ḤAJJ, AUTHORITY, AND *JIHĀD*: THE *ḤAJJ* AS SOCIAL MOBILISATION IN THE MOVEMENT OF SAYYID AḤMAD BARAYLVĪ

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Abstract

This article attempts to evaluate Sayyid Aḥmad Baraylvī's performance of *Ḥajj* in 1821-24 as an empirical event in the ideological and organisational history of his reformist-jihād movement. Based on the *Waqā'i'-i-Sayyid Aḥmad*, Urdu *tazkirah*, and modern scholarship, it suggests that pilgrimage was not only fulfilling a religious obligation but also a strategy of networks and charismatic accumulation. Using Green's approach to itinerancy as a system of religious circulation, the paper suggests how the path between Rāe Barēlī and Calcutta and onward to the Ḥijāz enabled Sayyid Aḥmad to expand his sphere of influence, establish centres of recruitment, appoint *khulafā'*, and bring fragmented followers together into a trans-regional community of devotion. The article adds insight into the role of authority, travel, and reform in early nineteenth-century South Asian Islam by foregrounding *Ḥajj* as a catalyst of circulatory charisma and organisational formation.

Keywords: *Hajj*; Sayyid Aḥmad Baraylvī; religious authority; social mobilisation; itinerant networks; *bay'at*; *khulafā'*

Introduction

Sayyid Aḥmad,[1] born on November 29, 1786 (Ṣafar 6, 1201 A.H.) in Rāe Barēlī,[2] emerged in the early nineteenth century as one of the most influential reformist figures in the North India. Since its migration to India several generations earlier, his family is consistently portrayed in biographical accounts as pious and ascetic.[3] Although initially least interested in formal *madrasah* education,[4] he acquired

competence in Persian and Arabic and was able to read works such as *Mishkāt al-Maṣābīḥ*.[5] The hagiographical sources emphasise his early moral discipline, distaste for vice, and inclination to support the poor.[6]

Details regarding his family's economic conditions are limited, though most accounts agree that he travelled between Rāe Barēlī, Lucknow, and Delhi in search of livelihood.[7] During such a visit to Delhi brought him into contact with Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz, who entrusted him to the guidance of Shāh 'Abd al-Qādir. Under these teachers, and under the influence of Shāh Rafī' al-Dīn and possibly Shāh Ismā'īl, he developed familiarity with the Holy Qur'ān, *tafsīr*, and *Hadīth*.[8] Although not an *'ālim* in the formal sense, his later writings and Arabic-Persian correspondence reveal his intellectual capacity and standing in the religious circle.[9]

His military service under 'Āmir Khān, Nawāb of Ṭonk, sharpened his organisational skills and political understanding. During his seven years with 'Āmir Khān and rising to command his personal guard,[10] he gained experience in logistics, personnel management, and political dynamics. While Hardy minimises this role,[11] the *Waqā'i' Sayyid Aḥmad Shāhīd* documents a close association between the two, including Sayyid Aḥmad's entrusted supervision of the Nawāb's son during a journey to Delhi.[12] His later visit to Ṭonk and the settlement of Mujāhidīn families there reinforce the significance of this relationship. With the dissolution of 'Āmir Khān's forces in 1817, Sayyid Aḥmad again moved to Delhi to set his future direction.[13]

He took *bay'at* with Shāh 'Abd al-ʿAzīz in 1806[14] within the Naqshbandī order,[15] though some sources attribute to him affiliation with four major *ṭurūq* —Qādiriyya, Chishtiyya, Suhrawardiyya, and Naqshbandiyya.[16] His principal training, however, is consistently linked to Shāh 'Abd al-Qādir.[17] By the time he returned to Delhi in 1818,[18] he had developed a reformist vision grounded in both Sufi discipline and socio-political realities of the 19th century India. In 1818 he introduced *Rāh-e-Sulūk-i-Nubuwwat*,[19] a method of spiritual discipline emphasising the Prophetic model[20] and rejecting practices he associated with *shirk*, such as *taṣawwur-i-shaykh*.[21] His shift toward a mobile, preaching-oriented approach—travelling rather than teaching from a fixed centre—marked an important departure from earlier Sufi customs.

Sayyid Ahmad's itinerant authority corresponds to Green's concept of the 'economy of itinerant religion,' which frames mobility as the basis for generating and sustaining charismatic power.[22] Religious authority and power may not be inherited through

institutions or texts but is generated through circulation: the movement across social landscapes, the encounter with the social strata, and the embedding of oneself in multiple local devotional networks.[23]

Sayyid Ahmad's performance of *Ḥajj* in 1821–24 was far more than the fulfilment of a religious duty. It served as a key juncture at which his circulatory charisma expanded, transformed the pilgrimage into a combination of expanded encounter, recruitment, and network-building. Using Green's framework of mobility as a mode of authority formation, the article maintains that the *Ḥajj* constituted a formative moment in the making of a trans-regional community of devotees.[24] Some latest scholarship has counted the wider political significance of the *Ḥaj* in late Mughal and early colonial South Asia. Choudhury has argued that pilgrimage circulations connected South Asian Muslims to broader interregional formations of authority and political action in the age of Mughal decline and British expansion. He notes that Sayyid Aḥmad's pilgrimage route generated fresh *bay'at* and contributed directly into the movement's later turn to jihād.[25] Jalal has situated Sayyid Aḥmad's career within the longer history of jihād in South Asia, treating him as the principal figure who tried to translate Shāh Walī Allāh's ideas into practice. She had located his movement within the moral and political tensions that marked modern South Asian Islam.[26] Taking insight from these studies, the current article narrowly focuses on the 1821–24 *Ḥajj* itself and argues that the journey should be read not only as a devotional obligation or as a prelude to later jihād, but as a concrete process of social mobilisation through which charismatic authority was extended, disciples were recruited, *khulafā'* were appointed, and a more durable trans-regional organisation was consolidated. Therefore, the article does not propose an entirely new intervention in terms of connecting *Ḥaj* and political authority. Rather it is reconstructing, from Urdu narrative sources, the organisational process by which that authority was accumulated in motion.

Literature Review

The historiography of the Sayyid Aḥmad Baraylvī's Mujāhidīn Movement is outlined by the partisan literature, colonial stereotypes and nationalist discourse with some modern academic perspectives. Urdu works like the *Waqā'i'-i-Sayyid Aḥmad* and *tazkirah* authored by his ideological inspired individuals are foremost important for reconstructing his itinerary, organisational mechanism, and the devotional tenets surrounding his mission. However, such hagiographical literature requires a critical reading to differentiate

between 'objective narratives' and their rhetorical aims of communal expansion.

Colonial writings developed a discourse of the movement in terms of *Wahhābism* and 'frontier sedition', Hunter[27] being the earliest example. Such narratives simplify the complex religious motivations under administrative headings. Mid-twentieth century writers, such as Rizvi [28] and Friedmann, [29] saw Sayyid Aḥmad's movement in the context of wider reformist currents that were connected to the Walī Allāhī tradition. While all these studies provide essential doctrinal and intellectual context, they do not thoroughly discuss the social mechanics of recruitment, mobility or organisational development.

