Chapter 1: Interaction of Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān and Sir William Muir on Ḥadīth literature

In Western scholarly studies on Ḥadīth material as well as in attempts to reconstruct a historical biography of Muḥammad, the work of Sir William Muir in the middle of the nineteenth century is often over-looked. Not only did he produce one of the first biographies of Muḥammad in the English language based on primary sources, he also formulated a thorough critique of the Ḥadīth and a methodology with which to sift what he considered historically accurate traditions from spurious ones. Subsequent scholars tended to reach very similar conclusions in their evaluation of the authenticity of the historical accounts contained within this body of traditions that formed the basis of not only the Muslim perception of their Prophet, but the foundation of the early development of Islam and the Muslim legal system as well.

Muir's contribution was unique in the West not only in its pioneering use of early Muslim sources, but also in that the context in which he wrote made Muslim evaluation of his research both immediate and interactive. A contemporary of Muir who responded to his *Life* soon after its publication was Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān. He wrote his *Essays* in which he sought to answer a number of Muir's criticisms; the book was later published in a more complete form in Urdu as *Al-Khuṭubāt al-Aḥmadīyah ʿalā al-ʿArab wa al-Sīrah al Muḥammadīyah* in 1887. Unlike many of the European Orientalists, Muir lived, worked, and conducted his research in an Islamic context where he had the benefit of interaction with believing Muslims such as Aḥmad Khān who, while trained in the traditional approach to the Ḥadīth, were also active in seeking to reform this classical approach in order to meet the needs of the contemporary Muslim community. In this process, these Muslim scholars were becoming increasingly skilled in selecting and assimilating those aspects of Western historiography and textual criticism which they considered legitimate.

Muir and Aḥmad Khān were influenced by their individual ideological frameworks both in the methodologies they chose to use and in the conclusions they reached. Muir applied Western critical methods to the biographical material found in the Ḥadīth in his attempt to reconstruct a historically accurate life of Muḥammad. As an Evangelical

Christian, he could not accept Muḥammad as a prophet of God bringing a message that supplanted the Gospel and that denied the deity of Christ. Hence, he began with the premise that any accounts that ascribed miraculous powers to Muḥammad had to be spurious. The spread of Islam could only be explained in purely human terms, and thus he sought to rationalize any supernatural elements found within the traditions. Aḥmad Khān, on the other hand, accepted, at least initially, the authority of the Ḥadīth in matters of religious belief and practice. His education had been in the traditional Islamic studies, though heavily influenced by the Shāh Wali Ullāh school of thought which rejected *taqlīd* and tended to favor a revival of the practice of *ijtihād*. Though his own evaluation of the traditions was continuing to evolve, little of this was overtly evident in his controversy with Muir, where he was more concerned with defending the traditional methodologies of evaluating the Ḥadīth against Muir's criticisms. In his later writings which were directed more to his fellow Muslims, he rejected all supernaturalism, but on the basis of a comprehensive scientific outlook as opposed to Muir's selective rejection of miracles in non-Christian religions.

This chapter examines the writings of Muir and Aḥmad Khān in the context of Muslim-Christian interaction in north-western India after the Revolt of 1857. It begins with (i) a brief sketch of their biographical details, emphasizing the factors that shaped their philosophical and religious perspectives. Next, (ii) their writings during or shortly after the Revolt of 1857 provide an appropriate starting point for a discussion on the changing dynamics of the encounter of Muslims with Christian government officials and missionaries after this pivotal event, by contrasting the opinions of Muir and Aḥmad Khān on whether Christian missionary activity had been a causal factor in the Revolt and on the role of the government in religious matters. After this survey of their early writings the chapter focuses on (iii) their major works on the topic of the Ḥadīth, and compares their methodology in evaluating the authenticity of traditional material. This analysis comprises the major part of this chapter.

Biographical sketches of Muir and Aḥmad Khān in their socio-political and intellectual contexts

Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān is generally revered for his contribution to the moderniz-ing of Islam and Muslim education in India.[1] The Mohammadan Anglo-Oriental (MAO) College which he founded exerted an enormous influence on the generation of scholars in the late nineteenth century that departed from the traditional Islamic schools and sought to incorporate Western methodologies and science in their learning. Aḥmad Khān was also a key spokesman for the Indian Muslim community in the aftermath of the 1857 Re-volt, particularly in the north-western provinces, in interpreting the causes of the revolt to the British government and in countering the negative image presented by those who wished to blame the Muslims and their religion for the uprising. Besides educational and political achievements, Aḥmad Khān was also influential in the area of religion, both in interaction with Christians as well as in discussions within the Islamic scholarly commu-nity. His pioneering efforts to integrate a rationalist, scientific approach to knowledge with Islam were the primary source from which subsequent Islamic modernists in India drew their inspiration.

Aḥmad Khān had a traditional Islamic education which he felt compelled to re-view when he began to work as a sub-judge, or *munṣif* in Delhi, in 1847. He began to study the Ḥadīth, including the *Mishkāt*, *Jāmiʿi Tirmizī,* and several parts of *Saḥīḥ Mus-lim*, with Maulāna Makhṣūṣullāh, nephew of ʿAbdul ʿAzīz and grandson of Shāh Wali Ullāh.[2] This helped to form the basis of his critical analysis of Muir's evaluation of the Ḥadīth in his *Life of Mahomet*. One of his first writings was on the life of the Prophet consisting of a small booklet on the birth, death, miracles and other events of the life of Muḥammad, written to give an accurate account of the traditional procedures to be fol-lowed in *mawlūd* or celebrations of the Prophet's birthday.[3] A major emphasis of this work was: "the essence of Islam is love for the Prophet and love for the Prophet will be reflected in following his Sunna."[4] In his subsequent writings, he continued to reveal this early Sufi influence of seeing the Sunna as an ethical pattern rather than a principle of legal authority.

The life of Sir William Muir closely parallels that of Aḥmad Khān: he was born two years later in 1819, entered the Indian service one year prior to Aḥmad Khān in 1837, and they both retired in 1876; Muir married when he was 21 and Aḥmad Khān when he was 18 years old. Both were appointed to be Knight Commanders of the Star of India (KCSI)--Muir in 1867 and Aḥmad Khān in 1888, and both received honorary degrees from the University of Edinburgh. Upon retirement, both also devoted themselves to educational work--Aḥmad Khān at the MAO College and Muir at the University of Edinburgh. Muir died at Edinburgh in 1905, while Aḥmad Khān pre-deceased him in Aligarh in 1893. During his service in India, Muir had been assigned to various posts in the north-western part of India, where Aḥmad Khān was also serving, though it is doubtful that they were ever stationed in any city at the same time. Nonetheless, Aḥmad Khān was well acquainted with Muir; in his biography of Aḥmad Khān, Lt. Colonel Graham termed Muir as Aḥmad Khān's "intimate friend" and "one of his best and most influential friends" despite his deep disagreement with Muir that he expressed in his writings.[5]

Muir had studied at the universities of Edinburgh and Glasgow, but left before taking his degree, after accepting an appointment with the Bengal Civil Service. In his preparation for work in India, he trained at Haileybury College, the officers' school of the East India Company, excelling in Oriental languages. Instruction in Oriental languages was central to the training at Haileybury, which became the first institution in Britain to offer such instruction.[6] As part of the Indian Civil Service, Muir rose through the ranks from settlement officer, to district collector, to secretary to the provincial government, to become Lt.-Governor of the North West Provinces from 1868-1874.[7] In an article in *The Pioneer* published in Allahabad, speculating on a possible replacement for Muir in the position of Lt.-Governor, Muir's abilities in administration receive this positive evaluation:

> In all the great questions which at present call for statesmanlike treatment, Sir W. Muir is thoroughly versed. No one since the days of Mr. Thomason has studied with such earnestness and success the knotty problems of revenue and land tenure. With matters of social reform he is peculiary [sic] fitted to deal, for there are few who have mixed so freely with the people,--few whose acquaintance with native manners and customs is so minute and accurate. Regarding the education of the

masses, an enthusiast's energy has in Sir W. Muir been tempered by breadth of view and by patient observation of the course of events. Beyond all this he is utterly fearless as to whom he pleases or displeases. More than once he is known to have restrained by his determined opposition that reckless haste which is sometimes mistaken for energy. More than once the Supreme Council has had to admit its inability to bend his will or to cajole him into acquiescence.[8]

As a civil servant, he was very much part of the British colonial empire, sharing as well as shaping that perspective. Even after his return to England, he continued to take part in the shaping of the British policy in India by functioning as a member of the Council of India from 1876 to 1885.[9]

Impact of professional career and religious beliefs on Muir's scholarship

Muir, working in various capacities for the Bengal Civil Service could not help but be influenced in his thought and writings by the position he held in the colonial government. As Said states, "No one has ever devised a method for detaching the scholar from the circumstances of life, from the fact of his involvement (conscious or unconscious) with a class, a set of beliefs, a social position, or from the mere activity of being a member of a society."[10] Bennett sees Muir as strongly influenced by his education at Haileybury College, leading him to attitudes of racial and cultural superiority.[11] He also suggests that Muir fit the pattern characteristic of other colonial administrators termed by Said as a "dialectic of information and control," by utilizing "their knowledge of people, language and culture for the purposes of control."[12] Yet in most of his writings, his Evangelical religious convictions had a much more overt influence on his choice of subjects and his treatment of them than his involvement in the colonial regime. He was significantly involved in the production of Christian literature--awarding prizes for publications of high quality,[13] assisting in the establishment and running of the North India Tract organization,[14] and writing a number of books or tracts himself, both for the purpose of controversy with Muslims and for the education of the indigenous Christian church. Muir's strong support for evangelical missions, Christian education, and indigenous congregations of Christians was a hallmark of his administration.

Muir was closely associated with the missionary community, and as an Evangelical was strongly supportive of their aims. In the words of Norman Daniel, "Sir William Muir brings together three different worlds: that of scholarship, that of government, and that of missions."[15] He had been a close friend of Pfander, a German Pietist recruited by CMS to work in northern India,[16] and it was upon the latter's encouragement that he proceeded to research and publish his biography of the Prophet Muḥammad.[17] This book along with his numerous other writings became a chief source of information on Islam for the missionaries who were serving in India or subsequently came with the purpose of working with Muslims. They were influenced in their perception of Islam by his writings as he was in turn influenced through his contact with Pfander.[18] As a government official, however, Muir supported the official policy of neutrality, arguing that it was improper for a "Christian" government to promote Hinduism or Islam and inadvisable to inculcate Christianity, but also that individual officers must be free to support educational or evangelistic efforts in a private capacity.[19]

Said, ignoring the strong impact of Muir's faith on his work as a government official and his research as an Orientalist constructs a different motivation to explain his pursuits. He sees the only explanation for Muir's enormous labors in scholarship on Islam coupled with his negative attitude and "impressive antipathy in that work to the Orient, Islam, and the Arabs," to be an attempt to deal with "the Orient's claim on him," followed by a sort of debunking project after his Orientalist training "opened his eyes to what the Orient really was."[20] Yet Said's definition and descriptions of the archetypal Orientalist often seem an ill fit for Muir. When he states his thesis, "that the essential aspects of modern Orientalist theory and praxis (from which present-day Orientalism derives) can be understood, not as a sudden access of objective knowledge about the Orient, but as a set of structures inherited from the past, secularized, redisposed, and re-formed by such disciplines as philology, which in turn were naturalized, modernized, and laicized substitutes for (or versions of) Christian supernaturalism,"[21] Muir would appear to be a "pre-Orientalist" in that he did utilize a sudden access to primary materials made possible by his posting to India and in that because of his Evangelical convictions he was committed to Christian supernaturalism and not to secularism or naturalism. Norman

Daniel presents Muir as continuing the biases and negative propaganda of the Middle Ages.[22] This conclusion is somewhat questionable because of his consistent use of primary sources and his thorough description of his method in analyzing the authenticity of traditional accounts. However, Said's description of Oriental scholarship consisting of "circumventing the unruly (un-Occidental) nonhistory of the Orient with orderly chronicle, portraits, and plots," does give an accurate description of Muir's record of the history of Muḥammad and Islam in his numerous books and his attitude in general toward the Muslim record of Islamic history.[23]

The missionaries and the Revolt of 1857

The Revolt of 1857 had a considerable impact on the relationship between the Christian missionaries and the Muslim community in India. Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān, in his analysis of the causes of the rebellion, saw the people's perception of the government's involvement in missionary activity as "chief among the secondary causes of the rebellion," the primary cause being the non-involvement of the indigenous people in the Legislative Council of India.[24] The people misapprehended the actions of the government and were convinced that it intended to force the Christian religion and foreign customs on Muslims and Hindus alike. They felt that this was not being done openly, but by indirect steps such as the removal of the study of Arabic and Sanskrit, and by reducing the people to poverty. The material assistance and Christian education given to the orphans after the drought of 1837 were also seen in this light.[25] With regard to the ongoing religious controversy, Aḥmad Khān had this to say:

> In the first days of British rule in Hindustan, there used to be less talk than at present on the subject of religion. Discussion on this point has been increasing day by day and has now reached its climax. I do not say that Government has interfered in these matters; but it has been the general opinion that all that was done was according to the instructions and hints of Government, and was by no means displeasing to it. It has been commonly believed that Government appointed missionaries and maintained them at its own cost. It has been supposed that Government, and the officers of Government throughout the country were in the habit of giving large sums of money to these missionaries with the intention of covering their expenses, enabling them to distribute books, and in every way aiding them.[26]

The common perception clearly implicated the government and its officials in activities which the people felt threatened their religion. In this, Aḥmad Khān stated that the creedal nature of the Muslim faith caused the Muslims to feel more threatened, and accounted for their greater numbers among the rebels.[27] He argued that it was "wrong and impolitic on the part of a government to interfere in any way with the faith of its subjects," especially in hindering the study of the tenets of their religion.[28] He did not insist that this was the intention of the government, but the people had misunderstood its actions as such, and it had done nothing to alleviate their suspicion and ill-will.

