahore, 1970), p. 40.

ern education nor from people discontented with British rule.[23] Opponents were, rather, people who had come to terms with British rule without the kind of modifications of religious beliefs that Sayyid Ahmad proposed. The editors of the newspapers that arose against Sayyid Ahmad, for example, were of the very sort of people one might have expected to support him: lawyers, men with titles like Khan Bahadur and Honourary Magistrate, men with Western education.[24] His two most outspoken opponents were two old government servants, Hajji ʿAli Bakhsh Bada'uni, sub-judge, and Hajji Imdadu'l-ʿAli, deputy collector. ʿAli Bakhsh's controversy with Sayyid Ahmad had a special edge to it because of his family's long opposition to the reformist movement. Linked to the Marahrah family who provided leadership to the Barelwis, he was outspoken against "Wahhabis" and *ghair-muqallid*—among whom he numbered Sayyid Ahmad. In 1873 he went to the Hijaz and secured a *fatwa* of *kufr* against him.[25] Imdadu'l-ʿAli, in contrast, was himself a member of the Ahl-i Hadis.[26] In 1881 he launched a monthly magazine, the *Ta'yidu'l-Islam*, specifically directed

23. Compare Wilfred Cantwell Smith, *Modern Islam in India* (Lahore, 1963), p. 20. He thus describes the opposition: "the smaller townsmen; and more especially those persons whose function (and vested interest) it was to voice the ideas and ideals of the old order, the ʿulama. . . . The interests of this class were vested especially in the teaching of Persian, etc. so that the adoption of the new social order, and particularly of the English language, threatened the existence of the clergy both ideologically and economically."

24. Imdād Ṣābirī, *Tārīkh-i Ṣiḥāfat-i Urdū* (Delhi, 1952/3), III, 169-91, 226-32, 320-26.

25. Āl-i Aḥmad Sarūr, "Sar Sayyid kē ēk Mukhālif: Maulawī ʿAlī Bakhsh Sharar" in *Na'ē aur Purānē Charāgh: Chand Tanqīdī Maẓāmīn kā Majmūʿah* (Karachi, 1955), pp. 115-40. The *Oudh Akhbar* of July 17, 1874 reported a reconciliation and a promise from ʿAli Bakhsh to raise money for the college. Government of India, *Selections*, 1874, p. 279.

26. Abū Yaḥyā Imām Khān Naushaharawī, *Tarājim-i ʿUlamā'-yi Ḥadīṣ-i Hind* (n.p., 1938-9), p. 563, argues that he was instrumental in making Moradabad a center for the Ahl-i Hadis. Imdadu'l-ʿAli had been loyal in the Mutiny, had supported the government even during the Afghan campaign, and was awarded the Star of India (Government of India, *Selections*, 1879, p. 892). He was "a great favourite of the Hon'ble Sir William Muir, the Hon'ble Sir John Strachey, Mr. Reid, Mr. Kempson, and Mr. Halsey" (Government of India, *Selections*, 1879, pp. 331-32).

against the writings of Sayyid Ahmad and his style of reform.[27]

Both men objected not only to Sayyid Ahmad's religious ideas but to the Western style of dress and behavior he encouraged. What was wrong with what they had been doing all along? On the occasion of the opening of Sayyid Ahmad's college in 1875, Imdadu'l-ʿAli wrote an article warning students that they would be better prepared for employment if they attended government schools. At Aligarh, they would, he warned, like "Native Christians, change their names [Mr. Bacon-a-Pig is suggested as one name], and in place of *angarkhas* and *pyjamas* will begin to wear coats and pantaloons, denying their poor relations, and begin to give their daughters in marriage to rich Europeans, laying aside all shame and the precepts of Islam."[28] Imdadu'l-ʿAli feared that deliberate accommodation to even superficial aspects of British culture would bring in its train erosion of an authentic understanding of Islam. To Sayyid Ahmad, the school offered precisely the opposite hope: that its accommodation to British social and political institutions would in fact go hand-in-hand with a true understanding of Islam.

Both religious and intellectual life at the school were, in the event, to lack vitality. The school itself had little to do with the reformulation of Islamic thought that Sayyid Ahmad envisaged. The school's uniqueness rested rather on its ability to transform students from divergent backgrounds, heretofore bound by family ties above all, into a

27. In the second number of that magazine a list was given of six people who had cooperated in its production; three were government officials: the collector and magistrate of Moradabad, an *amin* of the Judicial Department, and a sub-overseer; three were *ra'is*. *Tā'īdu'l-Islām* (Moradabad, 1882), p. 4.

28. *Lauh-i Mahfuz*, August 20, 1875, Government of India, *Selections*, 1875, p. 401. In the Lucknow Secretariat version is this penciled note: "This is Imdad Ali writing (or instigating?). It is meant to refer to Syud Ahmud." There may have been a personal rivalry between some of these men and Sayyid Ahmad. One newspaper (*Agra Akhbar*, May 7, 1879 in *Selections*, pp. 381-82) opposed the appointment of Sayyid Ahmad's son to the office of civil judge because "he [was] not held in respect by Musalmans, as he has adopted English habits and manners," and proposed Imdad ʿAli instead.

6. The main quadrangle at Aligarh: "Nothing could be greater than the contrast between the chaos of [the adjacent old city] and the deliberate order of the Aligarh College." (Lelyveld, *Aligarh's First Generation*, p. 156). Shown here are Strachey Hall and the college mosque in the distance.

cohesive group whose members shared experiences and values and were committed to the Aligarh thesis: that the Muslims of British India had been rulers; had now declined in comparison to non-Muslim Indians; but could, through English education and Islam, once again be great.[29] The school, with a core of devoted Englishmen on its staff, placed an emphasis on character more than scholarship, and encouraged good deportment, lively debating and conversational skill, gamesmanship, and manliness. Some two-thirds of the four hundred-odd graduates of the nineteenth century took government jobs. Muslim government servants,

29. Lelyveld, *Aligarh's First Generation*, p. 219.

landed gentry, and princely rulers came to support the school with enthusiasm.[30] "If the Imam Mahdi were to appear today," wrote Muhammad Qasim's disciple Mansur ʿAli, "unless he wore English dress and a Turkish fez [the latter being part of the Aligarh uniform], no one would believe him";[31] and the word "gentleman" for one who dressed and acted like the English passed into the Urdu language.

The British found Aligarh men easy to deal with. They granted the school substantial patronage for secular instruction and served as visitors, chief guests, patrons, and—most importantly—faculty members. Lord Lytton himself laid the foundation stone of the college in 1877, and guests of such stature were frequent at the school. They tended to see the school as the mark of the end of Muslim opposition to their rule, the end of obscurantism; and they valued not only its emphasis on secular education but its aristocratic style and its respect for religious observances.

Religion was significant at the school, for even if Sayyid Ahmad's own religious thought was not shared, religious identity was overwhelmingly important and a concern with instruction in a basic standard of Islam was important, too. Sayyid Ahmad had rapidly discovered that he could not raise funds for the school unless he completely disassociated himself from religious instruction. In 1874 he named a committee of twenty who would set the religious curriculum, including among its members none other than his archenemies, Imdadu'l-ʿAli and ʿAli Bakhsh.[32] Muhammad Qasim Nanautawi and Muhammad Yaʿqub Nanautawi were named as well, but they hastened to decline par-

30. Ibid., p. 324. Even some Hindu members of these groups contributed to the school, and there were in the nineteenth century a small—but declining—number of Hindu day students. This decline is in part a result of the increased options for education open to Hindus over time. See S. K. Bhatnagar, *A History of the M.A.O. College* (Delhi, 1969), pp. 94-96, 151, 243. Up until 1883 about a quarter of the students in the school and college together were Hindu; only 4.5 percent in the college. By 1904 the total percentage had declined to 11 percent overall.

31. Manṣūr ʿAlī Khān Murādābādī, *Mazhab-i Manṣūr* (Hyderabad, 1909), p. 136.

32. Yusuf Husain, *Selected Documents*, p. 114.

ticipation in any religious endeavor including Shiʿis.[33] Other participants were men who combined a worldly career as government official or landed notable with religious learning. The committee, in fact, came to naught, but it was the kind of people listed, not Sayyid Ahmad, whose religious beliefs were influential in the school.

The Sunni religious instruction offered by the school was largely within the reformist tradition. Sayyid Ahmad, himself, never failed to respect the exemplars of the tradition in which he too had his roots. On the occasion of Muhammad Qasim's death, he wrote an obituary in the *Institute Gazette*, lauding Qasim's character, his founding of Deoband and other schools, and his influence on thousands. "It is not enough to weep over him. Our nation talks and does not act. Deoband is his memorial and must be kept alive."[34] Moreover, Maulawi Muhammad Akbar Kandhlawi, mentioned above, was first professor of Arabic and Sunni theology at the school and managed the boarding house until his death in 1886. And in 1893 Muhammad ʿAbdu'llah, Muhammad Qasim's son-in-law, joined the staff to supervise the religion of the Sunni boys. He was enjoined to preach on such subjects as the Prophet, the Companions, the love of God, the duties toward one's parents, sympathy for fellow Muslims, the unity of God, and the beauty of the Qur'an. He was to chide those absent from prayer, help those with any doubts, teach Qur'an to those who had not read it, and to have no dealings at all with Shiʿi students.[35] The religious guidance offered by Abdu'llah and other Muslims at the school was, interestingly, reinforced by the efforts of some of the Englishmen at the school. T.

33. *Tahẕību'l-Akhlāq*, V, Nos. 13-15 (1873-1874), 170.

34. *Aligarh Institute Gazette*, April 24, 1880, p. 467.

35. Sayyid Aḥmad Khān, *Maktūbāt-i Sar Sayyid* (Lahore, 1959), pp. 617-20. Apparently he was not too successful: "In the year 1893 Maulawi Abdullah was appointed to perform functions similar to those of a Dean in an English college; it was hoped that an orthodox Musalman, moved by the true missionary zeal, would inspire a more religious spirit into the life of the Boarding House, but even at the time of his appointment he signalized the danger of his paying attention to the tithe of mint, anise and cummin, and omitting the weightier matters of the law." Theodore Morison, *A History of the MAO College* (Allahabad, 1903), p. 15.

W. Arnold, most notably, himself donned Indian dress and turban, attended the mosque at prayer time, and noted the names of those absent; he invited students and teachers to break the Ramazan fast at his house; and he always provided his guests with water for ablution.[36] To the extent that students acquired some religious education and were encouraged to perform their religious duties, the college made a contribution to the general trend in this period of spreading religious practice.