The works produced during last few decades, have shifted toward examining Islamic reform through lenses of mobility, network formation, and authority production. Metcalf[30] and Robinson[31] works on Muslim educational institutions study the way reformist movements developed disciplined communities, transmitted knowledge, and shaped notions of religious authority. None of these sources are dealing with Sayyid Ahmad directly, but these insights help frame the pedagogical and organisational dimensions of his movement.

The historiography of Sayyid Aḥmad Baraylvī and his Mujāhidīn movement has been shaped by hagiographical narrative, colonial categorisation, nationalist reinterpretation, and academic scholarship. Urdu works including *Waqāʾiʿ-i-Sayyid Aḥmad* and the *tazkirah* literature remain essential for reconstructing his journey, preaching, organisational methods, and devotional authority. However, all these sources should be handled carefully, since they were often written to venerate charismatic leadership, affirm moral prestige, and extend the movement's symbolic reach. They are therefore most useful when read not as transparent records of events, but as partisan texts that reveal how the movement represented its own mission, authority, and community formation.

Colonial writings discussed the movement through the idioms of 'sedition', 'fanaticism', and 'Wahhābism'. These writers reduce a complex reformist and revivalist movement to an administrative security problem. The works of Qeyāmuddīn Aḥmad, Yohanan Friedmann, and others, placed Sayyid Aḥmad more firmly within the intellectual and reformist currents associated with the Walī Allāhī tradition. These studies are important for understanding the doctrinal, theological, and political setting of the movement, but they do not always focus on the practical mechanics by which authority was

extended, followers were gathered, and regional networks were consolidated through travel.

Some recent scholarship has brought the *Ḥajj*, mobility, and trans-regional circulation into the centre of analysis. Rishad Choudhury has shown that pilgrimage in the age of Mughal decline and British expansion was not merely a devotional act, but also a medium of political connection, inter-regional exchange, and the remaking of Muslim authority.[32] In his discussion of Sayyid Aḥmad, Choudhury further notes that the 1821 pilgrimage caravan enabled him to raise funds, rally supporters, secure fresh *bayʿat*, and consolidate a revivalist community before the movement turned to *jihād* against the Sikh kingdom.[33] Choudhury also demonstrates that this conjunction of pilgrimage, armed struggle, and revival quickly entered colonial discourse, where the *Ṭarīqah-yi Muḥammadiyyah* was described as an 'Indian imitation' of the 'Arabian Wahhābīs. [34] His analysis is especially valuable in showing how colonial law and administration came to conceive Muslim pilgrimage and Wahhābī 'militancy' as inter-connected problems, and how the category 'Wahhābī' acquired a specifically political and administrative meaning in the attempt to define and contain jihād.[35]

Marc Gaborieau's work must also be placed squarely within this historiography. In one of his work, he describes Sayyid Aḥmad as a Naqshbandī Ṣūfī, reformer, and warrior who "reinstated two 'forgotten obligations': the pilgrimage and holy war (*jihād*)", undertook the pilgrimage to Makkah from 1821 to 1824 with 700 disciples, and then launched *jihād* after his return. [36] Gaborieau's central emphasis is the movement's millenarian and *mahdist* dimension, especially the posthumous expectation of Sayyid Aḥmad's return and the religious mentality that sustained such belief.[37]

In an earlier work, Gaborieau has interpreted Sayyid Aḥmad's career through the paired obligations of *Ḥajj* and jihād. Gaborieau's study of Sayyid Ahmad's movement is important since he shifts attention from colonial framing to the movement's own moral, legal, and religious vocabulary. His intervention is therefore directly relevant due his focus on the pilgrimage journey as an organisational process of mobilisation.[38]

Ayesha Jalal treats Sayyid Aḥmad as the principal figure who sought to translate Walī Allāhī conceptions of *jihād* into practice, while also insisting that the movement cannot be understood merely through hagiographical celebration or retrospective militant appropriation.[39] Her narrative highlights both the ethical standing of

the movement and compromises that shaped its unfolding, including financial strain, political contingency, and conflict with Muslim actors on the 'frontier'.[40] Jalal likewise argues that the later attachment of the label 'Wahhābī' to Sayyid Aḥmad and his followers reflected British insecurity and colonial classificatory habits more than doctrinal precision, since Indian practitioners of *jihād* did not abandon their Ṣūfī inheritances.[41]

This article is not the first one to connect Sayyid Aḥmad's *Hajj* with questions of authority, reform, *jihād*, or the later discourse of 'Wahhābism'. Drawing heavily on *Waqāʾiʿ-i-Sayyid Aḥmad*, Urdu *tazkirah* literature, and related narrative materials, it reconstructs the 1821–24 journey itself as a moving infrastructure of social mobilisation. What this perspective foregrounds is the organisational texture of the pilgrimage: repeated halts of preaching, rituals of repentance, mass *bayʿat*, the appointment of *khulafāʾ*, the consolidation of regional nodes of loyalty, and the gradual transformation of a dispersed devotional following into a more durable trans-regional movement. The article shifts the analytical attention from the movement's later *mahdist* afterlife, the colonial legal genealogy of the 'Wahhābī', and the broader memory of *jihād* to the pilgrimage journey itself as the practical arena in which authority was accumulated, embodied, circulated, and institutionalised.

This study reconceptualises the 1821–24 *Hajj* as a circulatory epoch: a moment in which charismatic authority was expanded through spatial mobility and through encounters generated along a major pilgrimage corridor. Green's framework addresses a key interpretive lacuna in the historiography, allowing the early organisational formation of the Mujāhidīn Movement to be understood as the product of processes of religious circulation.

The current article attempts to contribute to the literature by treating the *Ḥajj* as a space of interaction that enabled Sayyid Ahmad to expand and consolidate his authority. By integrating source-critical analysis with insights from modern scholarship on reform and mobility, it identifies the ways in which movement across diverse social settings like Allāhābād, Patna, Calcutta, and finally Ḥijāz generated the human, organisational, and symbolic capital that later sustained the Mujāhidīn Movement. It attempts to fill a gap in the existing historiography and reframes the *Hajj* as central to the movement's early formation.

Methodology and Sources

This study employs a historical-analytical approach grounded in close reading of nineteenth and twentieth centuries Indo-Muslim narrative sources. The primary materials include the *Waqāʾiʿ-i-Sayyid Aḥmad*, *tazkire* written by his disciples, and later Urdu chronicles. Such works are important since these contain essential information about his travels, preaching, and organisational practice. Most of these works are also shaped by devotional aims that idealise moral virtues, amplify charismatic authority, and portray events in elevated terms. The analysis treats such sources as partisan representations that illuminate the movement's self-understanding rather than as neutral historical accounts. Claims regarding mass repentance, conversions, or the numerical scale of support are therefore, read critically and, where possible, contextualised through comparison with other contemporary narratives and modern historiography.