In addition to the government, Aḥmad Khān faulted also the missionaries and their methods. They had introduced a new system of preaching; rather than holding to the traditional method of limiting religious discussion to a mosque or private home, they had taken to preaching in public places and printing and circulating controversial tracts. They had not confined themselves to explaining their own doctrines and books, but "attacked the followers and the holy places of other creeds: annoying, and insulting beyond expression the feelings of those who listened to them."[29] In all this, the missionaries enjoyed the protection of the authorities. They also opened Christian schools which the people were encouraged to attend by officers in high governmental positions, one of which could likely have been Muir. The schools were tolerated because the people believed that such education would lead to a position in the civil service, but were nonetheless seen as instrumental in the erosion of their faith.

A final factor cited by Aḥmad Khān as contributing to the distrust was the letter circulated among government officials proposing that since India was now united under one rule and connected by telegraph and railways, it was time that it be united under one religion, namely Christianity.[30] In his account of the 1857 Revolt, John William Kaye also presented this incident as a factor in creating the general opinion that the government intended to convert the people to their religion. Though its precise source seemed unclear, he described it as originating from the missionary community and sent to "'Educated Natives,' especially to respectable Mahomedans in Government employment."[31] Lt.-Governor Halliday saw it as serious enough that he responded with another circular disclaiming any government connection with the previous letter. That some felt this was

only another example of the subtle and under-cover methods the government was using to convert the masses was seen in Mirza Firoz Shah Shahzada's declaration calling for people to join *jihādīs* on the basis of the efforts of the government and the missionaries to destroy the religion of the Hindus and Muslims.[32]

Muir disagreed with the view that the activities of the missionaries were the cause of the Revolt. As head of the Intelligence Department at Delhi, he was intimately involved in the circulation of information as the uprising grew and was eventually defeated. In some of his letters he deals with the same charge of government toleration of missionary activity circulating in Britain. He admitted that the threat of Christianization by the British was a "tale" circulated by the rebel leaders, but that it was at no point connected with any grievance against missionary institutions or government support for the same. He argued that Indian nationals "do most thoroughly distinguish between a public and a private act in favor of Christian unity" and that they would actually respect one who lived by his convictions in supporting religion.[33] In another letter he again dismissed the allegations that missionary associations were to blame. He stated, "So far as my observations go, Missionary efforts have, in these quarters at least, attracted no hostile feeling, nor would any amount of private support of Missionary Institutions be challenged as a grievance."[34] He had not seen any special ill-feeling against the missionaries or their buildings in the destruction that followed, and counseled that if the uprising was successfully weathered, "[the government's] religious policy should still be that of strict neutrality, but its officers should be left free to use their private influence as hitherto in the support of Christianity."[35]

Muir continued to maintain this position with regard to official involvement with Christian missionary endeavors, reflecting the attitude of other Evangelicals in the Civil Service. He was a strong advocate of the post-1857 British position on a separation of the interests of the state from those of the church. He maintained, however, that this did not preclude the involvement of individuals within the civil service in the missionary endeavors of the Christian church in a personal capacity. In this he was continuing the policy of his mentor, James Thomason, of whom Muir wrote: "Sternly as Thomason held, in his position of Lieut.-Governor, to the axiom, that the introduction of religious teaching

by the Government was not only expedient but unjustifiable, he could yet see, as the goal of his measures, both Collegiate and Indigenous, the eventful conversion of the people to Christianity."[36] At a speech at Moradabad in 1871, Muir stated his position with respect to freedom of religion from the standpoint of a committed Christian:

> We value the Christian faith as our richest treasure; but, doing so, we can the better appreciate the existence of the same attachment in the breasts of both Mahomedan and Hindu to their respective faiths. We believe the Old Testament and in the Holy Gospel, and we love and prize them as our Sacred Scripture; and so we know the Hindu loves his Shasters, and the Mahomedan his Koran. And, as we should not ourselves tolerate interference with our own belief, or with our own observances, neither will we permit interference in any shape, or in any degree, with the faith and observances of our subjects.[37]

His speech at the MAO College at Aligarh in 1875, the first year of its functioning,[38] also reflected this perspective. He first congratulated his friend Aḥmad Khān whose vision and hard work had led to the founding of the college. In his speech, Muir stated that while he believed that the education of the young should be on a religious basis, the British government in India did not practice this principle since as a Christian government it could not inculcate tenets of Hinduism or Islam; and Hindus and Muslims would naturally object to any attempt by it "to inculcate Christianity in its schools and colleges."[39] He also appealed to the pronouncement of Queen Victoria who, upon assuming the direct administration of India after the 1857 Revolt, "declared that while herself placing a firm reliance on the truth of Christianity, and acknowledging with gratitude the solace of the Christian religion, disclaimed alike the right and the desire to impose her own convictions upon her Indian subjects."[40] Yet Muir continued to advocate the involvement of government officials in supporting Christian educational institutions privately, motivated by their personal convictions. As a committed Christian, Muir felt he could fully recognize and sympathize with the corresponding convictions and principles, from a Muslim point of view, upon which that college had been established. Aside from the granting of land to the MAO College in his official capacity, Muir had himself donated personal funds to the college "for the furtherance of secular studies, and of European science and literature," and was pleased with the arrangements made for this.[41] As for his other involvements in Christian work during his tenure at Allahabad, Muir had

personally conducted services for Christians and taught Sunday School at Allahabad in the absence of a regular clergyman, and had founded a village for the Christian community near Allahabad that was named Muirabad in his honor.[42] His most lasting contributions however were his writings.

Publications and scholarly interaction: *Muir*

The publication of Muir's *Life* in 1861 and the 1857 Revolt were the two events which initiated a widespread response from the concerned Muslims of India. The latter event shaped the community's political history while the former "molded mainly its religious history and added a new dimension to the Western Orientalists' approach to Islam."[43] Prior to the publication of the Prophet's biography, Muir had written a series of articles in the *Calcutta Review* on the Controversy between the missionaries and Muslim scholars.[44] He was a founder of the North India Christian Tract and Book Society, functioning as its President for 14 years and as its Patron for many years after that, as well as writing and publishing a number of their first books and tracts.[45] His first major work, however, was this four-volume biography of the Prophet, based on early Muslim sources.

Muir's friend, Pfander, had encouraged him to write a biography of Muḥammad which would be suitable for perusal by Muslims in the local language, written from sources they themselves would acknowledge.[46] Aloys Sprenger (1813-1893), while in India to teach at the Delhi College, had gained access to a number of manuscripts containing copies of the works of early Muslim historians such as Ibn Hishām (d. 834), Ibn Saʻd (d. 845) the Kātib of al-Wāqidī, and al-Ṭabari (d. 923);[47] and had published a biography of the Prophet in English in 1851.[48] Muir utilized these same primary sources along with the works of Sprenger and Gustav Weil,[49] though he apologized in advance for any deficiency in content that might be due to his lack of access to Western research, to his preoccupation with official business at Agra where he was stationed at the time, and later, to the inaccessibility of certain documents because of the Revolt which was at its height.

In assessing the colonialist approach to the history and culture of the Muslims of South Asia, Metcalf characterizes textually based, narrowly defined Islam as " 'too little'

to describe the complex and varied practices and loyalties of actual Muslims," especially when Islam is made into the single most important causal variable for whatever Muslims do.[50] Muir's *Life of Mahomet* could certainly be characterized as textual in its approach to Islam. He examines Islam through an investigation of the Qur'ān and, more importantly for this study, the Ḥadīth collections. From this he deduced how Islam was to be defined and interpreted, why Muslims behaved the way they do, and why Islam as a religion would always be inferior to Christianity. However, he did not utilize a comparison with the West in which non-European societies are seen as "backward, irrational, and medieval" because religion is the central force, and European societies are seen as "beyond religion in public life" and thus more progressive, as Metcalf describes the colonialist approach generally.[51] For Muir, as an Evangelical, religion was still regarded the defining force in society it necessarily had to be, with the caveat that that religion must be Christianity to be truly beneficial.[52]

The fault with the majority of the previous attempts of Western scholars to write a biography was, in Muir's opinion, that they were full of inaccuracies because of a lack of access to original documents. The fault with similar attempts by Muslims was that they were full of inanities because Muslim authors believed unquestioningly the multitude of miracles of Muḥammad contained in the traditions.[53] He had in an earlier article called for a "sifting analysis of the traditions, according to the probable dates of their being recorded; an account of the individuals who registered them; of the means they possessed for arriving at a true knowledge of the facts; and of the number through whom they successively descended."[54] In a lengthy introduction to his work, he proceeded to give his critique of the traditional Muslim method of analyzing the genuineness of traditions and outlined his own approach. C. J. Lyall, in his obituary of Muir for the Royal Asiatic Society described this section thus:

> The introductory chapter on the sources of the biography states, with a skill and clearness which have never been surpassed, the criteria which must be applied in utilizing, for an account of the Prophet's career, the information furnished by the Ḳur'ān and the supplementary data of tradition. The author's intimate knowledge and experience of Oriental character enabled him to criticize and interpret these data with a unique authority; and the chapter will always be read with profit by those who

approach the task of constructing a rational account of the origins of the Faith of Islam.[55]

He was also quick to add, however, that the work was "marked with a polemic character which must necessarily render in some degree antipathetic to those who profess the religion of Muḥammad."[56] This certainly was the reaction of Indian Muslim scholars such as Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān, who while appreciating Muir's scholarship, took strong exception to his biased and negative portrayal of Muḥammad. Aḥmad Khān also challenged his method of handling the body of traditions and made a thorough case in support of the traditional method practiced by Muslims throughout their history.

William Muir was quite explicit as to the polemical basis of his motivation for analyzing the Ḥadīth and writing a fresh biography of Muḥammad. He was convinced that a fresh sifting of the Ḥadīth would help the missionary by loosening the hold of the traditions on those Muslims who recognized the weakness of evidence based on hearsay or bias.[57] This was not to be merely an academic exercise, limited to the pursuit of literary phantoms, antiquarian research, or the acquisition of remote historical truths, rather it was to enable Christians to confront Islam with their own weapons, such as the writings of Ibn Isḥāq (d. 767), al-Wāqidī (d. 822), and al-Ṭabarī, rather than inadequate Western scholarship.[58] He seems to have had no doubt as to the outcome of the re-examination of the traditional sources. At the same time, Muir seemed to be making a conscious effort to break with traditional patterns of Western interpretations of Islam, while maintaining Western epistemological presuppositions which he labeled "historical deductions of modern research."[59] Though he admired Pfander, Muir criticized his writings as those which "have little reference to the historical deductions of modern research, and deal more with the deep principles of reason and of faith."[60] He joined scholars such as Weil and Sprenger in breaking new ground in Western research on Islam in their direct access to early Arabic sources, but saw it as no contradiction to retain his Evangelical bias rather than adopting the secular bias characteristic of later Orientalists.

Publications and scholarly interaction: Aḥmad Khān

As part of his larger effort in pursuing a policy of reconciliation between the Muslims and the English, Aḥmad Khān had sought to accommodate the Christian presence

and thought within the Islamic community through a number of writings, including an essay on the term used for Christians, *Naṣārā* (c.1858), a commentary on the Bible (1862, 1865), and a treatise on the permissibility of eating with Christians (1866).[61] Earlier, in a period termed by Baljon the "first stage of his religious thought"[62] in which his religious views followed the orthodox interpretations, Aḥmad Khān had begun to make notes for a work in defense of Islam to counter the writings of missionaries active in Agra. These notes were destroyed in the Revolt and were never later published as such.[63] It would seem that Aḥmad Khān had had contact with the missionary Pfander early in his career while stationed in Agra in 1842, and had received copies of the Persian and Arabic Bibles he requested after reading some of Pfander's tracts.[64] Ram Chandra, a Christian convert, had given Aḥmad Khān a number of Christian writings, including Muir's Urdu history of the Christian church as well as a copy of *Baḥs mufīd al-'Āmm fī Taḥqīq al-Islām* consisting of a debate between Rām Chandra and the Qaẓi of Delhi, Maulāna Ulfat Ḥusayn, which had been edited and published by Muir.[65] In his comments in a letter to missionaries in Agra, Rām Chandra echoed the statement by Aḥmad Khān's contemporary and biographer, Khawāja Alṭāf Ḥusayn Ḥālī (1837-1914), that Aḥmad Khān was "already printing a small pamphlet showing the errors of the Bible Chronology. I am positively told that he is going to compose a work proving the corruption of our present Bible."[66] Interestingly, in the commentary on the Bible which he later produced, Aḥmad Khān sought, on the contrary, to prove that there had been no corruption of the text itself.