Many associated with the school in fact espoused the cause of traditional religious education. Of the five goals declared by the Muhammadan Educational Conference (founded in 1886 by people at Aligarh), only the first resolved to spread "European science and literature among the Muslims." Other goals envisaged inquiries into the state of religious education in government schools and a plan to provide "Eastern learning and theology" to all those who wanted it; the improvement of elementary religious education; and support to schools for memorization of the Qur'an. The goals of the conference indicate the extent to which its members diverged in religious thought from Sayyid Ahmad, for although he failed to see the point of encouraging elementary religious education through *maktabs*, they made it a central objective. In fact, the conference accomplished little concrete during its early years; but it did succeed in organizing and collecting information and in helping create an interest in Islamic education, as well as in education for Muslims.[37] Individually, many of those touched by Western education or serving as government employees supported religious education. One graduate of Aligarh, for example, Maulana Hamidu'd-Din Farahi, left a position in the Hyderabad judiciary to be the first director of an important religious school—the Madrasatu'l-Islah in Sara'e Mir near Azamgarh—whose rationale was in part

36. Bhatnagar, *M.A.O. College*, pp. 97-100.
37. See Edward C. Churchill, "The Muhammadan Education Conference and the Aligarh Movement" (paper read at the Association for Asian Studies Annual Meeting, New York, March 1972).

the Islamization of the Rathor clan of Muslim Rajputs, many of whom were acquiring Western education.[38]

There were, as well, a cluster of writers associated with Aligarh who developed the strand of historical romanticism that Sayyid Ahmad had initiated. The poet Altaf Husain Hali, a sometime government servant, was notable for his extraordinarily popular *Musaddas*, which held out hope of Muslim regeneration worthy of the flowering of Muslim culture and power of classical times. This poem was sung and recited by Urdu-speaking Muslims everywhere. It was notable for the extent to which it saw religious reform as the key to regeneration and, indeed, later Barelwi writers saw the poem as a "Wahhabi" document. Hali's perspective was largely that of the Ahl-i Hadis, in fact. He denounced the unreformed ʿulama: "[In those who follow the Traditions (the Ahl-i Hadis) they see defection from the Faith]; their whole practice revolves around *fatwas* and their every opinion they regard as a better substitute for a Koranic injunction . . . with God and the Prophet they no longer have anything to do." He particularly objected, with both Deobandis and Ahl-i Hadis, to the emphasis on medieval rationalism, especially Greek learning and philosophy. "[Its exponents] cannot prove the mission of the Prophet, nor vindicate the worth of Islam; nor demonstrate the greatness of the Koran; nor show that the truth *is* the truth." He was scathing about the practices of unreformed Muslims: "for believers every path is open, and they may bow down and worship what they please. . . . If they please they may make

38. The school is described in Ḥāfiẓ Naẕar Aḥmad, *Jā'izah-yi Madāris-i Islāmiyyah-yi Maghribī Pākistān* (Gujranwala, 1960); in *al-Balāgh*, (December-January, 1954-1955, p. 385), and in various pamphlets issued by the school, particularly one entitled *Madrasatu'l-Iṣlāḥ*. I am indebted to David Lelyveld for first describing the school to me; and to Iftikhar ʿAzmi of Lucknow, a former student there, for accompanying me on a visit to the school in February 1970. Among the first teachers at the school were two Deoband graduates. The school was designed for students whose families were not impoverished, for the students paid fees and provided for their own needs (*Madrasatu'l-Iṣlāḥ*, pp. 35-37). Shibli Nuʿmani, discussed below, encouraged the school to combine "worldly and religious" education, but, as in the case of the more famous Nadwatu'l-ʿUlama, the school soon came to stress religious subjects, here too with a special emphasis on Arabic language and literature.

the Prophet their God. They may exalt the Imams above the Prophet. They may make offerings day and night at the shrines."[39] His orientation was much like that of that important figure at Aligarh, Muhsinu'l-Mulk. And indeed, Hali had been influenced by the teachings of Maulana Nazir Husain.[40]

The influential writings of Deputy Nazir Ahmad, a government servant on the fringes of the Aligarh movement, also illustrate the pervasiveness of reformist beliefs.[41] Through the new medium of the novel—patronized by the British and enthusiastically read by men and women alike—Nazir Ahmad captured the flavor of aristocratic domestic life in Delhi, and used that setting to instruct his readers in faithfulness to their religion. Yet Nazir Ahmad, unlike Sayyid Ahmad, propagated conservative social practices, most notably in his novel *Ibnu'l-Waqt* (The Opportunist), where he mocked those who aped British dress and manners. Still he enthusiastically embraced British rule, writing at length during the 1870s to deny the legitimacy of jihad; and, like Sayyid Ahmad, he insisted on the necessity of close personal relations between the English and the Muslims.[42]

These men inevitably drew opposition from those who

39. Translated by Ralph Russell in Aziz Ahmad and G. E. von Grunebaum, eds., *Muslim Self-Statement in India and Pakistan 1857-1968* (Wiesbaden, 1970), pp. 96-97.

40. For a useful biography of his life, see Ṣāliḥah ʿĀbid Ḥusain, *Yādgār-i Ḥālī* (Delhi, 1955), p. 54.

41. See Muhammad Mujeeb, *The Indian Muslims* (London, 1967), pp. 399-400, 410, 531-33. The heroine of the *Mir'atu'l-ʿArus*—though suspect because she was found in fiction—was the ideal of the reformers: she built a mosque, opened a Qur'anic school for local girls of "good family"; and capitalized on the new religious publications of the era by distributing "five hundred copies of the Bombay edition of the Qur'an" in a single day. See Nazir Ahmad, *The Bride's Mirror: A Tale of Domestic Life in Delhi Forty Years Ago*, translated by G. E. Ward (London, 1903), pp. 56-71.

42. See Nazir Ahmad's introduction to C. F. Andrews, *Zaka Ullah of Delhi* (Cambridge, 1929), p. xvi. "If Musalmans and Christians in India could learn to love one another as these two friends [Zakaullah and Andrews] have already done the . . . followers of both religions would begin to chant . . . : I should become one with you." Such concern was rapidly becoming outdated in a time when the real issue was the relation between Hindus and Muslims.

adhered to the perspective of the reformers without idealizing British rule and culture. Nazir Ahmad was considered by many to have a rather cavalier attitude toward Islam. He translated the Qur'an into Urdu, as did many of the ʿulama, but his colloquial Urdu, appropriate in his novels, seemed irreverent there.[43] He also wrote a major compendium on Islamic law, *Al Huquq wa'l-Fara'iz*, like Ashraf ʿAli Thanawi's *Bihishti Zewar* "an attempt to bring the *shariʿah*, its doctrines and laws, within reach of the common man's intelligence."[44] But although it called for unquestioning belief and faithful performance of all religious duties, it took many injunctions of the *shariʿah* to be suspended, such as the prohibition on taking interest.

There were such deviations because Hali, Nazir Ahmad, and others of this group wholly accepted Sayyid Ahmad's notion of progress and his belief that that progress hinged on cultivation of close relations with the British and accommodation to many dimensions of their culture. They tried to encourage Muslim self-respect by tracing Western advance to medieval roots and by emphasizing the glories of the Muslim past. It was their view of history that largely distinguished the intellectual orientation of the Aligarh group from that of the other reformers, for the latter, while typically not objecting to modern education for securing jobs, never associated such expediency with progress and advance, but felt constrained to live in a world in decline.

One voice of dissent at Aligarh itself was that of Shibli Nuʿmani, who joined the staff as Persian and Arabic teacher in 1883. He shared Sayyid Ahmad's concern to answer the historical criticisms of Western scholars, and like Hali was drawn to the genre of biography as a way of epitomizing the glories of the Muslim past and of setting forth ideals of exemplary behavior. One student, later to be a powerful political figure, recalled his classes as an awakening to the excitement of the Islamic past and to the power of its message.[45] Unlike Sayyid Ahmad, Shibli felt Muslim interests

43. Mujeeb, *Indian Muslims*, p. 533.
44. Ibid., p. 410.
45. Mohammed Ali, *My Life: A Fragment* (Lahore, 1944), p. 25.

best served by serious cultivation of Islamic learning, not Western learning; and he did not accept the political structure imposed by the British. Like many of the ʿulama, he wanted a society organized by the *shariʿah*, and political influence shared by religious scholars. For personal and ideological reasons both, Shibli came to find Aligarh uncongenial.

Aligarh students were, however, influenced by the school to accept an emotional espousal of the "colonial sociology" of India in which Indian Muslims—of all classes and all regions—were a corporate group, marked by their past as rulers and their present as a minority in need of protection. Such a perspective, coupled with skills in Western culture and close bonds with each other, prepared Aligarh students for a central role in the various political initiatives of the decades to follow.

The cost of this influential role—and of its apparent success—seemed high. Sayyid Ahmad himself was to die a disappointed man. His death coincided with short-term difficulties at the college, to be sure, but his sense of defeat had more profound roots. Aligarh had not been the locus of far-reaching reformulation of religious thought, and indeed—Shibli aside—religious life at the college seemed attenuated and flat. Moreover the political strategy envisaged by Sayyid Ahmad had not materialized as he had expected. However warm individual Englishmen might be, however skilled in Western culture some Indians might become, the pall of arrogant racism, inherent in the colonial situation, meant that the full acceptance of Indians as equals never happened. Justice Syed Mahmud, Sayyid Ahmad's Cambridge-educated son, should have been a model of full assimilation, but he was never accepted by his British colleagues and died a broken man.[46] Even the expectation of a continuing special relation with Englishmen on the part of Muslims who eschewed pressure tactics and active politics was, by the end of the century, showing strain: the

46. Lelyveld, *Aligarh's First Generation*, pp. 313-14.

inclusion of Hindi as an official language seemed little less than a betrayal.

The constraints imposed by the colonial situation in the late nineteenth century meant that the various trends among Muslims of the period operated within a rather narrow spectrum. All the movements entailed a self-consciousness about religion that made it qualitatively different from "traditional" religion, even if no major reformulations appear to have been made. All entailed a greater or lesser degree of concern with fidelity to religious practice, even at Aligarh, where exposure to Western training and institutions clearly stimulated a concern with Muslim teachings and Muslim identity. All produced a virtuosity in new techniques of organization and communication, including some degree of more bureaucratic and less familial bases of relations within institutions. All, given the reality of British power, sought to define a personal sphere in which the *shari'ah* was to be followed. The 'ulama held more clearly to the ideal of Islamic norms in all aspects of life, and accepted the limitations imposed on them more guardedly and more unwillingly than did people at Aligarh. They tended, in these early decades, to avoid political issues, whereas the Aligarh people sought out a place for themselves in the councils of the rulers. But both groups, as evidenced by the presence of reformist 'ulama at Aligarh, exemplified in fact if not in theory an inward-looking sphere for their religious life, while at the same time they moved toward an acceptance of "Indian Muslim" as their fundamental social identity.