While the analysis is rooted in Indo-Muslim narrative sources, its interpretive framework is informed by Nile Green's theoretical insights. Greens terms religious space as a 'terrain of exchange' created by the movement of individuals, thoughts, and rituals and animated by the interactions of diverse actors.[42] Travel becomes a meticulous sacred act, enabling itinerant leaders to breed new associations, spread teachings, and found networks of authority. The *Ḥaj* caravan does not seem to be a devotional process but as a moving space of religious interaction. Each halt became a momentary ground of exchange of repenting sins, oath taking, preaching and appointment of deputies. Itinerancy, in the sense of the 'infrastructure of Islamic circulation' therefore, found the mode for the circulation and expansion of Sayyid Aḥmad's authority.[43]

Itinerant Authority and the Formation of Pre-*Ḥajj* Networks

Before undertaking the *Ḥajj* journey in 1821, Sayyid Aḥmad had already developed a distinctive itinerant style of religious authority that shaped the early contours of his movement. His movement across Rāy Barēlī, Lucknow, and Delhi,[44] combined with his seven years of service under ʿĀmir Khān, Nawāb of Ṭonk—where he rose to command the Nawāb's personal guard,[45] provided him with experience in logistics, mobility, and leadership. Despite Hardy's skepticism,[46] the *Waqāʾiʿ-i-Sayyid Aḥmad Shāhīd* documents several instances of close association between Sayyid Aḥmad and 'Āmir Khān, including his supervision of the Nawāb's son during a journey to Delhi.[47] These movements formed the earliest foundation of a

circulatory network of disciples. The framing of his worldview was further strengthened under Shāh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz and Shāh ‘Abd al-Qādir in Delhi. He may not be termed an *‘ālim* in the formal sense, his academic orientation is revealed by engagement with Holy Qur’ān, *tafsīr*, and *ḥadīth*[48] and his later Arabic-Persian correspondence.[49] His *bay‘at* with Shāh ‘Abd al-ʿAzīz in 1806[50] and his association with the Naqshbandī order[51] laid the religious foundation that shaped his later reformist agenda. Rather than residing permanently in a fixed *khānqāh*, Sayyid Aḥmad toured widely, connecting prospective disciples along the way. The *Waqā’i‘* contains multiple narratives of individuals meeting him during travel, taking *bay‘at*, and spreading his thoughts into their own regions. Sayyid Ahmad’s mobilisation served as a tool of religious diffusion and network expansion.

Although the movement remained comparatively less formal before the *Ḥajj*, it had already acquired a recognisable structure. Its cohesion rested upon Sayyid Aḥmad’s personal spiritual authority, the devotional discipline shared by his followers, and the appointment of trusted *khulafā’* across different regions. By the time he started his *Ḥajj* journey, his followers were no longer merely a loose circle of admirers. It had developed the essential features of a mobile religious network: a charismatic centre in Sayyid Aḥmad himself, dispersed but loyal circles of adherents, and active channels through which teachings, instructions, and commitments could circulate. The *Ḥajj* journey strengthened these connections and gave them a more organised form. It helped transform an itinerant devotional network into a disciplined body capable of sustaining the ideological and political aims that later shaped the Mujāhidīn Movement.

Sayyid Aḥmad’s travels before the *Ḥajj* might be termed ‘technology of itinerancy’: a form of religious practice in which authority is produced through movement rather than through fixed institutions.[52] Each journey generated new devotional ties: travellers approached him on roads and riverbanks, local communities gathered during his stops, and new disciples took *bay‘at*.

In Green’s framework, such movement produces *circulating charisma*, binding dispersed individuals into relational networks through repeated contact with a travelling leader.[53] These early networks, formed before the pilgrimage, created the infrastructural base upon which the more extensive circulatory expansion of the *Ḥajj* would later build.

Debates on the Obligation of *Ḥajj*

After visiting different places for reformation of society, Sayyid Aḥmad went to his home town Rāy Barēlī, where he decided to perform *Ḥajj*. The decision surprised many since he had made extensive preparations for migration and *jihād.* Followers of Sayyid Aḥmad attribute his choice to undertake *Ḥajj* to a divinely inspired dream he experienced.[54] However, one of the reasons behind this decision might be the *fatwā* of ʻAbdullāh Sulṭānpūrī (d. 1583), against the obligation of *Ḥajj* upon the Indian Muslims[55] which he came across during his stay at Lucknow.[56] Munshī Khayr al-Dīn sent the *fatwā* to Shāh ʻAbd al-ʿAzīz; it had been issued by numerous scholars in Lucknow, that given the prevailing circumstances in India, *Ḥajj* was not obligatory upon the Indian Muslims. Shāh Ismāʻīl and ʻAbd al-Ḥayy had denounced the *fatwā* and issued a counter-*fatwā* that *Ḥajj* was obligatory upon the Muslims of India. Shāh ʻAbd al-ʿAzīz supported his disciples strongly.[57] Shāh ʻAbd al-ʿAzīz declared that *Ḥajj* was obligatory upon the Indian Muslims and those people who considered it otherwise were not scholars in real sense as they lacked knowledge of the original sources, i.e., holy Qur'ān and *aḥādīth*.[58]

This sharpened polemic over obligation demonstrates the extent to which religious debates created openings for reformist leaders to assert and consolidate moral authority. As Green argues, travelling religious figures often gained influence by entering debates that were already circulating widely and by journeying to the very places where such questions were being discussed. Their authority did not rest simply on office or institution; it was strengthened through movement, presence, and timely intervention. By appearing where disputes over correct practice were most intense, they could present themselves as guides capable of resolving uncertainty and directing religious conduct.[59] Sayyid Aḥmad's decision to undertake the *Ḥajj* was not only an expression of personal devotion. It was also a considered intervention in a broader field of religious debate, through which he sought to assert authority, clarify practice, and place his movement within a wider Islamic conversation.

Preparations and the Reorientation of the Movement

However, the issue could not be resolved with mere the scholastic debate and Sayyid Aḥmad announced his intention to perform the *Ḥajj*. It is pertinent to note that the *Ḥajj* becomes obligatory only for those able-bodied Muslims who possess sufficient financial means both for their own journey and for the maintenance of

their dependents during their absence. Neither Sayyid Aḥmad nor the majority of his followers possessed the requisite resources. Yet his role as a reformer demanded a degree of resolve and sacrifice surpassing that expected of ordinary believers. By undertaking the pilgrimage, Sayyid Aḥmad sought to revive adherence to Islamic commandments through personal example at a moment when, as he perceived it, the morale of Indian Muslims had declined to the point that many sought pretexts to evade their religious obligations. According to the *Waqā'i'*, Sayyid Aḥmad instructed his disciples to prepare for the *Ḥajj-i-wājib*, while also indicating that the pilgrimage contained certain concealed benefits—namely, the broader revival of Islamic injunctions that he believed would follow from their collective commitment. Sayyid Zayn al-'Ābidīn, son of Sayyid Aḥmad 'Alī, wrote letters on the directives of Sayyid Aḥmad and they were dispatched to his disciples in different towns and cities. They were informed that though he had decided to migrate and wage jihād, the divinely inspired message had postponed that plan. He invited his disciples to join him for the performance of *Hajj*. The content of the letter has been quoted in the *Waqā'i'*:

> *We are going to perform Ḥajj and you may bring along with you whosoever would like to accompany. But let it be clear to everyone that we have no financial resources. We trust in Allāh, and leave the problems of care to Him who will not fail us. On our way, we will seek all sorts of odd jobs to defray our expenses. Aged men and women, who are unable to earn their living and traveling expenses, will perform the useful service of guarding the belongings of our men while they are out on jobs; and in the expenses, both the earning persons and those sitting at home on guard duty will share equally.*[60] [translation mine]

Majority of Sayyid Aḥmad's disciples replied that they would soon join him along with those who wished to perform *Ḥajj*. The announcement of *Ḥajj* had a deep impact on both the general public and the *'ulamā'*, motivating many to travel to Rāy Barēlī to join him in the pilgrimage. However, Sayyid Aḥmad's family, aware of the difficult circumstances, initially hesitated to accompany him for *Ḥajj*. He eventually persuaded them, and several of his relatives including nephews, cousins, and others joined him.[61]

During his preparation for *Ḥajj*, Sayyid Aḥmad left Rāy Barēlī for a missionary tour and visited a few towns including Kānpur, Korā, Jahānābād, Khājwā, Fateḥpūr, and Dalmau. He was well received everywhere and thousands flocked to offer *bay'at*. Thousands entered

into his spiritual fold by taking oath of fidelity to him. A Muslim lady, wife of an Englishman, took oath, presented four thousand rupees and a house, but the Sayyid declined to accept the presents and handed over the gifts to Mīrzā ʻAbd al-Quddūs, son-in-law of the lady.[62]

This phase of preparation shows how Sayyid Aḥmad's authority expanded through direct personal engagement, travel, and public preaching. Green's argument is useful here because it shows that travel was not simply a means of moving from one place to another.[63] At every halt, through sermons, personal meetings, and acts of *bayʻat*, new bonds were formed and older loyalties were strengthened. In this way, itinerancy helped turn scattered circles of devotion into a wider and more connected religious network.

The Journey: Preaching, Repentance, and Appointment of *Khulafā'*

Once all arrangements had been completed and volunteers had assembled from across the country, the expedition commenced its long *Hajj* journey from Rāy Barēlī on 30 July 1821 (*Shawwal* 29, 1236 AH). Numbering around 400, the members were organised into smaller *jamāʻāt* for better management.[64] The route from Rāy Barēlī to Dalmau was covered on foot by the men, while the women traveled in *pālkīs*. From Dalmau onward, travel continued by boat; however, because the boats could not hold everyone, some members walked along the riverbank.[65] Before boarding at boats, Sayyid Aḥmad addressed in a speech to his *Ḥajj* companions:

> *Everybody should understand it clearly that we are undertaking this journey of Ḥajj empty handed… Those people who trust my words should join me and the others should return to their homes.*[66]

According to the available accounts, responsibility for arranging the caravan's food and accommodation fell upon Sayyid Aḥmad, yet he lacked the financial means to fulfill these obligations. Nevertheless, as anticipated, many individuals stepped forward to support the travelers, offering monetary help, hosting them at feasts, and thereby relieving the group of the need to prepare their own meals.[67] During the course of the *Ḥajj* journey, Sayyid Aḥmad encountered Englishmen on several occasions; in one instance, an English trader—who was unaffiliated with the Company and worked independently—provided a meal for the entire caravan.[68] The popularity of the *Ḥajj* expedition was such that people waited along the riverbanks to welcome Sayyid Aḥmad and his companions. At

every stopping point and during longer stays, crowds gathered around him, and many sought to enter into *bay'at* as an act of repentance. Wherever the caravan halted, Sayyid Aḥmad delivered speeches, urging Muslims to abandon practices he considered un-Islamic. At times, he condemned customs he regarded as religious innovations. His consistent message emphasised adherence to Islamic teachings and the rejection of *bid'at*.[69] Before leaving Rāy Barēlī, Sayyid Aḥmad had informed his companions that the *Ḥajj* would be undertaken without secure financial resources, and that only those who trusted their Creature and did not hesitate to earn through odd jobs should proceed. This insistence on collective hardship gave the *Ḥajj* caravan a reformist and pedagogical character from the start. The group moved slowly, partly on foot and partly by boat, and its very pace enabled repeated encounters with local communities. At every halt, the caravan became a temporary centre of preaching, *tawbah*, *bay'at*, and instruction. Supporters offered food, cash, and hospitality, while Sayyid Aḥmad's disciples were sent among the public to convey his message. In this way, ordinary stops along the route were transformed into sites of religious instruction, recruitment, and devotional consolidation.

During the journey the caravan arrived at a place called Ojhanī where Shaykh Lāl Muḥammad, one of the Sayyid's followers, was residing. He requested the Sayyid to visit his residence and meet those few hundred people who were waiting for him. The Sayyid accepted his request and went there along with his caravan. They all took *bay'at* at his hands and repented their past sins. Shaykh Lāl Muḥammad told Sayyid Aḥmad that these people lived in eighty-four villages in the vicinity and though they took oath of allegiance at his hands, none of them was aware of the teachings of Islam. All their deeds were similar to those of Hindus and he should make some arrangement for their education. The Sayyid addressed the audience that he was appointing Shaykh Lāl Muḥammad his *khalīfah* for their guidance and all should act upon his teaching since the caravan could not stay longer. Those people requested that Maulānā **'**Abd al-Ḥayy should teach them Islamic commandments during their stay. Later on, one Mazhar 'Alī Shāh of the place, who had a good following as a religious preceptor, also joined the fold of Sayyid Aḥmad's followers. He requested the Sayyid that there were many Muslim professionals whose earnings were affected by the teaching of the latter and he should think for their livelihood. The Sayyid appreciated Mazhar 'Alī Shāh's concern and committed that he would instruct Shaykh Lāl Muḥammad regarding their livelihood.[70]

The journey continued, and Sayyid Aḥmad and his companions carried their preaching at different places including Asrolī, Chapharī, Musriān. Majority of the people of these places were ignorant of the teachings of *sharī'ah*. They were taught commandments of Islam and were directed not to deviate from the right path, otherwise they would not get salvation here and in the life hereafter. Sayyid Aḥmad appointed his *khulafā'* for the guidance of his newly inducted disciples.[71]

The caravan halted at major stations, where hundreds of people came to meet Sayyid Aḥmad. He also dispatched his disciples to engage with the public and deliver his message. This not only drew many individuals to join him for *Ḥajj* but also helped spread awareness of his reform and Jihād Movement. During the *Ḥajj* journey, he appointed his *khulafā'* in various cities, and they later played significant roles in advancing the *Jihād* Movement. In Allāhābād, he appointed Shaykh Lāl Muḥammad, Shaykh Wazīr, and several others to teach *tawḥīd*, promote *sunnah*, and discourage *shirk* and *bid'at*.[72] His stay in Allāhābād lasted longer than at other stops, and thousands of people pledged *bay'at* at his hands, including Shaykh Ghulām 'Alī, one of the city's prominent nobles. Shaykh Ghulām 'Alī was instructed to preach the principles of Islam in the city and nearby villages. He was further advised to reduce the dues owed by cultivators so they would be more receptive to his message. Many disciples from Allāhābād and the surrounding region offered cash contributions to Sayyid Aḥmad to support his *Ḥajj* expenses. At several points, Sayyid Aḥmad left Shāh Ismā'īl, 'Abd al-Ḥayy, or other learned disciples behind to instruct those who had taken the *bay'at* of repentance. They were tasked with teaching the true essence of *sharī'ah* to them and to others, particularly because the caravan was travelling slowly and was under no pressure to hurry.[73] The primary narratives also show that these encounters did not end with momentary enthusiasm. Sayyid Aḥmad repeatedly transformed local reception into durable organisational links. Where newly initiated followers lacked knowledge of *sharī'ah*, he appointed trusted *khulafā'* to guide them after the caravan had moved on. In some places, learned companions such as Shāh Ismā'īl and 'Abd al-Ḥayy were left behind temporarily to teach those who had entered bay'at. The case of Shaykh Ghulām 'Alī in Allāhābād is especially revealing: he was instructed not only to preach Islam in the city and surrounding villages, but also to reduce demands upon cultivators so that they might be more receptive to reformist instruction. Such details indicate that Sayyid Aḥmad's mobilisation was not confined to exhortation; it involved local

leadership, ethical discipline, social negotiation, and the creation of continuing lines of authority.