However, Muir's biography of the Prophet caused Aḥmad Khān great distress regarding the portrayal of Islam and the character of Muḥammad, and concern for the doubts the book might create in the minds of a new generation of young Muslims who were then studying in English.[67] In a letter to Meḥdi 'Alī Khān on August 20, 1869, he stated:

> These days I am in a bit of a turmoil. I have been reading the book William Muir wrote on the life of the Prophet. It has burned my heart and its injustices and prejudices have roasted my heart. I have resolved to write a biography of the Prophet just as I had earlier intended, even if I have to spend all my money and become like a beggar, begging for alms.[68]

Ḥālī describes how in a visit to Aligarh in 1868, he and a friend found Aḥmad Khān in an agitated state of mind over Muir's work and determined to make a reply, against the advice of friends who considered it imprudent in light of Muir's position in government.[69] Aḥmad Khān subsequently went to Britain, accompanying one of his sons who was on his way to study there on a government scholarship. One of his major aims in making the trip was "to gain access to Islamic and western source material in the libraries of London, in order to write a comprehensive reply to Muir's work."[70] He responded primarily to Muir's first volume which dealt at length with an evaluation of the collection of the Ḥadīth. He was able to publish his research as *A Series of Essays on the Life of Muḥammad*, but in Ḥālī's assessment, "he did no more than have a summary of his Urdu notes translated into English and printed in that form."[71] He later printed a revised version in Urdu as *Al-Khuṭubāt al-Aḥmadīyah 'alā al-'Arab wa al-Sīrah al Muḥammadīyah* in 1887. Interestingly, Aḥmad Khān felt compelled to make use of European sources to gain a proper hearing, while Muir was similarly motivated to use early Arabic sources.

Belief regarding the Ḥadīth

Muir's concern in his analysis of the Ḥadīth was to find authentic, reliable sources from which to re-construct a biography of the Prophet. He considered the traditions or the Ḥadīth to be the second major source, after the Qur'ān, of historical material for the life of the Prophet and the rise of Islam.[72] But unlike the Qur'ān, which Muir acclaimed as a reliable, contemporary account, the traditions were suspect in his opinion. He defined the traditions as, "the sayings of the friends and followers of the Prophet, handed down by a real or supposed chain of narrators to the period when they were collected, recorded, and classified," the process of transmission being for the most part oral, a factor which weakened the reliability of the traditions because of the dependence on fallible memory and tendency to exaggeration.[73] The weaknesses in this system, as he saw them, were the doubtful history of the origin of the Ḥadīth, the inadequacy of the traditional tools to evaluate the accounts, and the intrusion of the prejudices and convictions of those passing on a tradition. Muir acknowledged that the traditions could, however, contain historical

facts which could have had their source in written remembrances by the Companions of the Prophet, but with no way of separating the factual history from the spurious traditions that had arisen.[74] Nevertheless, he did not reject completely the historicity of traditional accounts. In an essay reviewing the prologue to Sprenger's biography of Muḥammad, Muir discounted the idea that most of the traditional material had no basis in historical fact. He found in even the tales of the miracles of Prophet and of his "heavenly journey" a kernel of reality, "some real incident on which they were engrafted, which prompted the idea, and gave to fancy a starting point for its fairy creations and illustrative colouring."[75]

Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān saw the importance of the Ḥadīth for the biography of the Prophet and sought to refute Muir's negative assessment of Muḥammad by appealing to a different set of criteria of evaluation. But beyond mere biographical data, the traditions were also a source of the Sunna or custom/practice of the Prophet and thus a standard of conduct for Muslims applicable in all eras. He shared with Muir the opinion that the traditions had not been written down at the time of Muḥammad and his associates, but for the simple reasons that they were not needed and that "the art of authorship was in its infancy."[76] He also agreed that many fictitious traditions had been fabricated, a number of which were mixed in with genuine ones in accepted collections of Ḥadīth, but disagreed with Muir's opinion that they could not be separated. He felt that Islam was not affected in the least by the charge that fabricated traditions existed because Muslim scholars had not only been aware of them from the beginning but had written works "with the sole intention of discriminating false hadeeses from genuine ones," fashioned rules and tests "for ascertaining their merits, genuineness, and authenticity," and condemned fabricators as sinners.[77] He presented an often phrase-by-phrase critique of Muir's *Life* as a "Supplement" to his essay "On the Mohammedan Traditions."[78] His overall assessment of Muir's work was as follows:

> [T]he entire character of his composition clearly indicates that, before having arrived at any conclusion by an unprejudiced and candid investigation, as well as by fair, just, and legitimate reasoning, his mind was prepossessed by the idea that all these traditions were nothing else than mere fabrications or inventions of the narrators and other persons.[79]

He saw Muir as setting out to prove that fabrication and as motivated by *animus* in his writings. So though he respected Muir's learning[80] and approved of his inclusion of Ḥadīth material in his biography, he strongly disapproved of Muir's method of handling the material and his general dismissal of their authenticity.

Amīr ʿAlī, the details of whose life and work will be summarized in the following chapter, exhibited some ambivalence towards Muir's work in that while he repeatedly and vociferously attacked Muir's negative portrayal of Muḥammad and of Islam,[81] he quoted him when his conclusions were favorable and tended to adopt his approach to history at times. He explicitly followed Muir's lead in explaining the development of pre-Islamic legends,[82] in explaining the night journey of the Prophet as a vision,[83] in evaluating the genuineness of the documents containing the generous treaties of Muḥammad with the Christians,[84] and where his assessment of Muḥammad in general was positive.[85] Like Muir, Amīr ʿAlī was focusing in his study of the traditions on the task to produce an authentic account of the Prophet, but unlike Muir, his purpose was not to discredit Islam but to reaffirm its unique and valuable contributions to the history of world civilization. His difference with Muir in the methodology used was more in the particular authors he considered valid rather than in the tools used to evaluate the validity of particular traditions, whereas Aḥmad Khān disagreed with Muir in both aspects.

Factors leading to the origin of the Ḥadīth

Devotion to the Prophet

Muir considered cultural and historical factors to have had a major influence on the development of the body of traditions, the first of these being the Muslim community's devotion to Muḥammad as the Prophet of God. He described the scenario after the death of Muḥammad as one where between military campaigns, this "simple and semi-barbarous race" would fill time with recounting acts and sayings of the one who had set them on the course of conquest and victory stretching from Spain to India.[86] These tales grew with the passing of time, and where facts failed, imagination aided memory. Muir stated that the expansion of the empire also necessitated the rise of a body of tradition to supplement the Qur'ān which, though the source of divine guidance, did not include in-

structions on dealing with the many new situations the community faced. The Sunna of the Prophet was then adopted to supplement the divine text, drawing on his every remembered action and word, though Muḥammad never claimed such infallibility.[87]After his death, the Prophet's image "was soon encircled with a divine effulgence which he never anticipated; and . . . his commonest sayings and minutest actions became eventually invested with a celestial sanctity which he would probably have been the last himself to countenance."[88]

Aḥmad Khān disagreed with the notion that Muslims held Muḥammad to be infallible. He demonstrated that Muḥammad himself had directed his followers to consider authoritative only such sayings of his which he declared to be revealed and those with reference to religious dogmas, to morals, and to the life hereafter.[89] Ḥadīth regarding the peculiar circumstances of his life, of the society in general, or of the art of government needed to be examined first before being accepted as inspired. Following the Prophet in matters of religion was a duty, following in these other matters was merely meritorious.[90] But this respect for the Prophet as well as hope of merit was enough to motivate the early Muslims to seek out and investigate traditions regarding his life. Aḥmad Khān also objected to Muir's practice of putting the worst possible construction on traditions glorifying Muḥammad, as he saw it. What would happen to every other pious and virtuous person, he asked, if that person was examined "through the obfuscated and perverted medium of fraud and hypocrisy.[91] For the sake of intellectual honesty, Aḥmad Khān sought the same respect for the Prophet of Islam that Moses and Jesus received as leaders in Judaism and Christianity.

Aḥmad Khān's description of the historical scenario in which the Ḥadīth originated countered that of Muir. Aḥmad Khān began with the initial impetus towards the preservation of his sayings coming from Muḥammad himself, who had suggested that it would be good to pass on traditions faithfully, but had rebuked those who misrepresented his words.[92] Few traditions, however, were written down during the Prophet's lifetime or even shortly thereafter, but with the passing of the generation who knew him, collectors began to work. In contrast to Muir, Aḥmad Khān stated that these early collectors were not motivated by the needs of the expanding empire, since they were not involved in its

administration, being wholly devoted to religion. He described them as "several truly virtuous and pious persons, who regarded this world with contempt, and devoted themselves entirely to religion," as they undertook the task of collecting traditions.[93] This divergence between Muir and Aḥmad Khān in their perceptions of the historical antecedents of the Ḥadīth, points to their differing outlooks as to the purpose of the collections of Ḥadīth. Muir saw political and cultural reasons for creating a body of traditions, while Aḥmad Khān saw its role as strictly religious.

This tendency to view the collection of Ḥadīth as being religiously motivated is also evident in Aḥmad Khān's explanation of the presence of fabricated Ḥadīth. Though he admits deliberate fabrication, he first suggested possible natural causes.[94] Misunderstandings, differences in opinions or even a loss in memory regarding the real sense of the Prophet's original pronouncement could have easily led to variations. Additions could also have arisen through explanations of a tradition being passed on as part of that tradition. Conflicting material could also have had its source in the contradicting traditions of the Jews which had been incorporated into the body of Muslim traditional material. Deliberate forgeries he attributed to various motives including the desire of some to promote praiseworthy customs such as reading the Qur'ān or praying, the desire of others to entertain or motivate a crowd of hearers or to defeat antagonists in controversy, or the work of malicious persons in circulating spurious Ḥadīth. It is significant that even the motives for deliberate forgeries were seen by Aḥmad Khān as having their basis in religion rather than in any political movement or personal ambition. His later writings demonstrated a shift towards a position on possible causes similar to that of Muir's, yet within a more religious flavor, listing as the causes for the fabrication of traditions as follows:

> . . . that people liked very much additions by which the Prophet gained a luster of sanctity and glory; that narrators of events, deeds and words of the Prophet discovered that they themselves participated in the honour and praise they allotted to him; that sometimes quarrels arose, and that then every group recorded traditions in support of its own tenets; that wicked people forged traditions to please kings and princes; that unbelievers issued traditions with fantastic contents in order to soil Islam.[95]

Aḥmad Khān's concern for determining authenticity stemmed from his concern that the Muslim community was uncritically and unquestioningly accepting any tradition from

the authorized collections as authoritative. While his *Essays* showed primarily his efforts to refute Muir, his other writings on Ḥadīth, such as the one quoted above, evinced a concern for the reform of the practices of the Muslim community in the spirit of Shāh Wali Ullāh.[96]

Influence of political leaders

Muir saw strong links between the content of material within the traditions and the political or historical period in which it was produced. During the caliphates of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar the main tendency was "to exalt the character of Mahomet, and to endow it with superhuman attributes,"[97] resulting in the type of traditions Muir decried. The disunity that arose during caliphate of ‘Uthmān between his followers and those of ‘Alī was actually beneficial to the accurate recording of history in that members of each side were conscious of hostile criticism against them and therefore careful in the claims they made. In support of this point, Muir quoted a tradition from Kātib al-Wāqidī in which ‘Uthmān forbids repetition of traditions about Muḥammad which had not already been made known during the rule of the first two caliphs, as evidence that fabricated traditions were already surfacing then.[98] The careful scrutiny of the traditions of opposing groups was accompanied by the perpetuation of traditions that depreciated their adversaries. Muir notes, "[P]artisanship has fortunately thus secured for us a large amount of historical fact which would otherwise have sunk unnoticed."[99]

During the reign of the Umayyads, traditions in praise of the Prophet continued to abound. What was lacking in official sources was praise for the immediate family of Muḥammad with an accompanying attempt to seek a divine right to rule within that praise, in contrast to traditions from the Shī‘i opposition to Umayyad rule.[100] The Umayyad caliphate was also the period when the main fabric of the tradition was formed. Towards the end of this century, extant traditions were sought out and recorded; subsequent factions might try to recast what had been gathered, but the basic material had been es-

tablished. According to Muir, although the chief characteristic was the glorification of the Prophet, the basic content was trustworthy:

> In the traditional impress of this period, though the feature of Mahomet himself were magnified into majestic and supernatural dimensions yet the character of his friends and followers, and the general events of early Islam, were undoubtedly preserved with tolerable accuracy, and thus a broad basis of historical truth has been maintained.[101]

In contrast, the coming of the 'Abbāsids, in Muir's view, brought much more official tampering with the recording of the traditions. In seeking to overthrow the Umayyad regime, the 'Abbāsids and Shī'is used "perverted tradition" as their chief instrument to accomplish their ends.[102] Their object was to blacken the name of the forefathers of the Umayyads and to exalt 'Ali, almost to the point of deifying him. It was under the patronage of the 'Abbāsid caliphs, that the biographers of Muḥammad and historians of Islam flourished. Muir saw this patronage as directly affecting the content of what they wrote. Of Ibn Isḥāq, writing under the patronage of the first two 'Abbāsid caliphs he writes, "While lauding their ancestors, he seeks to stigmatize the Ommeyads, and to denounce as miscreants those of their forefathers who acted a prominent part in the first scenes of Islamite history."[103] Al-Wāqidī, Ibn Hishām and others lived and wrote during al-Ma'mūn's reign (813-833). Muir quoted Weil's lament from his *Geschichte Der Chalifen* that these earliest biographies were written at a time "when every word in favor of Muāvia rendered the speaker liable to death, and when all were declared outlaws who would not acknowledge 'Alī to be the most distinguished of mankind."[104] Muir deemed impartiality in such a setting impossible. Aḥmad Khān did not respond to these charges directly, except to state that he had fully explained the rise of spurious traditions elsewhere (see previous subheading), and to point out Muir's inconsistency in considering nearly all extant traditions as fabrications while at the same time relying so heavily on the accounts of al-Wāqidī.[105]

Weaknesses in the traditional evaluation of the Ḥadīth

In addition to the writings of biographers and historians, the work of the collectors of general tradition, the *muḥaddithūn*, was also criticized by Muir. While stating that some of them also "came within the circle of Abbāsside influence, and some of them un-

der the direct persuasion of Al-Māmūn,"[106] Muir concluded that in general, "there is no reason to doubt that the Collectors were sincere and honest in doing that which they professed to do" in seeking traditions from far and wide, inquiring carefully into their lists of transmitters, and recording them with scrupulous accuracy.[107] But what Muir objected to more than the character of the *muḥaddithūn* or the political influence under which they served, was the manner of selection itself.

Lack of critical analysis

Muir felt that the method of evaluating the authenticity of the Ḥadīth was not sufficiently stringent, but this conclusion was done on the basis of a European standard of criticism, and all the assumptions that involved. After acknowledging that the compilers did unsparingly reject ninety-nine out of a hundred extant traditions, Muir stated, "But the European reader will be grievously deceived if he at all regards such criticism, rigorous as it was, in the light of a sound and discriminating investigation into the credibility of the traditional elements."[108] He felt there was a need to teach Muslims the principles of historical criticism. Interestingly, it was this type of criticism which was used by the Muslim *'ulamā'* with devastating effectiveness against the reliability of the Christian scriptures in the Agra debate of the 1854 at which Muir had also been present.[109] Aḥmad Khān countered that the critical evaluation of the tradition had not been the responsibility of the Collectors. The only evaluation they carried out was on the basis of the *isnād*, not according to subject matter at all, the reason being that the nature of their work was only to collect, leaving the criticism of the content to subsequent generations of readers.[110] Amīr 'Alī stated in the conclusion of his *Critical Examination* that the science of historic evidence was an original contribution by the Muslims, or more specifically, the Arabs, to the science of history. "The mass of conflicting traditions with which they had to deal, regarding the life and history of their great Master, early gave rise to the science of sifting the credibility of historical documents."[111] He thus sharply disagreed with Muir's position that the Muslims of India were in dire need of instruction from the West.

Muir attributed the unwillingness of the compilers of the tradition to critically evaluate the subject-matter of those traditions to the very nature of Islam. He stated, "The spirit of Islam would not brook the spirit of free inquiry and real criticism," and included

both the beginnings of Islam and subsequent regimes in this denunciation.[112] He described Muḥammad and his followers as having blind faith that would not permit any doubt, questionings, or investigation in matters where "thus saith the Prophet of the Lord."[113] Later governments had no option but to silence anyone who would openly seek answers to doubts he might have, according to Muir, since "the dogmas of Islam were so closely welded with the principles upon which the Moslem government was reared."[114] This union of spiritual and political elements resulted in the "utter absence of candid and free investigation into the origin and truth of Islam, which so painfully characterizes the Moslem mind even in the present day."[115]

Such a condemnation of Islam did not remain unanswered; within the next few decades numerous Indian Muslim writers such as Chirāgh 'Alī, Sayyid Amīr 'Alī, and Shiblī Nu'mānī, led by Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān, repeatedly challenged this Western notion that there was no toleration in Islam. Aḥmad Khān turned the focus on the limiting aspects of other religions and argued his new approach to the Ḥadīth. He pointed out that the Jews implicitly believed that every word of the Old Testament was a revelation and therefore infallible, and that Christians also believed the Scriptures. In addition the latter held to two doctrines that he found to crush any freedom of independent judgment, namely the doctrines of the trinity and the sacrifice of Christ for the sins of all, because of their incomprehensibility.[116] His description of the freedom in Islam regarding the Ḥadīth was more an argument for a reformist approach to tradition than a clear reflection of history:

> All the Mohammedan traditions are, according to Islam, open to the free judgment of every person, as well as for free inquiry and investigation, as regards the narrators and also the subject-matter, and he is at liberty to reject entirely all such traditions which, according to his free and unbiased judgment, and after patient investigation, prove themselves to be contrary to reason and nature, or which, by any other way, are found to be spurious.[117]

Reliance on isnād

In his analysis of the methodology of the *muḥaddithūn*, William Muir criticized their reliance on a chain of narrators, or *isnād*, although he recognized the semblance of authenticity that it gave the traditions. The authority of a particular tradition was depend-

ent on whether it could be traced back to one of the Companions of the Prophet, and whether each individual in that chain of transmitters was of impeachable character. If these two requirements were in place, the tradition had to be received, even if the content was improbable.[118] These thorough lists of genuine personages, the juxtapositioning of improbable accounts, and the simplicity in presenting all traditions meeting the requirements for acceptability, demonstrated that these traditions had not been fabricated by the Collectors themselves.[119] But Muir doubted that this method could adequately furnish authentic historical material regarding the life of Muḥammad.

Aḥmad Khan was very critical of William Muir and other Western writers whose understanding of the rules for selecting authentic Ḥadīth he considered woefully inadequate, leading to the "grossest blunders when venturing to express an opinion upon the merits of [Islam]."[120] He devoted one of his essays on the life of Muḥammad to explaining these rules and evaluating the relative merits of various collections of traditional material.[121] He acknowledged that the current laws of criticism were not established at the time that the theological literature was written. The writers, however, had their own rules of composition, and unless they were thoroughly understood, it would be impossible to form a correct opinion of the defects of any specific writer. He outlined four key principles related to the transmitter that determined reliability. Firstly, it was required that the narrator trace the names of successive narrators through which the tradition had been transmitted, back to Muḥammad if possible. Secondly, each narrator in the chain had to be "truthful and trustworthy." Thirdly, when the tradition was reduced to writing, it was compulsory to accompany it with the list of transmitters, its *isnād*, along with any information regarding their general conduct. Finally, a personal evaluation of the credibility of the tradition could be appended by the collector to its content and transmission record.[122] On this basis many works on Ḥadīth were compiled.

In another essay, Aḥmad Khān further detailed the various tests applied to determine the authenticity of transmitted traditions, according to its *isnād*.[123] Each narrator in the *isnād* was presented according to one of seven set formulae indicating the directness of transmission. Muslim scholars disagreed over the degree of certainty required. Some felt it was sufficient if connecting links were known to have lived at the same time and

locality, others required proof of contact or actual proof of the occasion of transmission. Traditions could be categorized according to the character of the transmitters into one of the following: *ṣahīḥ* (sound), *ḥasan* (fair), *ḍaʿīf* (weak), *and ̱gharīb* (obscure).[124] Ḥadīth were also divided in terms of the source of each, whether it was traced back to Muḥammad himself, to one of his associates, or to one who had seen an associate. This final category, considered to be *riwāyāt* or tales, consisted of those beginning with "it has been related," and without any other details as to chain of narration--a kind "no more entitled to credit than is public gossip."[125] Yet it was traditions of this latter category which Aḥmad Khān said filled the books of the historians such as Ibn Hishām and the Kātib al-Wāqidī, which European writers used so freely.

Aḥmad Khān's major criticism of European writers was that they did not devote themselves to the necessary research and were motivated rather by prejudice and enmity in their selection of traditions from which they composed their histories of Muḥammad and Islām.

> Christian writers, ignorant of the rules and regulations that have been so established by learned Mohammedan Divines for ascertaining the intrinsic value and genuineness of any hadees, when they accidentally read any of our histories which, as before said, contain nothing but the worst of all hadeeses vainly flatter themselves that they have become acquainted with all the *minutiae* of Islam, and begin to criticize and ridicule our religion.[126]

He based his frequent dismissal of Muir's conclusions on the fact that Muir had drawn his material from unreliable groups of writings, primarily from al-Wāqidī.

The most reliable collections of Ḥadīth, according to Aḥmad Khān, were the ones by Bukhārī (d. 870), Muslim (d. 875), Tirmizī (d. 892), Abū Dāʾūd (d. 889), Nasāʾī (d. 915), Ibn Mājah (d. 887), and Imām Mālik (d. 795), because they contained only Ḥadīth related by trustworthy persons. His inclusion of Imām Mālik reflects the emphasis of Shāh Wāli Ullāh who elevated Mālik's *Muwaṭṭaʾ* to the level of the collections of Bukhārī and Muslim in the highest category of reliability.[127] Aḥmad Khān qualified this division between reliable and less reliable collections by stating, "It should, however, be borne in mind that, as the above-named books may contain some of doubted truth, or apocryphal Hadeeses, so the rest may contain some genuine ones."[128] This uncertainty

was so slight that traditions from the reliable collections were trusted by learned Muslims unless there was evidence of their unreliability. To assist in this task of evaluating the authenticity of Ḥadīth on the basis of trustworthiness of the transmitters, books had been written giving their biographies in great detail.

Aḥmad Khān considered biographers and writers of *siyār*, which he translated as "ecclesiastical history," less cautious that the *muḥaddithūn,* since the latter were more conscious that inaccuracies in their work could possibly result in innovations in religious matters. The former group of writers tended to use somewhat indiscriminately whatever material that came along, not expecting that their work would be regarded as a basis for doctrine. Aḥmad Khān considered the writings of the biographers to be less reliable as to historical accuracy also because of their lack of discrimination in the traditions they included.

> The most fruitful source of their subject-matter being that of oral tradition, every story related to them by individuals was eagerly welcomed by them, and inserted in their books without the least inquiry or investigation as to the nature of the tradition itself, or the character of the party furnishing it.[129]

The task of evaluating individual traditions within their writings was thus left up to the discerning reader using the requisite tools. Within this class of less reliable writings Aḥmad Khān included the following: the *Tārikh* of Bukhārī, the *Tārikh* of Ṭabarī, the *Sīrat* of Shāmī, the *Sīrat* of Ibn Hishām, and the *Ṭabaqāt* of Ibn Saʿd also known as Kātib al-Wāqidī.[130] The traditions contained within these collections required the most careful scrutiny, even if the author was well-known.

However, it was precisely this freedom from careful testing that caused Muir to consider the contribution of the biographers and historians invaluable.