Nadwatu'l-'Uluma

The Nadwatu'l-'Ulama, founded in 1891 at the annual convocation of one of the important new religious schools, the Faiz'i 'Amm in Kanpur, provided yet one more variation on these important themes. Nadwah shared with Aligarh the vision of having Muslims actively involved with the ruling power. These Muslims were, however, to be not the Western-educated but members of the 'ulama, men

who could act simultaneously as internal leaders to their community, men whose prestige was not based on tenuous acquisition of Western culture but on high skill in traditional learning and on membership in a world community with a great historical tradition. In the event, Nadwah's political ambitions failed and it, like other groups of ʿulama, primarily represented a center for internal religious leadership of other Muslims.

The school was founded by a group of religious leaders, government officials, and local notables who planned to establish Nadwah as a university that would affiliate all Muslim schools, including Aligarh. Eschewing all divisive issues, they proposed no new formulation of religious belief or practice, but rather summoned the ʿulama to forget their differences and simply emphasize their shared goal of spreading Islamic teachings and defending Islam. Thus united, they expected the ʿulama to assume extended judicial functions for their followers through a central *daru'l-ifta*. They contemplated independent financial resources for the ʿulama by reclaiming all *auqaf* land taken by the government and by soliciting both governmental and princely patronage and ordinary contributions. They would act as spokesmen for Muslims to the government, "if the government asks for involvement and the managing committee agrees." They called for improved communications among the ʿulama, and, in the style of the Congress and the Educational Conference, annual meetings at which they would assemble. "Now," their declaration of goals lamented, "the ʿulama have no power." Clearly influenced by the organizations of the Western-educated, Nadwah sought to end the political weakness of the ʿulama by imprinting the style of Aligarh upon them.[47]

They also hoped to bolster the prestige of the ʿulama by setting a high standard of excellence and sophistication in scholarship. Maulana Shibli, long a major influence at Nadwah, was perhaps alone in envisaging an institution whose members would be characterized by "wide-ranging thought,

47. Nadwatu'l-ʿUlamā, *Rū-dād-i Sālānah* (Lucknow) 1893-96, passim.

intellectual freedom, and courage."[48] He and others agreed, however, that mastery of Arabic and profound study of the Qur'an should be their main concern and the core of the syllabus of the school that they founded in Lucknow in 1898. In emphasizing sources they were influenced by the general reformist trend of the day, and, indeed, among their members were many of the Ahl-i Hadis.[49] But some, at least, cultivated Arabic because of the prestige attached to the high tradition: they distinguished themselves from those involved in popular reform and deplored the vulgarization of religious learning brought about by the spread of Urdu—and the easy availability of printed books instead of copied manuscripts. They expected recognition for their elitist accomplishments. "Now even the rulers will respect us," said one.[50] The hope of gaining British acceptance on British terms at Aligarh had proven vain: even Aligarh men were, ultimately, "natives." Those associated with Nadwah still wanted the approval of the rulers, but they wanted it on their own terms, terms that would gain them the respect of their fellow Muslims as well.

The members of Nadwah sought also to enhance their stature by identifying themselves with great periods of Muslim history and with the larger Muslim world. Shibli, influenced by the history and biography he read at Aligarh, wrote major biographies of the caliphs ʿUmar and al-Maʿmun, of al-Ghazali and of the Prophet. His writings, as well as his recommendation that Arabic be studied as a living as well as a classical language, encouraged the ʿulama

48. For a brief but excellent example of Shibli's own intellectual style, see the excerpt "al-Jizya" in Ahmad and von Grunebaum, *Muslim Self-Statement*, pp. 89-94. It illustrates his mastery and his pride in his knowledge of Arabic. It suggests by its very topic his desire to defend aspects of Islam criticized by the West. It shows by its style one of his chief characteristics, his ever-present defensiveness.

49. Among the most important were Shamsu'l-ʿUlama Muhammad Hafizu'llah, the principal from 1898 to 1908 and 1921 to 1931; Sayyid ʿAbdu'l-Hayy, the *nazim*, 1894-1904; Nawwab ʿAli Hasan Khan, the son of Siddiq Hasan Khan, who was particularly active in the Daru'l-Musannifin. See Abū Yaḥyā, *Tarājim-i ʿUlamā'* pp. 395, 522, 545-49.

50. Janāb Maulawī ʿAbdu'l-ʿAlī Madrasī al-Lakhnawī, in Nadwatu'l ʿUlama', *Rū-dād-i Sālānah*, 1897, p. 81.

to look beyond India to the larger Muslim world and to identification with Muslims of the Middle East. Others at the school, particularly Maulana ʿAbdu'l-Hayy and Habib-u'r-Rahman Sherwani, wrote specifically of the glories of the Muslim period in India. Both of the latter compiled substantial biographical works on the Indian ʿulama, offering the ʿulama of the present an inspiring example of what their forebears had achieved in the past.[51] Such writings, along with the apologetic religious works that asserted the superiority of Islam over Christianity, shaped a positive sense of the history and faith of the Muslim community that was welcomed particularly by those influenced by the British view of their inferiority. Cherishing of the glories of the past implied nursing anger toward the British for treating contemptuously people who had had such achievements—for destroying, so it seemed, a period of glorious rule. Maulana ʿAbdu'l-Hayy, soon to be director of the school, in 1895 visited the great historical monuments of Delhi. At the Red Fort he trembled with rage as he saw the "least White" casually touring—not even removing his shoes—before the throne where people once prostrated themselves. "Who would not weep," he wrote, "to see such change in the fate of the Muslims?"[52]

Some members of the school urged that English and modern subjects be included in the curriculum, for the purpose, above all, of more effective refutation of Western culture and Western religion.[53] They hoped not merely to convince the Western-educated of the validity of their own religion, but to convert Westerners as well. Sayyid Muhammad ʿAli Mongiri, considered the founder of the school,

51. Sherwani's work, *ʿUlamā'-yi Salaf*, was written at the request of Sayyid Muhammad ʿAli Mongiri for the second meeting of Nadwah; ʿAbdu'l-Ḥayy's multivolume *Nuzhatu'l-Khawāṭir*, originally written in Arabic, is the most complete biographical dictionary of the ʿulama of India. It has been translated into Urdu by Abū Yaḥyā Imām Khān Naushaharawī (Lahore, 1965).

52. ʿAbdu'l-Ḥayy, *Dihlī aur us kē Aṭrāf* (Lucknow, 1958 reprint), pp. 44-45.

53. Hali was unable to attend the first meeting in 1894, but in his speech, recorded in the proceedings (pp. 21-31), he espoused this reason for studying English.

defended the study of English for this latter reason. "Remember that Turkish and Persian were once languages of the infidels," he declared, "and English, too, may become an Islamic language."[54] Shibli above all genuinely sought to understand Western thought, a result of his close ties at Aligarh to Sayyid Ahmad and to Thomas Arnold. He attempted to work out a new theology, a new *'ilmu'l-kalam,* replacing the traditional *kalam* that had arisen in response to Greek thought with one more suited to the threats of the present. His work was widely attacked as heretical. In fact, despite the early rhetoric about providing both Eastern and Western learning, the 'ulama were deeply suspicious of the latter subject, and even English as a language was taught only briefly at the school.

As evidenced by even the talk of learning English, however, defense of Islam was a major goal at Nadwah, "both to make nominal Muslims into practicing ones and to spread Islam abroad."[55] All the groups of 'ulama engaged in debate and defense of Islam, but that emphasis was central at Nadwah. In part this concern derived from the foundation of the school in the 1890s, when resurgent Hinduism seemed particularly threatening and emphasis on the superiority of Islam over Christianity had gained currency. In part it derived from the founders' attempt to encourage internal unity among the different groups of 'ulama by defending Islam as a whole. In technique, they, like the Anjuman-i Himayat-i Islam (Society for the Protection of Islam), founded in Lahore in 1885, resolved to propagate Islam by such methods as sending out preachers and rescuing orphans. They took a broad view of their field of endeavor: one early member singled out America as a promising area of conversion.[56] Closer to home, they spon-

54. Sayyid Muḥammad al-Ḥasanī, *Sīrat-i Sayyid Muḥammad 'Alī Mongīrī: Bānī-yi Nadwatu'l-'Ulamā'* (Lucknow, 1964), p. 157.

55. *Ẓawābiṭ-i Nadwatu'l-'Ulamā'* (Kanpur, n.d.), no. 5.

56. Dāru'l 'Ulūm Dē'ōband, *Rū-dād-i Sālānah,* 1897, pp. 47-50. The speech was by Maulana Hajji Riyazu'd-Din, B.A., Tutor to the Crown Prince of Bhopal. The *Police News* of Meerut, reporting the meeting, noted that he personally pledged twenty-five rupees a year to support work there. Government of India, *Selections,* 1897, p. 229.

sored an orphanage in Kanpur in order to save homeless children from the influence of Christian missionaries. They sought to strengthen the faith of nominal Muslims; and they were particularly strong in their opposition to the Ahmadiyyah or Qadiyani sect that arose in Punjab at the end of the century.

The ʿulama of Nadwah hoped to achieve respect as the champions of Islam—powerful and intellectually distinguished. To ensure the respect they felt they deserved, from time to time they passed such resolutions as that of the sixth annual meeting: that the ʿulama would not stand in the presence of the *umara* and *ru'isa*, the local notables.[57] The issue of guarding one's dignity, of maintaining self-respect, were major themes in the social history of nineteenth-century India. The imperial rulers basically did not respect those over whom they had power, and deemed their own culture—as proven by their ability to rule—far superior. They often did not know or even value the internal rankings of the society they ruled. Sayyid Ahmad simply left a viceregal audience in Agra when he found his chair had been placed too far to the rear. Moreover, as Indians themselves formed institutions such as schools, associations, and conferences that transcended the fundamental ascriptive ties of family, clan, and *baradari*, inevitably questions of the status of members in such new situations arose. Shibli chafed at Aligarh, one such institution, because his subject of Arabic was deemed less important than secular subjects and he was accordingly paid less; he, too, found his chair placed at the rear, this time at a college function, and he wept.