The constant movement, repeated preaching, appointment of deputies, and cultivation of local support exemplify what Green calls the 'circulation of authority' through itinerancy.[74] Repentance rituals, mass *bay'at*, and the appointment of deputies occurred in these temporary spaces of exchange, where the charisma of a travelling reformer intersected with local religious concerns.

Calcutta: Mass Initiation and Organisational Expansion

The *Waqā'i'* vividly reflect the economic difficulties of the period; on several occasions, the disciples of Sayyid Aḥmad recorded detailed lists of the food items served at each gathering.[75] These accounts suggest that even the Bengali Muslims—despite coming from what had once been the most prosperous province of the Mughal Empire—could not afford more than a single dish at a time. The deteriorating economic conditions under Company rule had severely weakened the region, making it understandable that many Bengalis later aligned themselves with the *Jihād* Movement.

A particularly noteworthy moment during the *Ḥajj* journey was Sayyid Aḥmad's stop in 'Aẓīmābād (Patna). There, the household of Mazhar 'Alī, a wealthy local notable, pledged *bay'at* and committed themselves fully to the reformist mission and the *Jihād* Movement. Mazhar 'Alī, Maulvī Fateḥ 'Alī, Maulvī Ilāhī Bakhsh, and Shāh Muḥammad Ḥusayn were designated *khulafā'*—deputies,[76] authorised to take *bay'at* on Sayyid Aḥmad's behalf, recruit new adherents, and propagate the movement throughout Bihār. Although Sayyid Aḥmad travelled through numerous northern Indian towns, this was the first occasion on which he formally appointed *khulafā'* through written *sanad*. His visit to 'Aẓīmābād thus laid the groundwork for the structured organisation of the movement and its financial networks—an organisational framework that persisted for decades after his death.[77]

The *Waqā'i'* provide especially detailed information about his stay in Calcutta, allowing us to reconstruct events with considerable precision. They report that the preaching of Shāh Ismā'īl, 'Abd al-Ḥayy, and Sayyid Aḥmad was so compelling that each day thousands approached him, repented for their past misdeeds, and entered into *bay'at*. As a result, he had little opportunity to engage in anything outside of prayer and basic necessities. Even the sons of Tīpū Sulṭān—residing in Calcutta under British supervision—eventually took *bay'at*.[78]

Because news of Sayyid Aḥmad's *Ḥajj* caravan had spread among communities along his route, hundreds visited him daily throughout the journey. Every stop he made later became significant during the developing *Jihād* Movement. It took him over three months to reach Calcutta, and the crowds were so overwhelming that he could not perform the customary initiation involving holding the disciple's hand. Instead, he extended his turban so people could touch it to enter *bay'at*.[79]

Both the *Hajj* expedition and his nearly three-month residence in Calcutta left a lasting impact on the eastern regions of the subcontinent. People were able to meet, and learn directly from, members of the Shāh Walī Allāh family—'Abd al-Ḥayy and Shāh Ismā'īl—as well as their guide. Their teachings stirred religious consciousness among the public, and those with aptitude became sources of guidance in their own communities. During this extended stay, continuous preaching took place, and Muslims from various parts of Bengal—such as Sylhet, Chāṭgam, and Nawākhalī—visited him. After repentance and taking *bay'at*, many were appointed as *khulafā'*, who later carried his teachings with greater zeal into distant regions of Bengal.[80] A remarkable development during this period was the conversion of many Hindus to Islam; 'Abd al-Ḥayy delivered sermons twice weekly, and on average ten to fifteen Hindus embraced Islam each day.[81]

Several nobles based in Calcutta wrote to their relatives in Dhākā encouraging them to come and meet Sayyid Aḥmad. Those who travelled reported numerous un-Islamic practices widespread in eastern Bengal and urged him to visit their region. He declined courteously and instead designated Maulvī Imām al-Dīn and Ṣūfī Nūr Muḥammad of Sylhet to carry out missionary work there. Others among the educated visitors were instructed to teach *sharī'ah* in their own localities.[82] Tītū Mīr is mentioned as one of Sayyid Aḥmad's disciples.[83]

Bengal's strong involvement in the *Mujāhidīn* Movement was shaped by several circumstances: the population had long endured the damaging consequences of Company economic policies; the concept of *jihād*—largely unfamiliar due to the dominance of *Ṣūfī* traditions—was newly introduced; and many viewed Sayyid Aḥmad as a figure capable of addressing their grievances. Although Bengal rarely produced leaders of the *Mujāhidīn*, many Bengalis later joined them in the Afghan borderland and served the cause.

A common misconception among British officials and writers concerns the *pīr-murīd*—preceptor-disciple relationship. They frequently claimed that Sayyid Aḥmad adopted this organisational model from foreign influences. In reality, such hierarchical spiritual ties had existed in India for centuries within the *Ṣūfī* orders; Sayyid Aḥmad simply adapted the established *pīrī–murīdī* framework for the purposes of the Jihād Movement. He himself had been a *murīd* of Shāh ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz. Nevertheless, colonial administrators repeatedly asserted that he derived his organisational methods from the Wahhābīs during his *Hajj*.

Green asserts that Calcutta, like other major port cities, functioned as a *circulatory hub*—a centre where itinerant movements intersect with dense social worlds, amplifying religious traffic and facilitating the redistribution of ideas and authority.[84] Sayyid Aḥmad's three-month stay there illustrates how such hubs intensify itinerant charisma: diverse populations entered into his devotional network, and newly appointed deputies carried his teachings across Bengal and beyond.

Journey to the Ḥijāz and its Outcomes

After a stay of more than three months in Calcutta, the caravan, comprised of around 750 individuals—was organised into ten groups, each placed under the supervision of a designated leader, with every group travelling on a separate ship. The fair of passage alone amounted to Rs. 13,000, a sum entirely covered by gifts and contributions from followers and well-wishers.[85] The party departed from Calcutta in February 1822 (*Jamādī al-Awwal* 1237) and reached Ḥijāz on 21 May 1822 (29 *Shaʿbān* 1237). During their stay, in addition to performing the rites of *Ḥajj*, *Ṣīrāṭ al-Mustaqīm* was rendered into another language by ʻAbd al-Ḥayy and Shāh Ismāʻīl for Shaykh Ḥasan Effendī, the representative of Aḥmad Pasha, the ruler of Egypt.