> Happily, the Biographers did not hold themselves bound by the strict canons of the *Sunna*; they have preserved traditions sometimes resting on a single authority, or otherwise technically weak, and therefore rejected by the Collectors of the *Sunna*; and they have thus rescued for us not a few facts and narratives of special interest, bearing internal marks of authenticity.[131]

This was a point Muir repeatedly emphasized, disagreeing with Sprenger who held the official collections of Ḥadīth to contain more truth than the biographies.[132] While agree-

ing that the biographers tended to include every kind of tradition pertinent to their discussion without abiding by the stringent tests of the *muḥaddithūn*, Muir found no reason however, to doubt that their record was relatively accurate. Apart from the effort to glorify the Prophet, "they sought honestly to give a true picture of the Prophet; . . . while they admit some legendary tales excluded from the *Sunna*, their works are to a very great extent composed of precisely the same material; and . . . are, moreover, less under the influence of theological bias than were the collectors of the *Sunna*."[133]

Aḥmad Khān was categorical in his rejection of the traditions related by al-Wāqidī and his "Secretary" as well as of those transmitted by other historians which did not follow the rules of the *muḥaddithūn*. He referred to traditions from al-Wāqidī as "the weakest and most inauthentic traditions," and "no more entitled to credit than is public gossip"[134] and stated that they contained "nothing but puerile absurdities, rejected even by Mohamedans themselves."[135] He saw Muir's extensive use of al-Wāqidī as going against his own preconception that most traditions were fabrications, and accused Muir of poor scholarship for not investigating and discriminating genuine traditions from fabrications.[136] By this method Aḥmad Khān could effectively eliminate much of the evidence presented by Muir to support his analysis of Muḥammad's life and character.[137] Beginning as he did from a different "canon of criticism" it was inevitable that his conclusions would be different than that of Muir. The latter recognized that the veracity and reliability of al-Wāqidī had been doubted, but accepted Sprenger's defense of his account, considering it to be "the fruit of an honest endeavor to bring together the most credible authorities current at the end of the second century, and to depict the life of Mahomet with as much truth as from such sources was possible."[138] Aḥmad Khān's advice to writers on Islam was not to quote the Ḥadīth as an authority without being aware of the sources of the individual traditions. Aḥmad Khān did not object to critical evaluations, but rather to the neglect of the above principles, and to the substituting of invective, ridicule, and sarcasm for "the fair and legitimate arguments of a sound and liberal criticism."[139]

For Muir, doubts whether the compiled traditions contained authentic material were caused by several factors inherent in the nature of the traditions in addition to prob-

lems with the *isnād*. The brevity of the units transmitted and their total isolation from any context were characteristics that weakened their reliability and yet seemed to extend to the contemporary witness who was the first link in the chain. The style of narration was as if the event was first narrated "with all the informality of hearsay," a "looseness" that may have been present in each subsequent transmission.[140] The indivisibility of the unit transmitted resulted in its acceptance or rejection strictly on the basis of the *isnād* without regard for improbable or contradictory elements it might contain. Muir doubted the use of parallel accounts as confirmation of authenticity since he thought it quite possible that lines of transmission might have converged at one or more points. He speculated that the early recording of transmitted traditions had led to harmonization. Muir summarized his perspective on the methodology of the *muḥaddithūn* thus:

> The critical test applied by the collectors had, as we have just seen, no reference whatever to these pregnant sources of error; and, though it may have exposed and excluded multitudes of modern fabrications, it failed to place the earlier traditions upon a certain basis, or to supply any means of judging, between the actual and the fictitious, between the offspring of the imagination and the sober evidence of fact.[141]

For this reason, Muir felt it was necessary to construct another method by which to validate the historical authenticity of the content of the traditions.

Tests to determine fabricated Ḥadīth

William Muir proposed his own set of principles for determining the accuracy of historical material found within the Ḥadīth. By these he sought to answer two basic questions, whether the narrator would have had opportunity for personally knowing the facts he narrated and whether there was any trace of bias, special interest, or prejudice on the part of the narrator or by the Muslim community as a whole exhibited in the account. Muir had noted these two criteria while studying the collection of earlier controversial tracts by Henry Martyn, in which the author denied Muḥammad's miracles because of the lack of these two requisites: "their being recorded at or near the time of their occurrence, and the narrators being under no constraint."[142] To answer the first question, Muir set forth principles relating to the *period* to which the particular tradition referred; to answer the second, he gave principles relating to the *subject* it treated.[143]

Period

Muir's main emphasis in the tests relating to the *period* of a particular tradition was to establish whether the transmitter could have been a contemporary witness of the event, and hence meet that qualification for accurate historical reporting. Since almost no witnesses left after Muḥammad's death were older than he, any traditions relating to the time prior to the Prophet would be without a contemporary witness, and hence unreliable. Aḥmad Khān challenged the assumption that the testimony of an eye-witness was essential to establish the certainty of any historical fact. He argued that according to "the established laws of evidence which are acknowledged throughout the whole civilized world," other circumstances "apply in a manner equally forcible," though he did not state what those circumstances might be.[144] As for Muir's premise that traditions relating to events prior to the birth of Muḥammad were automatically suspect, Aḥmad Khān points out that the passing on of oral traditions had begun before the Prophet's death, and that since a number of Muḥammad's companions were older than he was and would have remembered these early events, those traditions could not be invalidated by period alone.

Muir also reasoned that events not significant at the time, even if occurring during the Prophet's lifetime would not likely have been remembered with any great accuracy and must therefore also be suspect. Speaking of Muḥammad, he said, "A poor orphan, a quiet inoffensive citizen, he was perhaps of all the inhabitants of Mecca the least likely to have the eyes of his neighbours turned upon him, and their memory and imagination busy in noting the events of his life, and conjuring up anticipations of coming greatness."[145] General history of that time such as public personages, national events, and genealogies, however, Muḥammad and his Companions would have remembered, and since these would have attracted more general attention, they would therefore be more reliable. Aḥmad Khān opposed the idea that traditions regarding insignificant details of Muḥammad's life before he became a public figure could not be accurate. He argued that when such a person became well-known in a role offensive to his family, an even more critical light would be focused on his origins by those who would be in the best position to know them. Furthermore, the application of that principle to other prophets such as Jesus and Moses would bring into question crucial events of their birth and childhood.[146]

Events relating to the time period during the lifetime of the Prophet were suspect for the reason that the accounts were very one-sided, in Muir's opinion. At the time of Muḥammad's death, no opponents would still have been living who could give an account justifying their opposition from the time of the beginning of his public ministry to the taking of Mecca. Converts who had formerly opposed him would not provide such a balancing view because of the zeal of their new belief. Muir insisted that accounts of the cruelty of those who opposed Muhammad, of the suffering of Muslims in the early years, and of groups such as the conquered Jewish and Arab tribes and the Hypocrites who were often portrayed negatively, must be seen in this light.[147] In response, Aḥmad Khān once again appealed not only to traditions regarding other prophets and their followers, but also to the honesty and truthfulness of the witnesses and the "millions and millions" of their number as proof of the "impossibility of the misrepresentation of those facts."[148]

> How is it possible to conceive that the early converts to any religion whatsoever, whose belief in their religion is sincere, who in the innermost recesses of their hearts believe that to follow the example of their prophet is the surest and safest path to salvation, and that to disobey his commands and injunctions is to incur eternal damnation;--how is it possible, we would ask, that all such pious and virtuous persons should have, all at once, become deaf to the mandates of their prophet, as well as blind to the written injunctions and precepts of their Sacred Book, and should have indulged in lying, fraud, hypocrisy--in short, in vices and crimes of every description?[149]

For Muir, any tradition from the above time periods if reported in great detail would be suspect to the degree of that detail. Here Muir quoted Henry Alford (1810-1871) from the "Prolegomena" to his edition of the Greek Testament[150] to support his argument. In general, William Muir made very few references to the critical methods used by Christian theologians in the analysis of the Bible. His critics noted that he "applied form criticism to the Qur'ān and Muslim traditions, yet appeared to regard the 'whole book of Genesis or the book of Chronicles as the production of a single individual.'"[151] One reason for his hesitancy to use these critical methods would have been that it was the findings of these theologians that had provided *'ulamā'* such as Raḥmat Ullāh and Wazīr Khān with the tools to confound Pfander and French in the 1854 debate at

Agra.[152] But Muir's use of Alford here was in connection with the *traditions* that had accumulated around the writers of Scripture, not the Scriptures themselves.

Aḥmad Khān in his analysis of the historical accuracy of the traditions repeatedly emphasized the importance of the character of the transmitter, while Muir emphasized the content. For Aḥmad Khān, it was the initial narrator that must be a contemporary of the events described, not the initial appearance of the tradition. For him it was not the great detail of a fabricated tradition that created suspicion of the subject matter as much as flaws in the character of the narrator. Therefore, the critical rules of the *muḥaddithūn* in evaluating the transmitters were more relevant in accurate discrimination between the false and the true than Muir's rules regarding the period and content of a tradition.[153]

Subject matter

Muir examined the *subject matter* of the Ḥadīth for any trace of bias, whether personal, sectarian, or communal. He felt that the matter of being associated with the Prophet had been considered a special honor, leading to fabrications of such personal knowledge of him. In the same manner, individuals would tend to exaggerate their suffering and exploits in the name of Islam. The credibility of these traditions would then be questionable.[154] The sectarian bias of larger groups such as the Shīʿis, Umayyads, and ʿAbbāsids, as well as smaller groups motivated by a strong spirit of clanship also had "a deep and abiding impress upon Tradition."[155] For these types of interpolations, there could be possible checks; but for divergence as a result of biases common to the whole Muslim body, there remained no check whatever.

Miracles

In addressing the subject of communal bias, Muir returned to his theme of denouncing all traditions glorifying Muḥammad and investing him with supernatural attributes. The Prophet's close association with the celestial spheres led followers to see him with superstitious awe, a glorification Muir rejected on the basis of "reason."

> On a subject so impalpable to sense, so readily apprehended by imagination, it may be fairly assumed that reason had little share in controlling the fertile productions of fancy; that the conclusions of his susceptible and credulous followers far exceeded the premises granted by Mahomet; that even simple facts were construed by their excited faith

as pregnant with marks of supernatural power and unearthly companionship; and that, after the object of their veneration had passed from their sight, fond devotion perpetuated and enhanced the fascinating legends.[156]

This bias against miraculous accounts was also predicated on another major component of Muir's proposed method of evaluating Ḥadīth, that of a comparison of the content of any tradition with what was stated in the Qur'ān, which he considered a "genuine and contemporary document."[157] He found that the Qur'ān affirmed the Ḥadīth, however, in its main historical points and in its portrayal of what interested Muḥammad. A major disagreement between the Qur'ān and the Ḥadīth was in the matter of miracles performed by the Prophet.

> There is no position more satisfactorily established by the Coran than that Mahomet did not in any part of his career perform miracles, or pretend to perform them. Yet tradition abounds with miraculous acts, which belie the plain declarations of the Coran; and which, moreover, if ever attempted, would undoubtedly have been mentioned in those pretended revelations which omitted nothing, however trivial, that could strengthen the prophetical claim. Here, then, in matters of simple narration and historical fact, we find Tradition discredited by the Coran.[158]

Also, the excesses to which Mawlāna Ghulām Imām Shahīd had gone in his *Mawlūd Sharīf* [159] in ascribing miracles to Muḥammad had caused Muir to react with extreme criticism in his review of the work for the *Calcutta Review* in 1852, and to conclude that "the Mohammedan mind of India" was "credulous beyond belief."[160] Hence he was quick to affirm the historical accuracy of the Qur'ān, and on the basis of its record, find the traditions containing a mixture of truth and falsehood with no rule for dividing between the two. In this matter, even the Kātib al-Wāqidī whom Muir generally approved as more reliable than some other sources, came in for criticism for indiscriminately including such stories in his account.[161] Legends and tales put in the mouth of the Prophet were dismissed on the premise that though some were found in the Qur'ān, in general Muḥammad was "taciturn, laconic, and reserved," and was therefore not likely to have given out this mass of fables.[162] All such stories were attributed by Muir to the heated imagination of his followers.

For Muir, this denial of miracles was not motivated by a rejection of the super-
natural and of God's divine intervention in human history. Rather to admit Muḥammad's
ability to perform the miraculous would be to acknowledge the possibility that he was a
true messenger of God, a position Muir could not countenance in his evangelical theol-
ogy. Muir's older brother, John Muir (1810-1882), who also served with the Civil Ser-
vice in India, presented similar arguments against the historicity of miracles in stories of
ancient Hinduism.[163] Both brothers reflect the influence of the Evidential Theology of
William Paley (1743-1805), believing that God affirmed true religions by verifiable
miracles. In their writings, both emphasized that for a miracle to be "verifiable," it had to
be recorded by witnesses and withstand the scrutiny of opponents.[164]

Like Muir, Aḥmad Khān held strongly to this principle of rejecting any tradition
whose content was contrary to what the Qur'ān declared, arguing that any Ḥadīth should
confirm or support the Qur'ān, explain or comment on some portion of it, or bear refer-
ence to matters not spoken of in the Qur'ān.[165] However, he objected to the characteriza-
tion of Muḥammad and of his followers as indulging in imaginative stories. He argued
that in the interests of intellectual standards, any historical figure renown for his piety
should not be approached with a prejudice determined to see the worst. The companions
and successors who would have been instrumental in passing on the traditions were also
men devoted to God and thus also devoted to truth and honesty.[166] To thus impugn their
motives as Muir had done was not justified in his opinion. Interestingly, Aḥmad Khān did
not seek to defend the accounts of miracles or of prophecies, and in fact took pains to ex-
plain away many of the miraculous stories surrounding Muḥammad's birth which Muir
held up to ridicule.[167] He did, however, charge Muir with behaving as "a prejudiced an-
tagonist," who "looks down, with sovereign contempt and groundless suspicion, upon
what regards every other religion than his own."[168]

Amīr 'Alī in his biography of the Prophet, agreed that Muḥammad had disclaimed
any power to work miracles, resting the truth of his divine commission solely on his
teaching. He compared Muir with the Quraysh tribe in Muḥammad's time in his sugges-
tion that Muḥammad would have been more effective in his preaching if he had been able
to support his claim with miraculous works.[169] He took issue with Muir for stating that

Muḥammad was inferior to the Old Testament prophets because he produced no miracles. Amīr 'Alī was of the opinion that "the rationalist of every age will be satisfied with the unanswerable reply of Mohammed to the idolaters of those days, which would apply equally well to the Christians of the present: 'My Lord be Praised! Am I more than a man sent as an apostle? . . . Angels do not commonly walk the earth, or God would have dispatched an angel to preach His truth to you.' "[170] Although he personally approved of Aḥmad Khān's and Muir's preference for interpreting the Prophet's "ascension," as a vision rather than a bodily journey, he questioned the Christians' double standard in accepting the bodily ascensions of both Elijah and Jesus while considering Muslims who did believe Muḥammad's journey to have been in a physical body as less rational.[171] He recognized that the Evangelical rejection of the Prophet's miracles had more to do with their theological exclusiveness than with any tendencies toward a strict Naturalism.