Shibli, indeed, left Aligarh for Nadwah in order to have a new arena in which to assert his own preeminence. A Rathor, "not even a pure Rajput,"[58] as one biographer noted,

57. Muḥammad al-Ḥasanī, *Muḥammad ʿAlī Mōngīrī*, p. 211.

58. Shaikh Muḥammad Ikrām, *Yādgār-i Shiblī* (Lahore, 1971), p. 115. This excellent biography, along with Ikram's comments about Shibli in *Mauj-i Kauṣar*, form the basis for most of the conclusions drawn here about this controversial figure. Sayyid Muhammad al-Hasani in his biography of Mongiri also exmphasized the importance of Shibli's relatively low origin—comparing it, of course, to Mongiri's *sayyid* status (p. 277).

his concern with status was implicit in his address to the first general meeting of the Nadwah, when he argued that it did not matter if one were a "*sayyid, shaikh,* or Arab," all that mattered was that one possess knowledge, and all Muslims possessing it were equal.[59] The respect he craved had long eluded him. Neglected by his prosperous father, he had as a youth become the most accomplished and cherished student of the celebrated scholastic, Maulana Muhammad Faruq Chiryakoti. But he was wrenched from that relationship, in which he found both personal and intellectual satisfaction, and sent to Aligarh, where his previous accomplishments counted for nothing. After Aligarh, he failed his pleader's exam and attained a minor government job as a clerk. From that time onward he was always in need of an opponent, and in those years he denounced above all the Ahl-i Hadis: "I would become a Christian, but not a *ghair-muqallid,*" he declared.[60] In 1882—this time against his father's objections—he went again to Aligarh, now as assistant professor of Arabic. There he finally found the intellectual interests that would define his activities for the rest of his life, for he took as his purview the cause of the entire Muslim community, giving up his oppostion to any sect, and, inspired by his study of Western history and biography, he turned his interest to the Muslim past and to the larger Muslim world.

Despite the acclaim given his writings, the support of Sayyid Ahmad, and the enthusiasm of his students, he still felt that he was not respected. At Nadwah he hoped to establish himself as unquestioned leader—of the ʿulama, the literary world, perhaps of the Indian Muslims as a whole. But ever sensitive to people's treatment of him, he was easily offended and offended others there, too. He guarded his dignity carefully, always traveling by horseback, never

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Neither author suggests the importance of the general process of Islamicization by which upwardly mobile people acquired status through adherence to orthodox practice and education in the high tradition. They rather emphasize the stereotypes associated with being Rathor: sensitive to insult, opportunistic, secretive, quick-tempered.

59. Nadwatu'l-ʿUlamā', *Rū-dād-i Sālānah,* 1895-96, pp. 3-19.

60. Ikram, *Yādgār-i Shiblī,* p. 194.

meeting anyone before four in the afternoon: "A strange kind of *maulawi* who guards his time like a district collector."[61] He distrusted his associates, and by his criticism he alienated Sayyid Muhammad ʿAli from the school. He engaged in bitter criticism of the two men who had been his guides and protectors, Chiryakoti and Sayyid Ahmad. Finally forced to leave Nadwah, he spent his last years establishing yet another institution, the Daru'l-Musannifin in Azamgarh, which was devoted to literary pursuits—the one area in which he was truly without peer.

Although Shibli's involvement in the Nadwah was unique, others also formed factions and new institutions for such personal ends. This motivation for founding the school was clear at the time, and many critics felt that Nadwah had no legitimate intellectual or social purpose of its own. If the desire was to unify the ʿulama and to improve Arabic education, why did it not work through one of the existing central schools, such as Deoband? Or through the Faiz-i ʿAm itself, which was to a striking extent free of the religious rivalries of the day? A correspondent to an Etawah newspaper wrote in 1891, "there already exists a good Arabic school at Deoband, and why should the Nadwat then take into its head to establish a separate one in its own name? It is downright madness on the part of Musalmans in general to be always hankering after founding new separate institutions, and never thinking of supporting and completing those already existing, which has reduced them so low in the scale of nations."[62] Another correspondent in a Lucknow newspaper of the same year derided another of Nadwah's claims: "English education, together with sufficient religious instruction, [is] best given at the Aligarh College, which every patriotic Musalman should help to become a University."[63] And another added, "If the Sunnis and Shias really feel so much need for religious education, why do not both sects take into their hands the management

61. Ibid., p. 194.
62. Government of India, *Selections*, *al-Bashir*, August 28, 1891, p. 477.
63. *Oudh Akhbar*, December 21, 1891, in Government of India, *Selections*, 1891, p. 698.

of such education in the already existing Muhammadan College at Aligarh?"[64] In Shibli's case the question seems particularly apposite since he taught at Aligarh for sixteen years.

Dubious of the need, or worth, of the Nadwah, the major groups of the ʿulama held aloof. Considering the depth of their mutual antagonism, how could they be united? The Shiʿah were the first to withdraw, under pressure, for they could not withstand the outcry against their inclusion in a religious school. A number of Deobandis did attend the first meetings, but not Rashid Ahmad Gangohi, who distrusted the institution from the start—an act deemed by his followers to be an example of his prescience.[65] Others soon joined him in holding aloof, for they suspected the modernist theology of Shibli, and they disliked the proposed relations with the government and the Western education. The Barelwi ʿulama, led by Maulanas Ahmad Riza Khan, ʿAbdu'l-Qadir Bada'uni, and Nazir Ahmad Khan Rampuri, engaged in consistent and substantial opposition, using books, posters, poetry, *fatawa*, and even a rival organization to accuse the Nadwah of free thought and irreligion.[66] The founders of the Nadwah had hoped not only to have the participation of the ʿulama but the support of the Western-educated as well; but Aligarh members, although they initially supported Nadwah, were subjected

64. Ibid., June 5, 1891, pp. 297-98 in Government of India, *Selections*, 1891.

65. Muḥammad ʿĀshiq Ilāhī Mīraṭhī, *Tazkiratu'r-Rashīd* (Meerut, n.d.), II, 205.

66. See Muḥammad al-Ḥasanī, *Muḥammad ʿAlī Mongīrī*, pp. 170-78, for a description of the measures taken by the Barelwis, and a partial list of the polemical literature engendered by the dispute. Reports of the feuds were carried in the papers. See a thorough report in *Najm ul-Akhbar*, April 16 and 23, 1896, in Government of India, *Selections*, 1896, pp. 234-35. The strategies of the Barelwis were nothing if not inventive. On the occasion of the seventh annual meeting in Calcutta in 1901, according to Sayyid Muhammad Ahsan: "they told the Surati traders that Nadwah was *wahhabi* and did not believe in *pirs*; they told the ʿulama of the Madrasah-yi ʿĀliyah that they were *nechari* and they had come to attack their school; to people with Western education they said that they wanted to distract people from such studies; to the Hanafis they said that they wanted to free people from *taqlid*." Muḥammad al-Ḥasanī, *Muḥammad ʿAlī Mongīrī*, p. 260.

to criticism and cherished institutional ambitions of their own. Soon they too stood apart.

In part because of the attacks of the Barelwis, the ʿulama associated with the Nadwah rapidly abandoned their claims to all-inclusiveness and identified themselves as Hanafi. Maulawi Amjad ʿAli, an early supporter of the Nadwah, spoke against the Barelwi accusations at the fourth annual meeting:

> Does [Ahmad Riza Khan] not think those are Sunni who like me and my friends act on the basis of the Qur'an and *hadis* and what is included in the books of *fiqh*? . . . There are no Shiʿah among us. There are only five or ten of the Ahl-i Hadis, and they do not denounce those who follow the four *imams* [and they only differ from us] by following the external meaning of *hadis* on a few small problems. Do you consider as Sunni only those who observe the fortieth and third and believe that the *shaikhs* are intermediaries to God? Are those Sunni who believe in you and call Shaikh Ahmad Sarhindi and Shah Waliyu'llah *kafir*? Does *sunniyyat* depend on worshiping *taʿziyahs* and graves and other innovations? Are Wahhabis those who pray five times a day and forbid prostitutes to dance? Alas, a hundred times, alas.[67]

Many of Nadwah's members had been students of the celebrated reformist teacher of Aligarh, Maulana Lutfu'llah; and, even more importantly, a large number were disciples in the Naqshbandi order of Maulana Fazlu'r-Rahman Ganjmuradabadi or of his distinguished successor Sayyid Muhammad ʿAli Mongiri, long an influential figure at the school.[68] Despite the initial ambitions to include new subjects—and new activities—at the school, the ʿulama of the Nadwah ultimately concentrated on the dissemination of reformist religious teachings, barely distinguishable from those of Deoband.

In its organization, however, the Nadwah did represent

67. Nadwatu'l-ʿUlamā, *Rū-dād-i Sālānah*, 1894-95, pp. 7-8.
68. Maulawi Abd'ul Qayyum Nadwi, "Deoband and Nadwa," in *History of the Freedom Movement*, vol. II, part II (Karachi, 1961), p. 426.

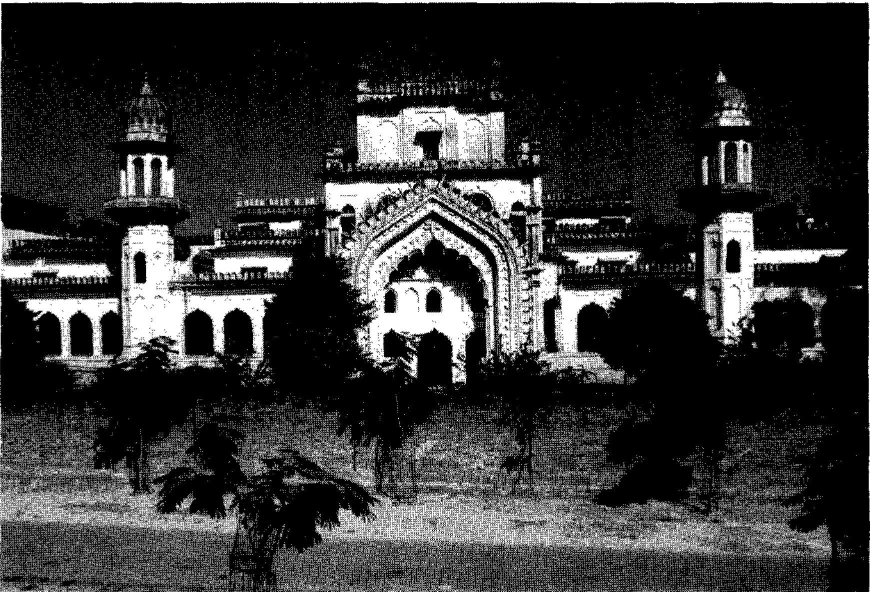
certain changes that were to characterize later activities of the ʿulama. Its founding membership was more diverse than had been those of the other groups of ʿulama. For despite the fact that there were certain common bonds of educational and Sufi experience among some of them, they shared no common *baradari* or caste origin. Nor did they come from a single geographic area, though most, to be sure, were from the broad region stretching from the lower Doab through the eastern United Provinces. Movements among Muslims were to depend less and less on common parochial links; and Nadwah, to a limited extent, typified this transition.