A number of scholars from Ḥijāz pledged *bayʻat*, among them Shaykh ʻAbdullāh Sirāj, Sayyid Muḥammad of North Africa, Shaykh Ḥamza, Shaykh Aḥmad b. Idrīs, Muḥammad ʻAlī Hindī, Mullā Bukhārī, Shaykh Ṣāliḥ Shāfiʻī, and Shaykh ʻAlī. A significant occurrence during the stay at Minā—associated with the concluding rites of *Hajj* —was the renewal of *bayʻat* specifically for *jihād*.[86] According to sources, a *bayʻat* for *jihād* had earlier been taken from his close associates at Ḥudaybiyya when Sayyid Aḥmad was on his way to Makka to perform *Ḥajj*.[87]

The later afterlife of the movement also requires more careful historiographical framing. As recent scholarship has shown, colonial officials and later polemicists increasingly folded Sayyid Aḥmad's career into a broad discourse of "Wahhābism", one that linked pilgrimage, reform, mobility, and militancy in ways that often obscured local doctrinal and organisational specificities[88]. Yet this category was not a transparent description of the movement's intellectual genealogy. Jalal emphasises that the attachment of the label "Wahabi" to Sayyid Aḥmad and his followers was more a function of British insecurity than an accurate characterisation of their doctrines and methods, and that Indian thinkers and practitioners of *jihād* did not abandon their *Sufi* inspiration and camaraderie.[89] The significance of the 1821–24 *Ḥajj*, therefore, lies not in proving a simple Arabian derivation, but in showing how pilgrimage served as a medium through which a specifically Indo-Muslim reformist project expanded its authority, recruitment base, and organisational reach before later being recoded within colonial knowledge as "Wahhābī".

The act of taking *bay'at* for *jihād* during the pilgrimage undermines the claim advanced by certain writers that Sayyid Aḥmad initiated his struggle against the Sikhs with English support or encouragement. Such assertions were often made either to shield the Wahhābīs from potential British hostility or to portray Ranjīt Singh as a Punjabi nationalist.

After performing *Ḥajj*, Sayyid Aḥmad returned to India along with his companions. He landed at Bombay, and after a short stay of a few days went to Calcutta, where he reached in October 1823 (*Ṣafar* 1239). His stay in Calcutta was for over two months. The return journey is as important as the previous one. While going for *Ḥajj*, Sayyid Aḥmad preached repentance of sins, following *sharī'ah*, and avoiding all innovations. The return journey had glimpses of the preparation of *jihād*. Sayyid Aḥmad purchased arms and his followers did so.

He visited Mangal Kot, Murshidābād, and from there to Kūhna at the request of Dīwān Ghulām Murtazā. Sayyid Aḥmad stayed there for a few days and some arms were gifted to him by the Dīwān. He returned to his home town Rāy Barēlī in April 1824 (29 *Sha'bān* 1239) after staying at different places. He followed the same pattern of preaching at important places, including Monghyr, taking *bay'at*, and appointing his deputies in different towns. Guns and pistols were purchased there from a local gun and ammunition manufacturing

factory.[90] The whole journey from and to Rāy Barēlī took two years and ten months.[91]

The caravan's arrival in the Ḥijāz illustrates Green's argument that pilgrimage spaces operate as 'supra-local arenas of Islamic exchange,' places where diverse Muslim populations converge and circulate religious authority across continents.[92] In this environment, Sayyid Aḥmad encountered scholars from North Africa, Arabia, and the Ottoman world who pledged *bay'at*, extending his devotional influence into new trans-regional circuits. Thus, the *Ḥajj* served not only as a devotional act but also as an accelerant of itinerant authority. As Green notes, pilgrimage routes historically transformed local religious figures into trans-regional agents of charisma by inserting them into global Muslim networks.[93] Sayyid Aḥmad's experience in the Ḥijāz exemplifies this process.

Conclusion

The leaders of the *Mujāhidīn* had felt the need for the performance of *Ḥajj* as Muslims of India were badly neglecting one of their fundamental duties as prescribed in the scripture and by the Holy Prophet *(Ṣal Allah-u-'alaihe wa sallam)*. They set an example for the fellow Muslims by performing *Hajj*. The performance of *Ḥajj*, by any means, did not connect them with the Arabian Wahhābīs.[94] One important aspect of the *Ḥajj* journey was the generosity of its leader. Sayyid Aḥmad had left his home town empty-handed but spent thousands on different occasions—on the marriage of people while travelling, the construction of wells and mosques, fare paid to ships, and meeting other necessities.[95]

The journey for the performance of *Ḥajj* was an important episode of Sayyid Aḥmad's struggle for the revival of Islamic injunctions. Sayyid Aḥmad and his followers, with no financial resources, performed *Hajj*. The excuse commonly used by Indian Muslims—that insecurity at sea prevented the performance of *Ḥajj* —was negated practically. The performance of *Ḥajj* by Sayyid Aḥmad along with his adherents became so popular that many *'ulamā'*, especially of the Deoband school of thought, continued the practice during colonial India.

His stay at different places benefited Sayyid Aḥmad and his followers in several ways. Firstly, food and money were provided during the journey. Secondly, *khulafā'* were appointed who spread the message of reformist Islam. Thirdly, many of the deputies not only

worked for reformation in their respective areas but also established networks for fund collection and recruitment of the *Mujāhidīn* during and after Sayyid Aḥmad. Fourthly, some adherents who took *bayʿat* during this time later became leaders of *jihād* activities during and after his lifetime, including the Sadiqpur family, who continued to lead the *Mujāhidīn* Movement for about a century. He established links with Muslims of other countries, including Burma, and appointed deputies for the reformation of that far-flung area. Last but not least, Sayyid Aḥmad established connections with Bengali Muslims during the *Ḥajj* journey, which proved an asset for the *Mujāhidīn* Movement during the colonial era. These deputies and followers of Sayyid Aḥmad performed excellently throughout the colonial period and were able to provide money and material to the *Mujāhidīn* in the Afghan borderland. The caravan's arrival in the Ḥijāz illustrates Green's argument that pilgrimage spaces operate as 'supra-local arenas of Islamic exchange,' places where diverse Muslim populations converge and circulate religious authority across continents. [96] In this environment, Sayyid Aḥmad encountered scholars from North Africa, Arabia, and the Ottoman world who pledged *bayʿat*, extending his devotional influence into new trans-regional circuits. The performance of *Ḥajj* was not a religious obligation only, rather it strengthened itinerant authority. According to Green, pilgrimage routes historically elevated local religious figures into trans-regional mediators of charisma by introducing them into global Muslim networks.[97] Sayyid Aḥmad's experience from his hometown to Ḥijāz exemplifies this process.

Notes and References

[1] Ghulām Rasūl Mihr, *Sayyid Aḥmad Shāhīd* (Lahore: Shaikh Ghulām ʿAlī and Sons, 1956), 33.