Christian and Jewish Scriptures

Another class of traditions which Muir also rejected as infected with a general bias were those that found confirmations of Muḥammad in Jewish and Christian Scriptures. This included supposed prophecies of the coming of the Prophet and his early recognition by Jewish and Christian religious leaders, supposed foreshadowings of peculiar rites and doctrines of Islam, and endeavors to make Arab history fit with Old Testament accounts and additional Jewish legends, including the tracing of Arab lineage back to Ishmael, the son of Abraham.[172] At this point, Muir attacked the traditions "which affirm that the Jews and Christians mutilated or interpolated their Scriptures."[173] Muir had previously published his studies on what the Qur'ān said regarding the Bible in *The Testimony borne by the Coran to the Jewish and Christian Scriptures* in which he concluded Muḥammad had no doubt as to the genuineness of the Scriptures extant at his time, and that his teachings corresponded with them.[174] But as Islam spread, the discrepancies between the teachings of the Qur'ān and those of the Bible became more apparent in those areas where the Bible was more widely studied. The logical result was that the Jews and Christians were accused of having falsified their Scriptures, and stories of such occurrences gained circulation.[175] The reason Muir gave for upright and sensible Muslims not contradicting these fabrications at the time, was the oppressive regimes that limited freedom and inquiry. "Honest inquiry into the genuineness of holy Scripture would have

sapped the foundations of Islam, and was therefore out of the question.... [I]t has already been shown that the faith and polity of Islam were one;--that free opinions and heresy were synonymous with conspiracy, treason, and rebellion."[176]

Aḥmad Khān responded to the arguments of Muir with an essay on "The Prophecies Respecting Mohammed as Contained in both the Old and New Testament."[177] Unlike his position in the matter of the miracles where he agreed with Muir that the accounts had been fabricated later, here he maintained that there was strong evidence for prophecies in the Jewish and Christian Scriptures that had been predicting the coming of Muḥammad. Since the Qur'ān contained assertions that the Prophet had been mentioned in the Law and the Gospel, Aḥmad Khān's stance was consistent with his confidence in the Qur'ān as the standard of authenticity by which to judge the Ḥadīth.[178]

"Satanic Verses"

If numerous traditions glorifying Muḥammad were fabricated, others that appeared to denigrate Muḥammad or that seemed heretical were likewise deleted, Muir postulated. However with the disappearance of such traditions, the evidence that they ever existed was also no longer available, rendering such an assertion without foundation. An exception, Muir thought, would be the incident of the "Satanic verses" where Muḥammad was said to have compromised with the idolatry in Mecca. In commenting on the sources for this incident, Muir wrote, "The story of the lapse is honestly told by Wāchidi and Tabari, and (as we find by a quotation in the latter) by Ibn Ishāc; but it is entirely and tacitly omitted by Ibn Hishām, although his book professes to embrace that of Ibn Ishāc."[179] In a later discussion on the comparative reliability of various historians, Muir again used Ibn Ḥishām's deletion of this incident from his account as evidence of reduced reliability. "His having thus studiously omitted all reference to so important a narrative, for no other reason apparently than because he fancied it to be discreditable to the Prophet, cannot but lessen our confidence generally in his book."[180] He also quoted the author of the *Mawāhib al-laduniyya* to support the authenticity of the story within the Islamic tradition.[181]

In his reply, Aḥmad Khān gave a much more comprehensive quotation from the relevant portion of the *Mawāhib*, giving both the Arabic with its translation, in order to

provide the context for Muir's excerpts and remarks. He emphasized the broken *isnād* and the unreliability of certain transmitters within that chain. "Traditions possessing an incomplete list of their narrators, can be considered as authentic only when they have other proofs to appeal to for establishing their own genuineness; when they are not at variance with the import of other authentic hadeeses as well as with the injunctions and commandments enjoined in the Holy Koran."[182] This particular tradition, he argued, contradicted commands in the Qur'ān and was inconsistent with both the character of Muḥammad and the spirit of Islam. He proceeded to give an alternative account of what might have happened, using a different tradition which placed the disputed words not in the Prophet's mouth, but in that of his enemies.[183] In a sense, this type of selection confirms Muir's concept of communal bias determining the content of a tradition. But Aḥmad Khān rightly pointed out that the principle of considering anything disparaging to the Prophet as having more legitimacy did open the way to many other abuses.[184]

Muir found a basis for fabrications or deletions such as the incident of the "Satanic Verses" in what he considered the sanction in Islam for the telling of untruths and of inventing pious frauds. If a divine religion needed the support of miracles, it would be "doing God a service" by fabricating some.[185] He gave the early caliphs, 'Umar and 'Uthmān, as examples as those who would *not* participate in such an activity, citing their caution in passing on traditions regarding the Prophet and their unwillingness to be guilty of adding to the facts. In contrast, 'Ā'isha' (d. 678), a wife of Muḥammad, was presented as an example of one given to "gossiping tales and trifling frivolities."[186] "But none of them, as far as we can judge, was free from the tendency to glorify Mahomet at the expense of truth, or could be withheld from the marvelous, by the most glaring violations of probability or of reason."[187] So once again, Muir attributed fabricated traditions to the motive of wanting to glorify the Prophet.

In addition to appealing to the essential honesty of the early converts as previously noted, Aḥmad Khān countered Muir's allegations of bias with a reference to Christian history. He acknowledged that within Islam, false and spurious traditions did arise in spite of precautions, just as they had in Judaism and Christianity. However, the difference, as he saw it, was that such "pious frauds" were not made into dogma as in Christian

history. To illustrate, he cited Muir's own account of the rise of spurious books in Christianity's second century when Origen and other church leaders deemed it permissible to use their opponents tactics in disputing with heathen philosophers, as found in Muir's Urdu history of the Christian Church.[188]

Tests to determine authentic Ḥadīth

With the general perspective that tradition cannot be "received with too much caution, or exposed to too rigorous a criticism," Muir proceeded to give his own standards for regarding any tradition or any parts of a tradition as reliable.[189] With each consideration he proposed, he also gave exceptions which would qualify acceptance.

(i) Unanimous consent or general agreement of traditions from various sources or chains of transmission was seen as a strong indication of credibility. However, agreement that was too close fostered suspicion that subsequent harmonization may have occurred, or that the traditions derived from the same family of spurious origin. Not considering a tradition as an indivisible unit, Muir also sought to discriminate between authentic portions and those fabrications which were later interpolated. In some cases, the parts in which traditions might vary in minor details were seen as more trustworthy than the parts in which there was complete verbal agreement. To illustrate, Muir agreed with Sprenger's assessment of traditions about Muḥammad's birth which agreed almost literally as to the marvelous but differed in the facts. "The *marvelous* was derived from one common source of fabrication, but the *facts* from original authorities. Hence the uniformity of the one, and the variation of the other."[190] In other instances, verbal coincidence pointed to early written records originating too long after Muḥammad's death to be considered contemporary records, yet transcribed much earlier than most of the other traditions, therefore giving greater reliability.

(ii) Another guideline proposed by Muir to which earlier reference has been made, was consistency with the teachings of the Qur'ān. Any points of a tradition which agreed with the record of the Qur'ān would be considered as having greater validity. However, this

was qualified by the recognition that obscure references in the revelation could also give rise to fabrications seeking to explain them by placing them in a particular historical context. Muir cited several examples and further illustrated his point with a parallel trend in early Christian history.[191]

(iii) The next standard for credibility related once again to his distrust of material glorifying the Prophet. Any disparagement of Muḥammad or tradition contrary to accepted Islam would tend to indicate authenticity. "When a tradition contains . . . anything at variance either in fact or doctrine with the principles and tendencies of Islam, there will be strong reason for admitting it as authentic: because, otherwise, it seems hardly credible that such a tradition could be fabricated, or having been fabricated that it could obtain currency among the followers of Mahomet."[192] The caution Muir added here was that this principle was not to be applied in accepting as authentic all that was considered "by *ourselves* discreditable or opposed to morality." Standards changed from era to era, what was considered indecent at the present time might have been laudable in another age and culture. Though himself deeply influenced by his own theological beliefs and cultural origin, Muir recognized the danger of such an ethnocentric approach in evaluating history.

(iv) Another source which Muir considered "far more authentic than any yet alluded to" was the collection of transcripts of treaties Muḥammad made with surrounding tribes-- Jewish, Christian, Muslim, and pagan--which were reduced to writing and were attested by one or more of his followers.[193] While these documents provided only a few facts, they did illustrate Muḥammad's relations with his neighbors and provided support to the traditional outline. The method of their preservation invested these traditions with greater authenticity. Since they were recorded on leather and preserved by the families who received them and considered them of great value or by non-Muslim tribes who relied on them as security for the concessions they contained, they had a historical authority "almost on par with the Coran."[194]

(v) A final source of authentic material was the poetry imbedded within the traditions. Muir appealed to what he perceived as the cultural character of the Arabs.

> When we consider the poetical habits of the nation, their faculty of pre-
> serving poetry by memory, the ancient style and language of the pieces
> themselves, the fair likelihood that carefully composed verses were at
> the first committed for greater security to writing, it cannot certainly be
> deemed improbable that such poems or fragments should in reality
> have been composed by the parties to whom they are ascribed.[195]

However, Muir considered any anticipation of Muḥammad's prophetic role, or of his military and political victories in poetical works to be anachronistic. In general, the value of poetry for use as a historical source for biography was limited to confirming other more factual sources and to giving the spirit of early Muslims towards non-believing neighbors and opponents.

Conclusion

The discussion regarding authentic sources for both Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān and Sir William Muir was not merely an historical abstraction. Muir was concerned to find genuine material from which to construct a biography of Muḥammad and to show that by their own sources, Muslims would have to reject the prophethood of Muḥammad. Aḥmad Khān, disturbed by the portrayal of the Prophet and the conclusions put forward by Muir, attacked his work at the foundation by criticizing both his sources and his methodology in handling those sources.

In regards to sources, Muir preferred the writings of the biographers and histori-ans since their collections were based on the criteria of content and would include all relevant material, even if its *isnād* was weak.

> To the three biographies by Ibn Hishām, by Wāckidi and his Secretary,
> and by Tabari, the judicious historian will, as his original authorities,
> confine himself. He will also receive, with a similar respect, such tradi-
> tions in the general Collections of the earliest traditionists,--Bokhāri,
> Muslim, Tirmidzi, &c., as may bear upon his subject. But he will reject
> as *evidence* all later authors, to whose so-called traditions he will not
> allow any historical weight whatever.

Aḥmad Khān on the other hand, tended to reject the compilations of historians and biog-raphers in favor of those of the *muḥaddithūn*. He held strongly to the requirement of a sound *isnād* if a tradition was to be considered genuine. The Muslim scholars had devel-oped the science of *'ilm al-rijāl* to evaluate the reliability of individual transmitters in the

chain, and thus collections of tradition lacking that chain were deemed as unreliable sources. It was by this standard along with the evaluation of the content that he later rejected most of the Ḥadīth as lacking any authority.

The two also disagreed as to methodology in handling the traditional material. In his conclusion to the guidelines for authenticity, Muir reiterated his rejection of the authority of the *isnād* for the historian or biographer of Muḥammad. Each tradition must stand or fall by its own merits as a whole and the validity of the component parts. The historical content of the Qurʾān remained the final standard for accuracy. For events where tradition provided the only evidence, careful discrimination was needed between "the fitful and scattered gleams of truth, which mingle with its fictitious illumination."[196] Aḥmad Khān, in contrast, appealed to the traditional standard of evaluating the authenticity of a tradition through an analysis of its *isnād*. The analysis of its content was for him, only a secondary consideration, at least at the time of this controversy.