Nadwah, though never able to forge a national leadership for the Muslims, also pointed to the kind of alliances among the groups that would be necessary for such a leadership. Its choice of name harkened back to the Arabian Daru'n-Nadwah, where the nobles of Mecca gathered to deliberate.[69] It attempted to give authority within the organization not only to the ʿulama but to government officials and local notables as well. Such people, of course, had close ties to other groups of ʿulama, but in this case, as an attempt to consolidate their influence, Nadwah provided them with positions of authority. They appointed a seven-member advisory council, the Majlis-i Mulk, comprising government servants or landed notables who shared an interest in religious learning. They established a directing council, two-thirds of whose members were ʿulama and *shaikhs*, but one-third influential supporters. And they honored the important leaders of Muslim states and heads of organizations with the title of *murabbi*, patrons of the institution.[70] Nadwah particularly solicited the support of the wealthy and powerful: princes, government servants, traders, and lawyers. Sayyid Muhammad ʿAli insisted that there be chairs at their general meetings so that those "they wanted to reach"—that is, people too proud to sit on the ground—would come.[71] They wanted to influence impor-

69. "Dar al-Nadwa," *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2nd edition, II, 128.
70. Nadwatu'l-ʿUlamā', *Dastūru'l-ʿAmal* (Lucknow, n.d.).
71. Muḥammad al-Ḥasanī, *Muḥammad ʿAlī Mongīrī*, p. 185.

tant people, especially any confused by Western culture, and they wanted their support. Nadwah also fostered relations with the government, for, in a colonial society, any ambitious leadership required its support. After a period of intense suspicion because of their presumed Pan-Islamic sentiments, the government agreed to patronize secular learning at the school, contributed land for its fine building on the banks of the Gumti in Lucknow, and, in 1908, sent the lieutenant governor himself to lay the foundation stone.

In its unrealized institutional ambitions, Nadwah anticipated, but did not achieve, the kind of organization that would appear in the first all-Indian national Muslim movement, that of the Khilafat agitation in the period after the First World War. In its contributions to Muslim sentiments of pride and defensive self-assertion, fostered by other groups as well, the ʿulama of the Nadwah made a substantial impact on that and other political movements. But the real accomplishment of Nadwah was its involvement in



7. The imposing main building of Nadwah

the quiet, undramatic, but influential work characteristic of the 'ulama of the late nineteenth century: the self-conscious dissemination of Muslim beliefs and practices, the fostering of Urdu as the language of the 'ulama, and the training of more 'ulama. Its 'ulama emphasized the teaching of Arabic, and, to some extent, theology; their writings, both at Nadwah and its offshoot, the Daru'l-Musannifin, were important contributions to history, biography, and essay writing in Urdu. Such activities could easily have been accomplished without the personally inspired debates and denunciations that Nadwah saw in its early years. Yet even such debates, as we have seen, did contribute to the interest in religious issues and in the religious community. And much as many deplored the new divisions among the Sunni 'ulama—Deobandi, Barelwi, Ahl-i Hadis, and now Nadwi—beneath their apparent differences they shared substantial common endeavors.

Conclusion: New Sects, New Strategies, Old Patterns

THIS study has challenged the widespread assumption that Islam in nineteenth-century India stagnated and that significant cultural change took place only through adoption of Western values. Islamic learning and the institutions of the ʿulama in fact underwent significant transformations that in many dimensions were shared by the Westernized. No one could deny that cultural change was largely stimulated and constrained by the chain of events stimulated by Western expansion. But the changes themselves were ones long characteristic of the Islamic tradition. Religious change in this period primarily entailed self-conscious reassessment of what was deemed authentic religion—it was not syncretism, not acculturation to Western patterns, not conversion. In part for this reason, the chief actors in this study were men who remained integrated in their society: they were not "alienated" or "marginal."[1] The Muslim reformers had a historic explanation for their current situation and an indigenous precedent for action in religious renewal or *tajdid*.[2]

New attention must be given to the broad repertoire of religious styles characteristic of traditional cultures like the Islamic, and to the process of change that permits current relevance without loss of continuity. An example from a domain we have not discussed in detail is suggestive, namely,

1. Cf. Kenneth W. Jones, *Arya Dharm* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1976).
2. For an analogous change, see Clifford Geertz, " 'Internal Conversion' in Contemporary Bali," in *The Interpretation of Culture* (New York, 1973), pp. 170-89. See also Robin Horton, "African Traditional Thought and Western Science, Part I: From Tradition to Science," *Africa*, 37 (January 1967), 50-71; "Part II: The Closed and Open 'Predicaments,' " ibid. (April 1967), 155-87; "African Conversion," ibid., 41 (April 1971), 85-108. Horton explains that in conversion members of "primitive religions develop an already existing concept of a supreme being concerned not with the local community but with the whole universe; it is activated when, with a decrease of social isolation, the activities of the gods of the microcosm no longer serve to explain the events of life."

that of medicine. Medicine remained holistic beyond even a Californian's definition, with the curing of the body and the soul often entrusted to the same specialist. For the same kind of reasons that brought about a revival of the core religious sciences, there was a revival of the classical medical tradition of *yunani tibb*. As there was a movement away from the *pir*-based mediational religion of the shrines in favor of individual moral responsibility, so too was there a change away from the medicine of midwives, now considered illiterate, as well as from practices now excluded as magic. Yet to find a systematic, generalizable, authoritative system of medicine, as of religion, Muslims did not need to move outside their own tradition. Techniques of Western surgery, considered to be superior, for example, could be readily incorporated, but the principles and system as a whole remained Islamic.

Thus one way of measuring change in a continuous self-replicating tradition—at first blush a contradiction—is to recognize the diversity of religious styles and explanations that not only the culture but single individuals typically know or know of.[3] Robin Horton memorably describes latent explanations as a "second string." Among Indian Muslims, as emphasized throughout this study, teachings were presented increasingly on the basis of systematic assessment against an ideal of the original sources. These involved an effort to propagate abstract and generalizable principles. Second, certain fields and disciplines came to be emphasized over others. Thus Qur'an and *hadis* were given a centrality unknown in the Mughal period or in the later *dars-i nizami*, which had stressed "rational studies." The dissemination of advisory judicial opinions, *fatawa*, attained new importance as a vehicle for communication of proper teachings. And third, there was a shift in emphasis and meaning of central symbols of the faith.

One important example may suggest the implications of this final point. For all Muslims, of course, the Prophet

3. See Dale F. Eickelman, "The Art of Memory: Islamic Education and Its Social Reproduction," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 20 (October 1978), 484-516.

Muhammad's being and actions are centrally important. But the interpretation given to him and the degree of attention to him varies. There was in this period a new emphasis on the Prophet, one noted by Annemarie Schimmel as a novel phenomenon throughout the Muslim world in the nineteenth century.[4] One recalls the Barelwi focus on the theory of the *nur-i muhammadi*, and that Ahmad Riza Khan called himself "ʿAbdu'l-Mustafa";[5] the praise for the Ahl-i Hadis, who were credited with "a rebirth from the heart of love for the Prophet";[6] the Deobandi efforts to model every detail of their life on his; the spread in this period of the celebration of the Prophet's birthday, fostered by other groups, though opposed by the Deobandis. The ʿulama themselves were regarded as deputies of the Prophet, and hence were expected to provide examples to others. A biographer of one of the Deobandis explained the importance of religious leaders such as his subject, Ashraf ʿAli Thanawi, for, he explained, just as God initially sent a prophet to embody the teaching of each sacred book, even so there had to be later manifestations of those teachings to make them real for ordinary people.[7] The ʿulama modeled themselves on the Prophet, and ordinary people modeled themselves on them. To see the Prophet as moral exemplar is only one of many possible ways of viewing him. In mystic poetry like that of Rumi, for example, one seeks an emotional identity with the Prophet, dwells on his surpassing beauty, is absorbed in his light. This orientation was never wholly lost, but the primary focus during the

4. Annemarie Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1975), Conclusion and p. 39. She notes that the mystic Rabʿia, for example, did not consider love for the Prophet part of her spiritual devotion.

5. "The slave of the chosen one," that is, of the Prophet Muhammad. This is exactly the kind of name the reformers opposed, on the grounds that *ʿabd* ought to be followed by one of the ninety-nine names of God. ʿAbdu'l-Ḥakīm Maẕharī Akhtar Shāhjahānpūrī, *Rasā'il-i Riẓawiyyah* (Lahore, 1977), p. 4.

6. Abū Yaḥyā Imām Khān Naushaharawī, *Tarājim-i ʿUlamā'-yi Ḥadīs̤-i Hind* (Delhi, 1356/1937?), p. 34.

7. Muḥammad Taqī Uṣmānī, Introduction to *Māsir-i Ḥakīmu'l-Ummat Mausūmah ba-Ifādāt-i ʿĀrifiyyah* by ʿAbdu'l-Ḥayy (Karachi, 1972), page *jim*.

nineteenth century shifted to the Prophet's personality and behavior, his example made the more compelling through love.

Change can also be measured by institutional transformation. Instruction in personal morality in this period was in the hands of a popularly supported religious leadership whose authority rested on character and education, increasingly stamped by graduation from one of the new formally organized schools of the day. These ʿulama spoke to their followers in a wide variety of roles: those of *mufti*, of scholar of Qurʾan and *hadis*, and often of doctor, bestower of amulets, Sufi *shaikh*, and spiritual guide as well. They represented, if Muhammad Mujeeb's rather intriguing categorization be extended, the flourishing of the "righteous ʿulama" or the "religious thinkers." Mujeeb has argued that there were historically three kinds of religious specialists in South Asia: the Sufis, the "orthodox" ʿulama (that is, the *ʿulama-i su* who served Muslim governments), and the religious thinkers. With the imposition of colonial rule, the role of the *ʿulama-i su* largely disappeared but, as Mujeeb puts it, their "externalist armory" had been strengthened by the efforts of reformers like Shaikh Ahmad Sarhindi and Shah Waliyu'llah, so that they fostered the inner life characteristic of sufism and there ceased to be a distinction between them—the ʿulama—and the "orthodox Sufi." There remained only "righteous ʿulama."[8] As for the Sufis, he could have gone on to point out, some made a similar adjustment, and notable groups among them, from the eighteenth century on, placed a new emphasis on the Law. The characteristic religious specialist of the nineteenth century, whether based in *khanaqah* or *madrasah*, was at once *ʿalim* and *shaikh*.