[2] Sayyid Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī Nadwī, *Tārīkh-i Daʿwat wa ʿAzīmat: Sīrat-i Sayyid Aḥmad Shāhīd* (Karachi: Majlis-i Nashriyāt, n.d.), 109; *Chamarkand Colony* S. No. 271, Civil Secretariat, North-West Political Department, Tribal Research Cell, Peshawar, p. 4.

[3] Mihr, *Sayyid Aḥmad Shāhīd*, 30-57; Nadwī, *Sīrat-i Sayyid Aḥmad Shāhīd*, 90–92; Muḥammad Hedāyatullāh, *Sayyid Aḥmad: A Study of the Religious Reform Movement of Sayyid Aḥmad of Rā'e Bareli* (Lahore: Sh. Muḥammad Ashraf, n.d.), 45.

[4] ʿAlīm Naṣrī, *Shāhnāmah-yi Balākōṭ: Taḥrīk-i Jihād kī Manẓūm Dāstān*, vol. 1 (Lahore: Idārah Matbūʿāt-i Sulaymānī, n.d.), 54. This was a sort of deviation from the family tradition as they had always served during Sultanate and Mughal periods but mainly in the capacity of *qazis* or *sheikh-ul-Islam*. The elder brother of Sayyid Ahmad was serving Amir Khan of Tonk in capacity of Imam-e-Lashkar—responsible to lead the congregational prayers. It is

pertinent to note that getting knowledge and appointment as a *qazi* or some other post was no more an attractive job as the Muslims had lost most part of their previous domain and it was needed to look for other sources of livelihood.

[5] Ashraf ʿAlī Thānvī, *Arwāḥ-i Thalāthah*, reprint (Lahore: Maktabah-i Raḥmāniyyah, n.d.), 129.

[6] Nadwī, *Sīrat-i Sayyid Aḥmad Shāhīd*, 110.

[7] Hedāyatullāh, *Sayyid Aḥmad*, 51–52; Muḥammad Ḥamzah Ḥasanī Nadwī, *Tazkirah-yi Ḥaḍrat Sayyid Aḥmad Shāhīd*, reprint (Karachi: Majlis-i Nashriyāt, 1996), 28.

[8] Ishtiāq Ḥusain Qureshī, *ʿUlamāʾ in Politics* (Karachi: Maʿārif, n.d.), 141.

[9] Hedāyatullāh, *Sayyid Aḥmad*, 58–60; Mihr, *Sayyid Aḥmad*, 76–77.

[10] Maḥmūd Ḥusain, "Sayyid Aḥmad Shāhīd (I)," in *A History of Freedom Movement, 1707–1831*, vol. 1 (Karachi: Royal Book Company, 2008), 560.

[11] Peter Hardy, *The Muslims of British India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), 51.

[12] Nawwāb Muḥammad Wazīr Khān, *Waqāʾiʿ-i-ʿSayyid Aḥmad Shāhīd* (Lahore: Sayyid Aḥmad Shāhīd Academy, 2007), 86.

[13] Naṣrī, *Shāhnāmah-yi Balākōṭ, 78.*

[14] Qeyamuddin Ahmad, *The Wahabi Movement in India*, reprint (Islamabad: National Book Foundation, 1979), 25. Farooqi has stated 1807, see N. R. Farooqi, "Saiyid Ahmad of Rae Bareli: An Account of His Life and Thought and An Appraisal of His Impact on the *Sufi* Centres of Awadh and Eastern India" in Saiyid Zaheer Husain Jafri and Helmut Reifeld (eds.), *The Islamic Path: Sufism, Politics and Society in India* (Delhi: Rainbow Publishers Limited, 2006), 295.

[15] Shaykh Muḥammad Ikrām, *Mauj-i-Kawthar* (Lahore: Idāra-yi Thaqāfat-i Islāmiyyah, 2000), 15. One source narrates that Sayyid Aḥmad took *bayʿat* at the hands of Shāh ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz during his first visit, stayed for six days, and then departed. He returned after six months and then remained with Shāh ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz for another six months. Thānvī, *Arwāḥ-i Thalātha, 126.* Yet another source reports that he took *bayʿat* in all four major Sufi orders—the Qādiriyya, Chishtiyya, Suhrawardiyya, and Naqshbandiyya. Yet another source has narrated that he took *baiʿat* in all four popular mystic orders of *Qādiriyya*, *Chishtiyya*, Suhrawardiyya and Naqshbandiyya. Muʾīn al-Dīn Aḥmad Khān, "Ṭarīqah-i Muḥammadiyya Movement: An Analytical Study," *Islamic Studies* 6 (1967): 375–88.

[16] Khān, "Ṭarīqah-i Muḥammadiyya", 375-88.

[17] Qamar Aḥmad Usmānī, *Barēlī sey Balākōṭ: Tazkira-yi Mujāhid-i Kabīr Ḥaḍrat Sayyid Aḥmad Shāhīd Barēlvī* (Lahore: Idāra-yi Islāmiyyāt, 1983), 27.

[18] Khān, *Waqāʾiʿ-i-ʿSayyid Aḥmad*, 86; Mihr, *Sayyid Aḥmad*, 113.

[19] The scholars have named his order *Tariqah-e-Muhammadiyah* (path of the Prophet) but we prefer the name given by Sayyid Ahmad himself. Sayyid Aḥmad, *Ṣirāṭ al-Mustaqīm*, ed. Shāh Ismāʿīl, Urdu trans. Muḥammad Akram (Lahore: Islāmī Academy, n.d.), 179.

[20] Khān, "Ṭarīqah-i Muḥammadiyya", 375-88.

[21] Khān, *Waqāʾiʿ-i-ʿSayyid Aḥmad*, 13.