Another major difference that can be discerned between the two writers in their approach to the Ḥadīth is the motive each ascribed to the *muḥaddithūn*. Aḥmad Khān tended to see the recording of traditions primarily as a function of religion in that the collectors were consciously aware of how those traditions could shape Islam, while biographers and historians were equally aware that theirs was not a religious role, providing much greater latitude in the selection of Ḥadīth for their writings. Muir, on the other hand, postulated no such self-awareness on the part of the collectors of a need to preserve the religion of Islam from innovations, seeing the selection of material based on political considerations. The differences between the collections of the *muḥaddithūn* and those of the biographers or historians were because of a more honest handling of the material by the latter, in his view, including material that others might consider derogatory to Islam of the Prophet.

One area in which there was a similarity in their conclusions, though not their presuppositions, was in their rejection of the records of Muḥammad's miracles. With regard to Aḥmad Khān, this is more an argument from silence than an explicit statement. His reluctance to defend the stories of the miracles is significant in light of his later outright rejection of the supernatural and acceptance of the rational and natural as the ground

of truth. His reluctance to explicitly reject them in this earlier work could indicate a transitional phase in his own experience, or more likely, merely the apologetic nature of the work in which the rejection of miracles could not necessarily enhance his cause. Muir's rejection of Muḥammad's miracles was on a completely different basis. He regarded miracles as proof of a divine mission and began with the presumption that the origin of Muḥammad's mission was not from God. Therefore, any traditional accounts containing supernatural elements had to be rejected.

Both were, in a number of areas, influenced by the constraints of their own religious beliefs in interpreting the traditional material. Muir could not acknowledge the prophethood of Muḥammad without questioning the finality and ultimate revelation of God in Christ Jesus, as recorded in the Bible. For this reason, his principles in evaluating the Ḥadīth would have to preclude any attribution of divine inspiration or miraculous powers to Muḥammad who so clearly denied Christ's divinity. Aḥmad Khān as a believing Muslim, could not countenance the ascription of impious motives to Muḥammad or to his early followers. Thus the Prophet could not have acted contrary to the clear teachings of the Qur'ān by compromising with the idolatry at Mecca, and his pious companions could not have deliberately perpetrated frauds glorifying Muḥammad more than he deserved. Aḥmad Khān also felt compelled to defend the traditional method of evaluating the traditions by their chains of transmission in order to arrive at the traditional assessment of the character and mission of the Prophet. The strong language both writers used to attack the other's larger community of faith seems to indicate that the "controversy" for them was not confined to the realm of intellectual abstraction, but touched them at the core of their spirituality. Yet this fundamental influence on their respective positions was not overtly acknowledged by either, as each tried to present his arguments on what he assumed to be a universal standard of reason.

However, where Muir was situated solidly in conservative theological trends, actively involved in the Evangelical missionary movement, Aḥmad Khān demonstrated a shift in his writings from a position similar to that of the Ahl-i-Ḥadīth of his day to one where his orthodoxy was questioned by others. In his journal *Tahẕīb al-Akhlāq*, he criticized the blind following of any tradition, and presented a strict set of standards to deter-

mine the authority of a tradition, even if found in an accepted collection.[197] He held the position that even those traditions claiming to give the words of the Prophet could only be considered as having transmitted the sense of his teaching, not his actual words. Brown states, "He so severely restricted the application of Ḥadīth that he came to be viewed by conservative opponents as a *munkir-i-Ḥadīth*, a denier of tradition."[198] Muir, on the other hand, shows little evidence of having been influenced by this interaction, though subsequent generations of missionaries who relied on his work did demonstrate an acceptance of the scholarship of Aḥmad <u>Kh</u>ān in this field, as the next chapter demonstrates through an examination of the writings of Thomas Patrick Hughes and Edward Sell.

Notes

[1] Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān's life has been researched by many scholars, and a number of different biographies have been written, variously emphasizing his contributions to the British Empire, to the Muslim community, to political independence, to Hindu-Muslim unity, to Muslim separatism and nationalism, to education, and more. See chapter 1 of Christian W. Troll. *Sayyid Ahmad Khan: A Reinterpretation of Muslim Theology*. New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd., 1978, pp. 3-27. Subsequent works include: Hafeez Malik. *Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan and Muslim Modernization in India and Pakistan*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1980; Sheila McDonough. *Muslim Ethics and Modernity: A Comparative Study of the Ethical Thought of Sayyid Ahmad Khan and Mawlana Maududi*. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1984; Saeeda Iqbal. *Islamic Rationalism in the Subcontinent with Special Reference to Shāh Waliullāh, Sayyid Ahmad Khān and Allāma Muhammad Iqbal*. Lahore: Islamic Book Service, 1984. In addition, a number of thesis have been written at McGill University in the past few years dealing with various aspects of Aḥmad Khān's works: Andreas Felix D'Souza. "The Concept of Revelation in the Writings of Three Modern Indian Muslims: A Study of Ahmad Khan, Abu al-Kalam Azad, and Abu al-A'la Mawdudi." Unpublished Ph. D. Thesis, Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University, 1988; Shaista Azizalam. "Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan and the 'Ulamā'." Unpublished M. A. Thesis, Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University, 1992; Agusni Yahyi. "The Impact of Colonial Experience on the Religious and Social Thought of Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān and Ahmad Hassan: A Comparison." Unpublished M. A. Thesis, Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University, 1994; Ruswan. "Colonial Experience and Muslims Educational Reforms: A Compariston of the Aligarh and the Muhammadiyah Movements." Unpublished M. A. Thesis, Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University, 1997.

[2] Altāf Ḥusayn Ḥālī. *Hayat-i-Javed: A Biographical Account of Sir Sayyid*. Trans. by K. H. Qadiri and David J. Matthews. Delhi: Idarah-i Adabiyat-i Delli, 1979 [originally published in Urdu, 1901], p. 33.

[3] Entitled *Jilā al-Qulūb bi zikr al-Maḥbūb* (1839), as in Ḥālī, *Hayat-i-Javed*, p. 31.

[4] Brown. *Rethinking Tradition*, p. 33.

[5] G. F. I. Graham. *The Life and Work of Syed Ahmad Khan C. S. I.* Rpt. IAD Oriental Series, 29. Delhi: Idarah-i Adabiyat-i Delli, 1974, [first edition, 1885] pp. 107, 194.

[6] Bernard S. Cohn. "The Recruitment and Training of British Civil Servants in India," in *An Anthropologist among the Historians and Other Essays*. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1987, pp. 528-533, 541.

[7] "Death of Sir William Muir," *The Times*, July 12, 1905, p. 4.

[8] "The Lieutenant-Governorship of the North-West," *The Pioneer*. Jan. 10, 1872, p. 5.

[9] C. J. Lyall. "Obituary Notices: Sir William Muir," *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, 37 (1905), p. 873.

[10] Edward Said. *Orientalism*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1978, p. 10.

[11] Clinton Bennett. *Victorian Images of Islam*. CSIC Studies on Islam and Christianity. London: Grey Seal Books, 1992, p. 14.

[12] Ibid., p. 104.

[13] "Notes and Intelligence." *The Indian Evangelical Review: A Quarterly Journal of Missionary Thought and Effort*, 1, 1 (1873), pp. 96. Describes awards given by Muir to publications in the Urdu language.

[14] J. J. Lucas. *History of the North India Christian Tract and Book Society, Allahabad: 1848-1934*. Allahabad: The North India Christian Tract & Book Society, [1934], pp. 1-3, 39-41.

[15] Norman Daniel. *Islam, Europe and Empire*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1966, p. 279.

[16] Powell. *Muslims and Missionaries*, pp. 132-157 for biographical information of C. G. Pfander. The remaining chapters give an account of his interaction with Muslims in northern India.

[17] Muir, *Life*. p. iii.

[18] Bennett. *Victorian Images*, p. 13.

[19] William Muir. "An Address Delivered by Sir William Muir, K.C.S.I. , on the occasion of a visit to the Mahomedan Anglo-Oriental College at Allygurh, on 12th November 1875," *An Account of the Ceremony of Laying the Foundation Stone of the Mahomedan Anglo-Oriental College, Allygurh, Together with some Articles on Subjects Connected with the Movement, being Extracts from English and Anglo-Indian Newspapers*. Allahabad: Pioneer Press, 1877, pp. 30-32.

[20] Said. *Orientalism*, pp. 150-151.

[21] Ibid., p. 122.

[22] Norman Daniel. *Islam and the West: The Making of an Image*. Rev. ed. Oxford: Oneworld, 1993, pp. 326-327.

[23] Said. *Orientalism*. p. 151.

[24] Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān. *The Causes of the Indian Revolt*. Appendix A in Hafeez Malik and Morris Dembo. *Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan's History of the Bijnor Rebellion*. South Asia Series (East Lansing, MI) occasional paper no. 17. East Lansing, MI: Asian Studies Center, Michigan State University, 1972. p. 124.   The text was originally published in Urdu in 1858, the year after the Revolt as *Asbāb-i baghāwat-i-Hind*, and according to G. F. I. Graham, translated and published in English by Graham and Sir Auckland Colvin, see Graham. *Life*, p. 32.

[25] For further details on the involvement of missionaries in the aftermath of the famine and the Muslim community's response, see Powell. *Muslims and Missionaries*, pp. 159-163.

[26] Aḥmad Khān. *The Causes of the Indian Revolt*, p. 125.

[27] Ibid., p. 129.

[28] Ibid., p. 129.

[29] Ibid., p. 126.

[30] Ibid., p. 128. A copy of the letter is included as "Appendix I" in the same volume. It argues the superiority of the Christian religion based on the fact of Christ's resurrection from the dead, and urges the reader to consider these facts, then embrace them publicly, pp. 149-151.

[31] John William Kaye. *A History of the Sepoy War in India. 1857-1858*. Vol. 1. London: W. H. Allen & Co., 1870, pp. 472-473.

[32] Moti Lal Bhargava. *History of Modern India*. Lucknow: The Upper India Publishing House Pvt. Ltd., 1970, p. 293.

[33] Sir William Muir. *Records of the Intelligence Department of the Government of the North-West Provinces of India during the Mutiny of 1857 including Correspondence with the Supreme Government, Delhi, Cawnpore, and Other Places* , vol. 2. Edinburgh: T.& T. Clark, 1902, p. 112.

[34] Ibid., pp. 130-131.

[35] Ibid.

[36] William Muir. *The Honourable James Thomason, Lieutenant-Governor N.-W. P., India, 1843-1853 A.D.* Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1897, p. 89.

[37] William Muir. "Speech of the Lieutenant-Governor at the Moradabad Durbar," *The Pioneer*. Nov. 16, 1871, p. 3. He added that the only conditions qualifying this freedom was loyalty to the British Government, obedience to the law, and non-interference with the religious freedom of another; any such communal strife would be punished in the due course of law.

[38] The Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College officially opened on Jan. 8, 1877, but had been operational since 1875.

39   Muir, "An Address, pp. 30-31.

40   Ibid., p. 31. See also Muir. "Speech of the Lieutenant-Governor," p. 3.

41   Muir. "An Address," pp. 30-32.

42   Eugene Stock. *The History of the Church Missionary Society* , v. 2. London, Church Missionary Society, 1899, pp. 264-265, 524.

43   Wahidur-Raḥman. "The Religious Thought of Moulvi Chirāgh 'Ali," p. 18.

44   The articles were later published in, Sir William Muir. *The Mohammedan Controversy*.

45   Lucas. *History*, pp. 2-3, 39-41.

46   Muir. *Life*, Preface, p. iii.

47   Ibid., pp. xcv-ci. C. J. Lyall in his obituary notes that the manuscripts used by Muir were "an abridgment of Ibn Hishām's *Sīrat ar-Rasūl*, the autograph of the compiler, dating from 707 of the Hijrah; the volume of Tabarī's *Annals* dealing with the whole of the Prophet's life except the last five years; and, most important of all, the portion of the *Ṭabaḳāt* of Ibn Sa'd, called the Secretary of Wāḳidī," all of which were subsequently deposited in the India Office Library. Lyall, "Obituary," p. 876.

48   Aloys Sprenger. *The Life of Moḥammad, from Original Sources*. Allahabad: Presbyterian Mission Press, 1851. This was subsequently incorporated into his *Das Leben und die Lehre des Mohammad; nach bisher grösstentheils unbenutzten Quellen*. 3 vols. Berlin: Nicolaische verlagsbuchhandlung--A. Effert & L. Lindtner, 1861, 1862, 1865. Reviewed by Muir in *Calcutta Review* in 1868, see Muir, "Value of Early Mahometan Historical Sources," in *The Mohammedan Controversy*, pp. 103-152.

49   See especially, Gustav Weil. *Mohammad der Prophet: Sein Leben und seine Lehre.* Stuttgart: Verlag der J. B. Metzlerschen Buchhandlung, 1843, and his *Geschichte der Chalifen; nach handschriftlichen, grösstentheils noch unbenhtzten Quellen*, 3 vols. Mannheim: F. Bassermann, 1846-1851.