The role open to such ʿulama was decisively shaped by constraints provided by powerful imperial rule. In these circumstances the ʿulama could seek to revive the Law only by conveying the tradition in its many facets to individual followers. They therefore fostered a kind of turning away

8. Muhammad Mujeeb, *The Indian Muslims* (London, 1967), p. 315.

from issues of the organization of state and society, toward a concern with the moral qualities of individual Muslims. Not surprisingly, schools became their characteristic institution. Their dominant activities were education and propaganda. This was true, tellingly, not only of the movements that took the *mujaddid*, the renewer of the Law, as their ideal, but also of a movement we have not discussed above, the Ahmadiyyah. This movement, most influential in the Punjab, drew on a second pattern of religious change, also known throughout Muslim history: that of the Mahdi who was to appear at the end of time. Its leader, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (1835?-1908), like the others, insisted that the key to well-being lay in a renewed interpretation of the faith of Islam, and like them he insisted that the truth lay in attention to sources of the faith. What was novel was his belief that he was the recipient of new communications from God, and that he himself was a prophet. The implications of this claim were important to those who either supported or opposed Ghulam Ahmad. But the movement, if it varied in extreme, did not vary in kind from the others. It, too, focused on inner reform, for Ghulam Ahmad believed himself commanded to accept British rule and to declare a complete prohibition on jihad, the warfare that others who had believed themselves to be the Mahdi had typically embraced.[9] Limits on forms of action were firmly set.

Each group of ʿulama saw itself at this period in a progression of reformers from the past. The Ahl-i Hadis of course identified itself with the classical scholars of *hadis*, but they also saw a model in the thirteenth-century figure Ibn Taymiyyah, who rejected most forms of sufism and who, although Hanbali, rejected most formulations of the law schools in favor of a literal reading of the Qur'an and

9. Warren Fusfeld, "Mirza Ghulam Ahmad and Maulana Ashraf ʿAli Thanavi: Alternate Islamic Strategies in 19th Century India" (unpublished paper, 1975). For a general study of this movement see Spencer Lavan, *The Ahmadiyah Movement: A History and Perspective* (Delhi, 1974).

sunnat.[10] Within India, the Ahl-i Hadis traced a continuous heritage of thinkers who shared their perspective, among them the eighteenth-century Naqshbandi, Mirza Mazhar Jan-i Janan. Even the Barelwis, who in fact legitimized most of the customary practices the others eschewed, saw their leader as a *mujaddid* or renewer of the Law, and regarded figures like ʿAbdu'l-Haqq Muhaddis, the great *hadis* scholar of Akbar's reign, as their precursor. They held that they alone were the true *sunnis*, the *ahl-i sunnat o jamʿat.* As for the Deobandis, one recalls Rashid Ahmad's comment: "The harm [the corrupt] Sufis have caused to Islam . . . is greater than that of any other sect. . . . Those who tried to effect reform were Shaikh ʿAbdu'l-Qadir Gilani, Shaikh Shihabu'd-Din Suhrawardi, Shaikh Ahmad Sarhindi, and Sayyid Ahmad Barelwi. God revealed to them the way of the *sunnat,* and praise be to Him, he also revealed it to me."[11] He was thus one with founders of the great Sufi orders, a great courtier-scholar, and the leader of the jihad.

Opposition to alternate movements similarly had the sanction of historic precedent. Ahmad Riza Khan Barelwi denounced with familiar terms of abuse those who favored reform of custom, recalling the names of dissident sects of the classical age: they were *muʿtazilah, rafizi,* and were to be judged *fasiq, mulhid,* even *kafir.* He in turn was accused of reprehensible innovation or *bidʿat.* The Deobandis called the Ahl-i Hadis "Shafiʿi" in order to define their rivalry as differences of law schools. At one level these identifications provided legitimacy to the movements, much as Dayanand Saraswati's image as a *sannyasi* enhanced his efforts to establish himself as leader of a new interpretation of Hinduism. But at another level these claims were not mere rhetoric: they provided form and content to the movements, and they determined the nature of their teachings.

10. Ibn Taymiyyah was above all the model for the eighteenth-century Wahhabi movement in Arabia. For a study of his thought see Muhammad Umar Memon, *Ibn Taimiya's Struggle against Popular Religion* (The Hague, 1976).

11. Ẕuhūru'l-Ḥasan Kāsōlī, *Arwāḥ-i S̤alās̤ah* (Saharanpur, 1950), p. 279.

The stimulus to these movements, as to similar movements elsewhere, lay in social and political transformations that called into question received emphases and patterns of action. With such change many people came to lose confidence in the power of local cults in favor of formulations found in the written tradition. The currency given those formulations was clearly related to the continued importance of the old elites. Although they felt their access to power checked by the presence of foreigners and by opportunites offered their rivals, they still in fact retained resources and status. It was they who valued and studied classical music and Islamic medicine, so that both disciplines persist in India as nowhere else in the Muslim world;[12] it was they who similarly fostered the central religious sciences of Islam.

The north Indian ʿulama were of the *ashraf*, related in family and occupation to the rulers of the empire, men who saw its decline as not only a social but a spiritual issue. They feared for their own place and feared for their culture, as well. By the late nineteenth century they could no longer serve Muslim rulers, nor could they even be assured of employment at all. By then, in contrast to the early decades of their rule, the British talked of formal requirements and quotas; patronage and informal ties ceased to be effective. Both Shibli Nuʿmani and Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, for example, had been thwarted by that system; both failed exams and failed to get the places they felt rightly theirs. Their personal crises were taken as symptomatic of the failure of their system of belief as a whole, and each called for moral renewal and new orientations in religious thought. Yet the need was felt even by those successful in the British system, for the presence of the British and the dislocations of their system were felt by all. As described above, almost one-third of the registered donors to Deoband in the last decades of the century were government servants, and many

12. This comment on music is owed to Harold S. Powers, and particularly to his draft paper, "An Indic Musicologist Looks at the Muslim World" (May 1979).

others were landowners and traders tied in varying degrees to British rule.

The reform movements spread, however, to include people of all classes. Sometimes other groups—peasants, craftsmen, agriculturalists, tradesmen, women—knew and heard the religious leaders and regarded them as holy men. Sometimes they shared *baradari* or clientage links to the core supporters. Some religious leaders, notably the Deobandis, took pride in reaching out to all people, and claimed to speak for all Muslims. Others, like Aligarh and the Ahmadiyyah, claimed to speak for the elite.[13] Yet members of lower classes did participate in religious reform, including that of the Ahmadiyyah, and did so in part for reasons of their own, particularly the opportunity afforded by scripturalist religion for claims to status and respect. In the twentieth century, moreover, religious symbols have been a basis for political participation, and that has provided further incentive to the spread of reform.

One of the most striking characteristics of the process of modern religious change among Indian Muslims has been the degree of internal dispute that has been generated. Would the same purposes not have been served by a single movement of reform? Why did so many conflicting redefinitions emerge? Pious Muslims of the day, who knew the world to be in decline anyway, expected nothing else, and pointed to the *hadis* that predicted that later years would see seventy-two sects. There are other explanations as well. First, when thoughtful people, never doubting the ultimate validity of their faith but accepting their own deficient expression of it, sought texts or historical periods or methods of interpretation to provide a correct standard of belief, they not surprisingly chose different texts or approaches

13. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad angrily denied that his was a mission to sweepers: "my principles and doctrines . . . are morally so sublime and spiritually so exalted that they are not suited to . . . Muhammadans of a low type and bad morals . . . they are accepted only by intelligent and noble-minded men . . . and my followers actually include in their number Raises, Jagirdars, respectable government officials, merchants, pleaders, learned Maulvis and highly educated young men." "Phoenix," *His Holiness* (Lahore, 1958), p. 61.

from their rich and varied tradition. The different orientations varied in their place on the continuum from mediation to individual responsibility described above. Their respective adherents varied in their degree of internal cohesion; in general, those whose beliefs deviated most from the mainstream acted most clearly as demarcated sects. One can imagine that people would be drawn to one movement or another because of a preference for certain teachings or for the kind of bonds characteristic of those who followed them.

Central also to the flourishing of these different tendencies were factional rivalries. Some have judged faction to be the fundamental characteristic of Indian social life. Decisive in these factions, however, was the new element that the British understood membership in the religious community to be one of the fundamental organizing principles of Indian society. The British, in their attempts to systematize and classify, most notably in the census, in part created, in part reflected the reality they wanted to understand. They sought to make their rule effective by standardizing and codifying Muslim and Hindu law. They wished to make their educational system attractive by providing each community with books they assumed appropriate to it. Thus Kempson, as director of public instruction for the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, actually sent an emissary to inspect the curricula of schools in the Middle East in order to shape his Oriental curriculum to their standard. The British tabulated their employees on the basis of their religion, and set quotas for employment by that standard. All this not only created an arena of competition between Hindus and Muslims; it created competition within each community for the putative leadership of the community, as well.

The rivalry for the ear of the British was evident in the religious movements of Sayyid Ahmad Khan, Ghulam Ahmad, and Nadwah; it was far less so at Deoband. But all the movements wanted at least their loyalty recognized, and there were mutual accusations of toadyism and disloyalty. That there was conflict over leadership and that the conflict

was expressed in religious terms is not surprising. Indeed, as Sandria Freitag has shown, the impetus to communal riots was often to be found in competition for power among coreligionists engaged in rivalry for internal leadership of a community.[14] In such a conflict leaders could simultaneously consolidate their position and gain credit as defenders of the faith. One ploy in the resulting communal conflict was to deny that one's opponent genuinely represented his community. Arya Samajis seeking to participate in a debate with Muslims and Christians were accused of not really being Hindu.[15] A Muslim defending a Sufi shrine against Hindu encroachments heard the Hindu tell the British judge that Islam denied the legitimacy of such shrines—and hence that he could not defend Muslim interests.[16] The issue of religious affiliation and of how that affiliation was to be defined pervaded countless areas of life.

There was another element that stimulated the variety of different religious movements and hence conflict. Conflict was, in fact, positive; it was satisfying to those involved. In letters, in tracts, in debates, one senses—again in some more than others—an element of relishing the position of being unique, of being misunderstood, of being wronged by the whole world but knowing that one is morally right, morally superior. For people whose own self-esteem was shaken by change in general and by the racist disdain inherent in colonialism in particular, sectarian affiliation provided a sense of unquestioned value. Rashid Ahmad (of the Deobandis) dreamed of himself acting as *mufti* before the Prophet and answering a hundred questions successfully: "Since that day I have been happy and felt that were the whole world against me I would still know that the right

14. See Sandria Freitag, "Religious Rites and Riots: From Community Identity to Communalism in North India, 1870-1940" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1980).