[22] Nile Green, *Bombay Islam: The Religious Economy of the West Indian Ocean, 1840–1915* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 8–12.
[23] Nile Green, *Global Islam: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020), 4–6.
[24] *Ibid.*, 4-6.
[25] Rishad Choudhury, *Hajj across Empires: Pilgrimage and Political Culture after the Mughals, 1739–1857* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2024), 1–9, 270–271.
[26] Ayesha Jalal, *Partisans of Allah: Jihad in South Asia* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008), 15–17, 58–59.
[27] W. W. Hunter, *The Indian Musalmans: Are They Bound in Conscience to Rebel Against the Queen?* (London: Trübner & Co., 1876).
[28] Saiyid ʿAbd al-Ḥayy ʿAlī Riẓvī, *Shāh Walī Allāh and His Times: A Study of Eighteenth Century Islām, Politics, and Society in India* (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1970).
[29] Yohanan Friedmann, *Messianic Ideas and Movements in Sunni Islam* (London: Oneworld Academic, 2022).
[30] Barbara D. Metcalf, *Islamic Revival in British India: Deoband, 1860–1900* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1982).
[31] Francis Robinson, *The ʿUlamāʾ of Farangī Maḥall and Islamic Culture in South Asia* (Delhi: Permanent Black, 2001); Francis Robinson, "The ʿUlamāʾ of the Indian Subcontinent from 1800 to the Present," in *The ʿUlamāʾ in Contemporary Islam: Custodians of Change*, ed. Muhammad Qasim Zaman (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008), 53–77.
[32] Choudhury, *Hajj across Empires, 1-9.*
[33] Rishad Choudhury, "Wahhābīs without Religion; or, A Genealogy of Jihādis in Colonial Law, 1818 to 1857," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 42, no. 2 (2022): 404–419.
[34] Choudhury, "Wahhābīs without Religion", 404-419.
[35] *Ibid.*, 404-419.
[36] Marc Gaborieau, "Le mahdi oublié de l'Inde britannique: Sayyid Ahmad Barelwî (1786–1831), ses disciples, ses adversaires," *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée* 91–94 (July 2000): 257–274, https://doi.org/10.4000/remmm.259
[37] Gaborieau, "Le mahdi oublié de l'Inde britannique", 257–274.
[38] Marc Gaborieu, "The 'forgotten obligation': a reinterpretation of Sayyid Ahmad Barelwî's jihâd in the North-West Frontier, 1826–1831", in J. Assayag (ed.), *The Resources of History. Tradition, Narration and Nation in South Asia* ((Paris: École française d'Extrême-Orient and Institut Français de Pondichéry, 1999).
[39] Jalal, *Partisans of Allah*, 76-77.
[40] *Ibid.*, 91–93, 100–101.
[41] *Ibid.*, 307–308.
[42] Nile Green, *Islam and the Army in Colonial India: Sepoy Religion in the Service of Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 57-60.
[43] Nile Green, *Terrains of Exchange: Religious Economies of Global Islam* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 114-16.
[44] Mihr, *Sayyid Aḥmad Shāhīd*, 30–57; Nadwī, *Sīrat-i Sayyid Aḥmad Shāhīd, 90-92.*

[45] Ḥusain, "Sayyid Aḥmad Shāhīd (I)," 560.
[46] Hardy, *The Muslims of British India*, 51.
[47] Khān, *Waqāʾiʿ-i-ʿSayyid Aḥmad*, 86.
[48] Qureshī, *ʿUlamāʾ in Politics,* 141.
[49] Hedāyatullāh, *Sayyid Aḥmad*, 58–60; Mihr, *Sayyid Aḥmad Shāhīd*, 76–77.
[50] Ahmad, *The Wahabi Movement in India*, 25.
[51] Ikrām, *Mauj-i-Kawthar, 15.*
[52] Green, *Bombay Islam,* 10–13.
[53] Green, *Global Islam*, 9–12.
[54] Khān, *Waqāʾiʿ Sayyid Aḥmad*, 560.
[55] For a study of the religious trends of Mughal times please see Riaz ul Islam, "Religious Trends of the Mughal Age", *JHSS*, Vol. 1, No. 1, January-June 2010, 1-19.
[56] Abdullah Sultanpuri was an important person of Humayun, Sher Shah and Akbar's time. He had issued a *fatwa* declaring Haj non obligatory upon the Indian Muslims due to unsafe journey via sea. Hedāyatullāh, *Sayyid Aḥmad*, 112.
[57] Nadwī, *Sīrat-i Sayyid Aḥmad Shāhīd*, 258.
[58] Mohiuddin Ahmad, *Saiyid Ahmad Shahid: His Life and Mission* (Lucknow: Academy of Islamic Research and Publications, 1975), 80–81; Nadwī, *Sīrat-i Sayyid Aḥmad Shāhīd*, 259–61.
[59] Green, *Islam and Army in Colonial India*, 25–48.
[60] Khān, *Waqāʾiʿ-i-ʿSayyid Aḥmad*, 560–63.
[61] Nadwī, *Sīrat-i Sayyid Aḥmad Shāhīd*, 264.
[62] Ahmad, *Saiyid Ahmad Shahid*, 82.
[63] Green, *Islam and Army in Colonial India*, 25–48.
[64] Ahmad, *The Wahabi Movement in India*, 30.
[65] Nadwī, *Sīrat-i Sayyid Aḥmad Shāhīd*, 274–75.
[66] Khān, *Waqāʾiʿ-i-ʿSayyid Aḥmad*, 599–601.
[67] Nadwī, *Sīrat-i Sayyid Aḥmad Shāhīd*, 268–69.
[68] Khān, *Waqāʾiʿ-i-ʿSayyid Aḥmad*, 606–607; Nadwī, *Sīrat-i Sayyid Aḥmad Shāhīd*, 278.
[69] Nadwī, *Sīrat-i Sayyid Aḥmad Shāhīd*, 275–76.
[70] Khān, *Waqāʾiʿ-i-ʿSayyid Aḥmad*, 608–14.
[71] Nadwī, *Sīrat-i Sayyid Aḥmad Shāhīd*, 281–83.
[72] Khān, *Waqāʾiʿ-i-ʿSayyid Aḥmad*, 625–28.
[73] Nadwī, *Sīrat-i Sayyid Aḥmad Shāhīd*, 283-88, 294.
[74] Green, *Islam and Army in Colonial India*, 25–48.
[75] Khān, *Waqāʾiʿ-i-ʿSayyid Aḥmad*, 700–722.
[76] *Ibid.*, 750.
[77] Ahmad, *The Wahabi Movement in India*, 31.
[78] Khān, *Waqāʾiʿ-i-ʿSayyid Aḥmad*, 814–15, 826–33.
[79] Hedāyatullāh, *Sayyid Aḥmad*, 114.
[80] Ikrām, *Mauj-i-Kawthar, 22-23.*
[81] Nadwī, *Tazkirah-yi Ḥaḍrat Sayyid Aḥmad Shāhīd*, 58.
[82] Nadwī, *Sīrat-i Sayyid Aḥmad Shāhīd*, 333–34.
[83] Hedāyatullāh, *Sayyid Aḥmad*, 115. The reform movements in eastern and western Bengal—later known as the Farāʾiḍī and Wahhābī movements—

were led by Sharīʿatullāh, Dudū Miyān, and Tītū Mīr. Information about Sharī'atullāh's early life is scarce: he was born in Fāridpūr in 1780, performed *Ḥajj* at eighteen, spent two decades in Ḥijāz, and began his reform efforts only after returning to Bengal.

[84] Green, *Terrains of Exchange*, 112–15.

[85] Ahmad, *The Wahabi Movement in India*, 38.

[86] Nadwī, *Sīrat-i Sayyid Aḥmad Shāhīd*, 365–68.

[87] *Ibid.*, 362.

[88] Choudhury, *Hajj across Empires*, pp. 270–271, 294.

[89] Jalal, *Partisans of Allah*, pp. 307–308

[90] Ahmad, *The Wahabi Movement in India*, 38.

[91] Nadwī, *Tazkirah-yi Ḥaḍrat Sayyid Aḥmad Shāhīd*, 66.

[92] Green, *Bombay Islam*, 14–17.

[93] Green, *Global Islam*, 18–20.

[94] Harlon O. Pearson, Harlon O. *Islamic Reform and Revival in Nineteenth Century India: The Tariqah-i-Muhammadiyah*. Delhi: Yoda Press, 2008, 40.

[95] Mihr, *Sayyid Aḥmad Shāhīd,* 213–14.

[96] Green, *Bombay Islam*, 14–17.

[97] Green, *Global Islam*, 18–20.