50   Barbara D. Metcalf. "Presidential Address: Too Little and Too Much: Reflections on Muslims in the History of India." *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 54, 4 (Nov. 1995), p. 956.

51   Ibid.

52   See William Muir. *The Rise and Decline of Islam*. Present Day Tracts. London: The Religious Tract Society, [1883], also contained in J. Murray Mitchell, and William Muir. *Two old faiths: essays on the religions of the Hindus and the Mohammedans*. New York: Chautauqua Press, 1891.

53   Muir. *Controversy*, p. 78.

54   Ibid., p. 18.

55   C. J. Lyall. "Obituary," p. 877.

56   Ibid.

57   Muir. *Controversy*, pp. 18-19.

58   Ibid., p. 66.

59   Ibid., p. 67.

60   Ibid.

61   J. M. S. Baljon Jr. *The Reforms and Religious Ideas of Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān*. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1949. p. 17.

62   Baljon. *The Reforms*.

63   Ḥālī. *Hayāt*. p. 74.

64   Powell. *Muslims and Missionaries*, p. 167.

65 Powell. *Muslims and Missionaries*, p. 217. Ram Chandra and Aḥmad Kẖān had previously sparred over the modernist challenge to traditional astronomy, where the latter had defended the traditional cosmology, a position he later repudiated.

66 Powell. *Muslims and Missionaries*, pp. 217-218.

67 Ḥālī. *Hayāt*. p. 119.

68 Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Kẖān. *Maktūbāt-i-Sir Sayyid jo...Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Kẖān marḥūm ke'ilmī o adabī, siyāsī o mazhabī fārsī o urdū kẖaṭūṭ ka majmū'ah jis men 1849 'i. 1898 'i. tak ke kẖaṭūṭ jam'a kie gae hen*. Shaykẖ Muḥammad Ismā'īl Pānīpatī, ed. Lahore: Majlis Taraqqī Adab, 1959. p. 62 [Translation mine].

69 Troll. *Sayyid Ahmad Khan*, p. 113.

70 Ibid., p. 127.

71 Ḥālī. *Hayat*. p. 119.

72 Muir. *Life*, p. ii.

73 Ibid., pp. xxvi-xxviii.

74 Ibid., pp. xxxiv-xxxv.

75 Sir William Muir. "Value of Early Mahometan Historical Sources," *The Mohammedan Controversy; Biographies of Mohammad; Sprenger on Tradition; The Indian Liturgy; and the Psalter*. Edinburgh: T.& T. Clark, 1897, p. 123, first published in the *Calcutta Review*, 46 (1868), pp. 319-390. A review of Aloys Sprenger's *Das Leben und die Lehre des Mohammad*. Berlin, 1865.

76 Aḥmad Kẖān. *Essays*, p.178.

77 Ibid., p. 210.

78 Ibid., pp. 204-241.

79 Ibid., p. 205.

80 He wrote of his "high respect for the character and attainments of Sir Wm. Muir," and his "knowledge of his profound acquaintance with oriental literature" (Ibid., p.221) as well as of "the high attainments of Sir Wm. Muir as an Arabic scholar" (Ibid., p. 238), but in both references lamented the fact that Muir did not use these abilities to report more accurately on matters relating to Muḥammad.

81 Sayyid Amīr 'Alī. *A Critical Examination of the Life and Teachings of Mohammad*. London: Williams and Norgate, 1873, pp. vii-ix.

82 Ibid., p. 26.

83 Ibid., p. 59n. This also followed Aḥmad Kẖān's position as stated in his *Essays*, pp.342-372.

84 Ibid., p. 208.

85 Ibid., pp. 42, 107.

86 Muir. *Life*, p. xxviii.

87 Ibid., p. xxxi.

88 Muir. *Controversy*, p. 107.

89 Aḥmad Kẖān. *Essays*, p. 191.

90 Ibid., p. 191.

91 Ibid., p. 206.

92 Ibid., pp. 192-193.

93 Ibid., pp. 207-208.

94 Ibid., p. 200.

95 Baljon, *Reforms*, pp. 61-62, quoting from the collection of Aḥmad Khān's later writings entitled, *Ākhirī Maẓāmīn* (1898), pp. 128-129. See also Aziz Ahmad. *Islamic Modernism in India and Pakistan*. London: Oxford University Press, 1967, p. 49.

96 Troll, Sayyid Ahmad Khan, pp. 137-143, particularly p. 137, note 161 for a list of other writings on Ḥadīth.

97 Muir. *Life*, p. xxxvi.

98 Ibid., p. xxxvii, footnote.

99 Muir. *Controversy*, p. 150.

100 Muir. *Life*, p. xxxvii.

101 Ibid., p. xxxviii.

102 Ibid., p. xxxix.

103 Ibid., p. xl.

104 Ibid., p. xli.

105 Aḥmad Khān. *Essays*, pp. 209-210.

106 Ibid., p. xli.

107 Ibid., p. xlv.

108 Ibid., p. xliv.

109 Powell. *Muslims and Missionaries*, pp. 246, 244.

110 Aḥmad Khān. *Essays*, pp. 212-213.

111 Amīr ʿAlī. *A Critical Examination*, p. 337.

112 Muir. *Life*, p. xlv.

113 Ibid., p. xlv.

114 Ibid., p. xlv.

115 Ibid., p. xlv. In another essay, Muir states that Islam "placed shackles on the independence of human thought, stifled free inquiry, and imprisoned the intellect in the close dark cell of dogma and superstition." Muir. *Controversy*, p. 149.

116 Aḥmad Khān, *Essays*, pp. 162-163, 171.

117 Ibid., p. 164.

118 Muir. *Life*, p. xliv.

119 Ibid., p. xlv-xlvi.

120 Aḥmad Khān. *Essays*, p. 177.

121 Aḥmad Khān. "On the Mohammedan Theological Literature," *Essays*, pp. 176-189.

122 Aḥmad Khān. *Essays*, pp. 178-179.

123 Aḥmad Khān. "On the Mohammedan Traditions," *Essays*, pp. 190-240. For the section on transmitting traditions, see pp. 195-200.

124 Aḥmad Khān. *Essays*, p. 198.

125 Ibid., p. 197.

126 Ibid., pp. 203-204.

127 Brown. *Rethinking Tradition*, p. 23.

128 Aḥmad Khān. *Essays*, p. 180.

129 Ibid., p. 182.

130 Ibid., p. 183.

[131] Muir. *Controversy*, p. 113.

[132] Ibid., pp. 119, 127-128; Sprenger. *Life of Moḥammad*, pp. 68-74.

[133] Muir. *Controversy*, p. 122.

[134] Ibid., p. 209.

[135] Ibid., p. 212.

[136] Ibid., p. 210.

[137] For a similar trend of rejecting the writings of al-Wāqidī by Shiblī Nuʿmāni, a historian who worked with Aḥmad Khān at MAO College, see Muhammad Qasim Zaman. "A Venture in Critical Islamic Historiography and the Significance of its Failure," *Numen*, 41 (1994), pp. 32-34.

[138] Muir. *Life*, pp. xcvi, c.

[139] Aḥmad Khān. *Essays*, p. 181.

[140] Muir. *Life*, p. xlviii.

[141] Aḥmad Khān. *Essays*, p. l.

[142] Muir. *Controversy*, p. 11, see S. Lee. *Controversial Tracts on Christianity and Mohammedanism by the late Rev. Henry Martyn, B. D. . . .* Cambridge: J. Deighton & Sons, and Stevenson, 1824, pp. 455-457.

[143] Muir. *Life*, p. liii.

[144] Aḥmad Khān. *Essays*, p. 214.

[145] Muir. *Life*, p. liv.

[146] Aḥmad Khān. *Essays*, p. 215.

[147] Muir. *Life*, p. lviii.

[148] Aḥmad Khān. *Essays*, p. 218.

[149] Ibid., pp. 218-219.

[150] Muir. *Life*, p. liv, see Henry Alford. *The Greek Testament: With a Critically Revised Text; a Digest of Various Readings; Marginal References to Verbal and Idiomatic Usage; Prolegomena; and a Critical and Exegetical Commentary*, vol. 1. London: Rivingtons, 1848, p. 56.

[151] Bennett. *Victorian Images of Islam*, p. 125, quoting George Cox. "Review of the *Life of Mahomet*," *National Review*, 1850, pp. 137-160.

[152] Powell. *Muslims and Missionaries*, pp. 268-271. William Muir's brother John Muir (1810-1882) had used Western methods of textual criticism in his controversies with Hindus. John had preceded William to India and had written several books examining the textual history of Hinduism and providing a Christian response. Upon his retirement, he returned to Scotland and continued his academic study of Indian literature and Christian theology. Unlike his brother William, John's Christian theology underwent a significant change as he ceased to exempt the Bible from the rigorous philological and historical analysis to which he had subjected the Hindu Scriptures. See Richard Fox Young. *Resistant Hinduism: Sanskrit Sources on Anti-Christian Apologetics in Early Nineteenth-Century India*. Publications of the De Nobili Research Library, ed. by Gerhard Oberhammer, v. 8. Vienna: Institut fur Indologie der Universitat Wien, 1981, pp. 64, 69-71, 166-168. I have not been able to acquire a copy of Avril Powell's paper, "The Muir Brothers, Evangelical Discourse, and Indigenous Scholarship in 19th Century North India," to be published in connection with the North Atlantic Missiology Project (University of Cambridge, Westminster College, Cambridge), though I presume that the contrast between the two brothers is dealt with in greater detail.

[153] Aḥmad Khān. *Essays*, p. 218.

[154] Muir. *Life*, pp. lix-lx.

[155] Ibid., p. lxi.

[156] Ibid., p. lxiii.

[157] Ibid., p. l.

[158] Muir. *Life*, pp. l-li.

[159] Shahīd, Mawlāna Ghulām Imām. *Mawlūd Sharīf*. Cawnpore: Maṭbaʿ-i Muḥammadī, 1850; also published in Lucknow, 1843; Cawnpore, 1845, Agra, 1852, according to Muir, see next footnote.

[160] Muir. "Biographies of Mohammad for India; and the Mohammedan Controversy," *Controversy*, p. 86.

[161] Ibid., p. lxvi.

[162] Ibid., pp. lxvi-lxvii.

[163] Young. *Resistant Hinduism*, pp. 71-75.

[164] Ibid., p. 72.

[165] Aḥmad Khān. *Essays*, p. 180, 190.

[166] Ibid., p. 207.

[167] Ibid., p. 377-394.

[168] Ibid., p. 220.

[169] Amīr ʿAlī. *A Critical Examination*, p. 49.

[170] Ibid., p. 58.

[171] Ibid., p. 59.

[172] Muir. *Life*. pp. lxvii-lxx.

[173] Ibid., p. lxx.

[174] Muir. *Life*, p. lxx.

[175] Ibid., pp. lxx-lxxi.

[176] Ibid., p. lxxii.

[177] Aḥmad Khān. *Essays*, pp. 318-341.

[178] Ibid., pp. 318-319.

[179] Ibid*.,* p. lxxiii, footnote*.*

[180] Ibid., p. xciv.

[181] Ibid., p. lxxiii, footnote. Qasṭalānī (d. 1517), was the author of *al-Mawāhib al-laduniyya fī-'l-Minaḥ al-Muḥammadiyya.*, a collection of Ḥadīth on the life of Muḥammad.

[182] Aḥmad Khān. *Essays*, p. 230.

[183] Ibid., pp. 231-232.

[184] In his *A Critical Examination*, Amīr ʿAlī shows that this tool can be used against the Christian history as well, pp. 286-287.

[185] Muir. *Life*, p. lxxiv.

[186] Ibid., p. lxxv.

[187] Ibid.

[188] Aḥmad Khān. *Essays*, p. 194. See "Introduction," note 41 for bibliographic information on Muir's book.

[189] Muir. *Life,* pp. lxxvii-lxxxvii.

[190] Ibid., p. lxxix.

[191] Ibid., p. lxxxi.

[192] Ibid.

[193] Ibid., p. lxxxi-lxxxiii.

[194] Ibid., p. lxxxii. See also idem. "Ancient Arabic Poetry:Its Genuiness and Authenticity." *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, n.s., 11 (1879), pp. 72-92.

[195] Ibid., p. lxxxiv.

[196] Ibid., p. lxxxvii.

[197] Aḥmad Khān. "Iqsām-i Ḥadīs." *Tahzīb al-Akhlāq*, v. 2. *Sar Sayyid Aḥmad Khān ke Maẕāmīn maṭbuʿah Tahzīb al-Akhlāq 1287 ta 1293 hijrī [1870-1876]*. Lahore: Malik Faẓl al-Dīn, 1895, pp. 172-180.

[198] Brown. *Rethinking Tradition*, p. 36.