15. See Bawra Arjan Singh, trans., *Mela Chandapur* (Lahore, n.d.).

16. See J. Royal Roseberry, III, "The Beginning of Hindu-Muslim Conflict in British Punjab (Pakistan)," *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies*, 3 (Fall 1979), 43.

was on my side."[17] It was, it seems, crucial to define oneself against other Muslims, to distinguish sheep from goats among those with whom one could communicate. Simply to validate one's worth on the grounds of being Muslim was too theoretical: debates with Christians and Hindus offered an opportunity to consolidate one's position within a community, but offered no meaningful exchange. Among Muslims, however, there were shared symbols of controversy: the Deobandis could ominously warn against praying behind an *imam* whose ideas were deemed deviant; the Ahl-i Hadis could angrily insist on their right to enter all mosques; the Barelwis could expend endless efforts to travel to the Hijaz to solicit *fatawa* of *kufr* against their opponents. Moreover, those united in conflict shared a sense of community, most dramatically among the later Ahmadiyyah, who created in this century a virtually self-contained society among themselves.

The result of religious change, for all the bitterness of the conflict among sectarian groups, was not that a previously united community was divided but that there was now substantial homogeneity among Muslims. The whole level of concern with religious life in north India had changed. One needed only to look to see mosques on every side in districts where there had previously been none.[18] They ranged from splendid new city mosques in such towns as Deoband, Saharanpur, and Budaun, to humble village mosques, little more than clearings, often built by the corporate efforts of local Muslims.[19] There were new schools everywhere, those offering the advanced Arabic course for religious scholars as well as ordinary *maktabs* for young boys and Qur'anic schools bringing literacy and elementary religious learning to local girls. The latter evoked no small amount of controversy, but were to become an important addition to religious life. There was a whole new industry of printing and distributing religious books, teaching the

17. Ẓuhūru'l-Ḥasan, *Arwāḥ-i Ṣalāṣah*, pp. 287-88.
18. See, for example, G.R.C. Williams, *A Historical and Statistical Memoir of Dehra Dun* (Roorkee, 1874), p. 31.
19. Murray Titus, *Islam in India and Pakistan* (Calcutta, 1959), p. 65.

tenets of the faith, and providing translations of Arabic classics into Urdu. There were, every year, increasingly large numbers of Muslims undertaking the hajj, a reflection not only of piety but of improved transportation—and of the effective organization of Thomas Cook and Sons under contract with the government.[20] In many years the pilgrimage from India was the largest of that of any Muslim country.[21] The census of 1901 for the North-Western Provinces and Oudh concluded correctly that there had been a "genuine deepening of religious life" among the Muslims of the area.[22] More and more Muslims shared a common language in Urdu: the language of the new schools, of the books and pamphlets and translations of religious classics, and of ever more popular public debate. They shared greater concern with the sources of the faith, the "high tradition" to which increasing numbers assimilated.

But the new religion was not the old. Muslims were ever more self-conscious, their religion not taken for granted but espoused deliberately. Many aspects of the Islamic teachings and organization of this period have an affinity to modern patterns of social and economic integration and to the personal requirements of bureaucratic organizations. This was particularly true of movements that eschewed extravagant customary practices and downplayed local saintly cults to foster, instead, a high degree of internal discipline and personal responsibility for fulfilling the religious law. The reformers themselves, however, in no way believed that they were accommodating to any pattern of modernity, let alone to the values of their rulers. To them, in contrast, they were committed to a return to pristine Islam. They looked back, not West, and believed themselves to be in the company of the great Muslims of the past for whom

20. See J. M. Cook, *The Mecca Pilgrimage: Appointment by the Government of India of Thos. Cook and Son as Agents for the Control of the Mahomedan Pilgrims* . . . (London, 1886).

21. Wilfred Scawen Blunt, *The Future of Islam* (London, 1882), p. 10. In 1880 India sent 15,000, as compared to 12,000 Malays, who outnumbered the Indians in some other years.

22. R. Burns, *Census of India* 1901: *N.W.P & O.* (Allahabad, 1902), vol. I, part I, p. 77.

precisely the end of false customs and the creation of religiously responsible individuals was central. The Muslim leaders of the day saw themselves as embodying received patterns of leadership and interpretation appropriate to a time like this one, as to times before, when the conditions of daily life seemed notably awry. They were engaged in renewal, *tajdid*, of the teaching of the Prophet and Qur'an.

An appreciation of this overriding meaning given to the movement is crucial if one is not to be misled into seeing "modernity" where the participants would see Islam. To them their attitudes and orientation were not different from a traditional past, for they did not view history as a road to modernity, but rather as a setting for periodic occasions (as they hoped this was) when humans emulated the great historic peak which is the period of revelation itself. They held the past to be better than the present or the future. One can of course distinguish unique characteristics of the Islamic movements of recent times, shaped as they are by new means of communication, Western domination and resulting forms of economic change, and by mass participation in political activities. Yet the Islamic quality of the movements is central, not only because it gives them meaning, but because it has a life of its own, apart from any abstract model of "modernity" that regards such symbols as only veneer. Not all Muslims have shared in these movements, but for substantial numbers, here as elsewhere, they have provided a sense of continuity with the past, of community in the present, and of meaning and direction in individual lives.

Glossary

ahl-i kitab (*ahl-i kitāb*): the people of the book; those who are members of authentic (albeit superceded) religions.

ahl-i sunnat wa jamaʿat (*ahl-i sunnat wa jamāʿat*): a term used by Indian Barelwis to describe themselves. Also see Sunni.

akhlaq (*akhlāq*): good qualities, virtues, dispositions.

ʿalim (*ʿālim*; pl. *ʿulamā'*): a learned man, in particular one learned in Islamic legal and religious studies.

ʿamaliyyat (pl. *ʿamaliyyāt*): practices, specifically words, phrases, numerical charts, etc., understood to have special power.

ʿamm (*ʿāmm*): ordinary people, in contrast to the elite or *khass*, here defined by spiritual rather than sociological criteria.

ashraf (*ashrāf*): the well-born, in India comprising the four *qaum* (q.v.) of *sayyid* (the descendents of the Prophet); *shaikh* (descendents of his Companions); Mughal; and Pathan.

auqaf (*auqāf*): see *waqf*.

baiʿat: a vow of allegiance to a *pir* as his disciple or *murid*.

baqa (*baqā*): abiding eternally in God; a stage on the Sufi path often understood to follow *fana*, absorption or extinction of the self in God.

baradari (*barādarī*): brotherhood; the patrilineage within which, by custom, marriage is preferred.

barakat: blessing, holiness, spiritual power inherent in a saint; conveyed in *tabarruk*, sacred relics or blessings.

Chishti (*Chishtī*): a Sufi path of those initiated into the chain of succession that begins with Mu'inu'd-Din of Ajmer

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NOTE: Based in part on M.G.S. Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam* (Chicago, 1974) III, 449-454, and on John T. Platts, *A Dictionary of Urdu, Classical Hindi, and English* (London, 1968 reprint).

(d. 1236); divided into the two branches of *nizamiyyah* (*niẕāmiyyah*) and *sabiriyyah* (*ṣābiriyyah*).

daroghah (*dārōghah*): the head man of an office; an inspector of police.

dars-i nizami (*dars-i niẕāmī*): a syllabus of religious education current in South Asia from the eighteenth century.

daru'l-islam (*dāru'l-islām*): lands under Muslim rule; later, any lands in which Muslim institutions are maintained, whether or not under Muslim rule. It is the converse of *daru'l-harb*, the "lands of war."

daru'l-ʿulum (*dāru'l-ʿulūm*): a place of advanced religious learning, superior to a *madrasah*.

darwesh: see Sufi.

fana (*fanā*): see *baqa*.

faqir (*faqīr*): see Sufi.

Fatihah (*fātiḥah*): opening chapter of the Qur'an, often repeated over food on customary occasions, at graves, etc.

fatwa (*fatwā*; pl. *fatāwā*): the opinion of a *mufti* on a point of law.

fiqh: jurisprudence; the discipline of elucidating the *shariʿat* (q.v.); also the resultant body of rules.

ghair-muqallid: one who does not follow the historic law schools but consults the Qur'an and *hadis*; the Ahl-i Hadis.

gyarhwin (*gyārhwīṅ*): the festival held in commemoration of the death of Shaikh ʿAbdu'l Qādir Gīlānī (1078-1166); literally, "eleventh."

hadis (*ḥadīs̤*): the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad based on the authority of a chain of transmitters.

hafiz (*ḥāfiẕ*): a person who has memorized the Qur'an.

hajj (*ḥajj*): the annual pilgrimage to Mecca, required of every Muslim once in his life if possible.

hakim (*ḥakīm*): see *tibb*.

Hanafi (Ḥanafī): referring to the Sunni legal *mazhab* (q.v.) ascribed to Abu-Hanifa (699-767).

Hanbali (Ḥanbalī): referring to the Sunni legal *mazhab* (q.v.) ascribed to Ahmad ibn Hanbal (780-855).

hazrat (*ḥaẕrat*): presence, dignity, a title applied to any great person.

'ibadat (*'ibādat*; pl. *'ibādāt*): religious obligations, particularly those of the canonically prescribed rituals, owed by man to God.

'id (*'īd*): a festival. *'Īdu'l-fitr*, the great *'id* following the fast of Ramazan and *'īdu'l-aẓḥa*, the *'id* of the sacrifice commemorating Abraham's offering of his son Ishmael.

ijazat (*ijāzat*): permission, specifically of a student to offer instruction himself.

ijtihad (*ijtihād*): individual inquiry to establish the ruling of the *shari'at* (q.v.) upon a given point, by a *mujtahid*, a person qualified for the inquiry. The Sunnis have considered *ijtihad* permissible only on points not already decided by recognized authorities; on points already so decided they require *taqlid*, adherence to the usual view of one's *mazhab* (q.v.).

imam (*imām*): (1) leader of the canonical prayer; or the leader of the Muslim community; (2) among the Shi'ah, 'Ali and his descendants as proper leaders of the Islamic community, even when rejected by it, held to have a spiritual function as successors to Muhammad; (3) among Sunnis, any great *'alim* (q.v.), especially the founder of a legal school.

imkan-i nazir (*imkān-i naẓīr*): "the possibility of an equal"; a subject of debate as to whether God could create the equal of Muhammad.

isal-i sawab (*īṣāl-i ṣawāb*): the transfer of merit for a pious act to someone else, often deceased.

jagir (*jāgīr*): the right to the revenue of a piece of land given by government as a reward for services.

jami' masjid (*jāmi' masjid*): see *masjid*.

jazb (*jazb*): absorption, attraction; one whom God has drawn to himself is a *majzub* or madman.

jihad (*jihād*): (1) spiritual struggle against one's baser instincts; (2) legitimate war against non-Muslims waged by a *mujahid* (*mujāhid*; pl. *mujāhidīn*).

jinn: a race of creatures made of smokeless fire, some good and some evil, who may help or possess humans, and whom humans seek to control.

kafir (*kāfir*): a non-Muslim; one who practices *kufr*, infidelity.
karamat (*karāmat*; pl. *karāmāt*): a miracle performed by a saint.
kashf: an opening, a manifestation from God.
khalifah (*khalīfah*): one who receives *khilafat* (q.v.) from a *pir* (q.v.).
khanaqah (*khānaqah*): a building for Sufi (q.v.) activities, where *zikr* (q.v.) is observed and where one or more *pirs* (q.v.) live, entertain traveling Sufis, and teach their disciples.
khass (*khāṣṣ*): see *ʿamm*.
khilafat (*khilāfat*): "successorship" to a *pir*, giving permission to initiate disciples.
khwajah (*khw̤ājah*): a title.
kotwal (*kōtwāl*): the chief officer of the police for a city or town; city magistrate.
kufr: see *kafir*.
madrasah: a school for ʿulama (q.v.).
mahallah (*maḥallah*): a quarter of a city.
Mahdi (*mahdī*): the "rightly guided one" who will appear at the end of time to establish Islam; among the Twelver Shiʿahs, he is the "hidden" Imam.
majzub (*majẕūb*): see *jazb*.
maktab: a writing or primary school, as opposed to a *madrasah*.
Maliki (Mālikī): referring to the Sunni legal *mazhab* (q.v.) ascribed to Malik b. Anas (715-795).
manqulat (*manqūlāt*): the "copied" subjects, Qur'an and *hadis*, as distinguished from *maʿqulat*, which are the products of man's reasoning.
mansabdar (*manṣabdār*): the holder of a rank in the Mughal state system.
maʿqulat (*maʿqūlāt*): see *manqulat*.
masjid: a mosque; any place of worship for Muslims where *namaz* (q.v.) is performed in a group; a major mosque where the Friday prayer is performed is a *jamiʿ masjid*.
maulana (*maulānā*): "Our Lord," a title given to a person respected for religious learning.

maulawi (*maulawī*): a learned man.

maulud (*maulūd*): the anniversary of the Prophet Muhammad's birth.

mazhab (*mazhab*): in Sunni Islam, one of the four equally legitimate schools of law: Hanafi, Hanbali, Shafiʿi, and Maliki.

millat: in the Ottoman empire, one of the recognized autonomous religious communities.

mirza (*mirzā*): a Persian title: gentleman.

mufti (*muftī*): an expert in the *shariʿat* (q.v.) who gives opinions in cases of law and conscience.

muhaddis (*muḥaddiṣ*): a scholar of *hadis* (q.v.).

Muharram: the first month of the Muslim calendar, when the death of the Prophet's grandson Husain and his companions is mourned by the Shiʿah.

muhtamim: a manager, one concerned about others.

mujaddid: a renewer of the religious law who recalls Muslims to authentic revelation; he is engaged in renewal or *tajdid*.

mujahid (*mujāhid*; pl. *mujāhidīn*): see jihad.

mujtahid: see *ijtihad*.

munsif (*munṣif*): a subordinate judge; an arbitrator.

murid (*murīd*): a disciple of a Sufi *pir*.

murshid: see *pir*.

namaz (*namāz*): the canonical prayer, performed five times daily.

Naqshbandi (Naqshbandī): a Sufi path of those initiated into the chain of succession of Baha'u'd-Din Naqshbandi (d. 1389); the *mujdaddidi* (*mujaddidī*) branch has initiation from Shaikh Ahmad Sarhindi, called the *mujaddid* (q.v.) of the second millennium.

nawwab (*nawwāb*): a viceroy, governor, lord.

padri (*pādrī*): common title given all Christian religious leaders or missionaries.

pir (*pīr*): a Sufi master able to lead disciples on the mystical way; also known as *murshid* (a guide) or *shaikh*.

Qadiri (Qādirī): a Sufi path of those initiated into the chain of succession of ʿAbdu'l-Qadir Gilani (d. 1166).

qasbah (*qaṣbah*): a town dominated by Muslim families.

qaum: a people, tribe, family.

qawalli (*qawāllī*): singing and playing as part of devotional exercises inducing ecstasy.
qazi (*qāẓī*): a judge administering *shariʿat* (q.v.) law.
qutb (*quṭb*): the polar star; a center around which anything revolves; a term used for the Sufi deemed the most advanced of his age.
ra'is (*ra'īs*; pl. *rū'isā*): the head, master, person of authority.
Ramazan (Ramaẓān): the ninth Muslim month, canonically designated as the month of fasting between dawn and dusk.
sadru's-sudur (*ṣadru'ṣ-ṣudūr*): the chief judge
sahib (*ṣāḥib*): lord, gentleman; a title of respect
sajjadah nishin (*sajjādah nishīn*): the successor to the leadership of a *pir*.
samaʿ (*samāʿ*): musical sessions held by Sufis to induce spiritual ecstacy.
sanad: a diploma, testimonial, certificate.
sarparast: guardian, patron.
sayyid: see *ashraf*.
Shafiʿi (Shāfiʿī): referring to the Sunni legal *mazhab* (q.v.) ascribed to ash-Shafiʿi (767-820).
shaghl: (1) occupation; (2) meditation in Sufi disciples.
shah (*shāh*): an Iranian royal title; also used for subordinate personages; when used before the name, it often implies a Sufi saint.
shaikh: (1) a title for a Sufi master or *pir* (q.v.); (2) a Muslim believed to be descended from the Companions; see *ashraf*.
shariʿat (*sharīʿat*): the whole body of rules guiding the life of a Muslim, in law, ethics, and etiquette; sometimes called Sacred Law. The provisions of the *shariʿat* are worked out through the discipline of *fiqh* on the basis of *usulu'l-fiqh* (basic sources of legal authority), which Sunnis commonly list as Qur'an, *hadis* (q.v.), *ijmaʿ* (consensus of the community), and *qiyas* (legal analogical reasoning). The Shiʿah commonly substitute *ʿaql* (reason) for *qiyas* and interpret *ijmaʿ* as consensus of the *imams* (q.v.).
Shiʿah (Shīʿah): general name for that part of the Muslims

that held to the rights of ʿAli and his descendants to leadership in the community whether recognized by the majority or not; or any particular sect holding this position. Shiʿi is the adjective, or refers as a noun to an adherent of the Shiʿah.

silsilah: the "chain" of all Sufis who share spiritual descent from a common founder. See *tariqah.*

Sufi (*ṣūfī*): an exponent of sufism (*tasawwuf*), the commonest term for that aspect of Islam which cultivates spiritual development. The Arabic *faqir* (fakir) and the Persian *darwesh* (dervish), both meaning "poor," are terms applied to Sufis.

suhbat (*ṣuḥbat*): companionship; the company of a saint; carnal intercourse.

suluk (sulūk): journey, way; the particular path of conduct taught by a Sufi.

sunnat: received custom, particularly that associated with Muhammad; it is embodied in *hadis* (q.v.).

Sunni (Sunnī): properly *ahlu's-sunnah wa'l-jamaʿah* ("people of the custom and the community"), that majority of Muslims which accept the authority of the whole first generation of Muslims and the validity of the historical community, in contrast to the Kharijis and the Shiʿah; Sunni as adjective refers to the doctrinal position, as noun it refers to an adherent of the position.

tabarruk: see *barakat.*

tabiʿat (*tabīʿat*): nature, disposition.

tahsil (*taḥṣīl*): a revenue district held in charge by a *tahsildar* (*taḥṣīldār*).

tajdid (*tajdīd*): see *mujaddid.*

taqlid (*taqlīd*): see *ijtihad.*

tarbiyat: training in personal characteristics, as distinguished from merely intellectual training.

tariqat (*ṭarīqat*): the mystical way; specifically, any one of the Sufi (q.v.) "brotherhoods" or "orders"; groupings of Sufis with a common *silsilah* (q.v.) and a common *zikr* (q.v.).

tasarruf (*taṣarruf*): the dramatic expenditure of energy by a *shaikh* on his disciple to change his behavior.

tasawwuf (*taṣawwuf*): see Sufi.
tasawwur-i shaikh (*taṣawwur-i shaikh*): meditation on the *shaikh* by the disciple as a technique of spiritual discipline.
tasbih (*tasbīḥ*): magnifying God; a string of beads used to count one's prayers or repetitions.
tatbiq (*taṭbīq*): drawing things together face to face; here, resolving and uniting religious approaches and interpretations.
tauhid (*tauḥīd*): the unity of God.
tawajjuh: the powerful attention directed on a follower by a Sufi *shaikh* who thus influences him decisively.
taʿwiz (*taʿwīẕ*): a prayer for God's protection, an amulet.
taʿziyah: (1) mourning; (2) effigies of tombs, etc. used in the Shiʿah processions of Muhurram (q.v.).
tibb (*ṭibb*): the classical Muslim system of medicine practiced by a *hakim* or *tabib* (*ṭabīb*).
ʿulama (*ʿulamā'*): see *ʿalim*.
ʿurs: (1) "marriage" with God upon the death of a saint; (2) the festival commemorating that date held at the tomb.
wahdatu'sh-shuhud (*waḥdatu'sh-shuhūd*): the metaphysical doctrine of phenomenological monism, contrasted with the ontological monism of *wahdatu'l-wujud*: Unity of Appearance in contrast to Unity of Being.
wahhabi (*wahhābī*): a follower of the eighteenth-century Arabian reformer ʿAbdu'l-Wahhab who taught an anti-Sufi, Hanbali Islam; used by opponents to describe nineteenth-century Indian reformers.
wakil (*wakīl*): an attorney, pleader; a deputy.
waqf (pl. *auqāf*): a pious endowment (or "foundation") of certain incomes, commonly rents or land revenues, for the upkeep of a mosque, a hospital, etc.
zakat (*zakāt*): the canonical tithe.
zamindar (*zamīndār*): a holder of the rights to revenue of a piece of land.
zikr (*ẕikr*): Sufi practices designed to foster the recollection of the name of God as a spiritual exercise.
zimmi (*ẕimmī*): a "protected subject," follower of a religion tolerated by Islam, within Muslim-ruled territory.

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