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EVANGELIZING BENGALI MUSLIMS, 1793–1813:  
WILLIAM CAREY, WILLIAM WARD, AND ISLAM

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A Dissertation  
Presented to  
the Faculty of  
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Philosophy

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by  
James Ryan West  
May 2014

**APPROVAL SHEET**

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I dedicate this dissertation to my family:

Danielle, David, Sally, and John West; James and Joy West; Danny and Judy Henley.

Thank you for your support.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.....	viii
PREFACE.....	ix
Chapter	
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
The State of Carey-Ward Scholarship .....	2
Secondary Source Material.....	2
Primary Source Material.....	7
Primary Research Question, Thesis, and Parameters.....	9
Statement of Primary and Secondary Research Questions.....	10
Statement of Thesis.....	10
Statement of Parameters .....	10
Importance of the Study.....	13
Dissertation Summary and Overview of Context .....	14
Dissertation Summary .....	14
Overview of Context.....	17
2. WILLIAM CAREY AND WILLIAM WARD: PHILOSOPHY OF MISSIONS .....	24
Philosophy of Missions Stated.....	27
God’s Sovereignty and Millennial Expectations	
Provide an Assured Hope .....	39
Basis of Mission: God is Able to Establish His Glory .....	39
Milliennial Expectations: God Will Establish His Glory .....	45
Hopes Realized: God is Establishing His Glory.....	48

Chapter	Page
A Close Communal Life .....	52
The Centrality of Indigenous Leadership.....	60
Conclusion .....	79
<b>3. CAREY, WARD, AND ISLAM: AN ENCOUNTER IN BRITISH COLONIAL BENGAL .....</b>	<b>81</b>
Practical Category for Bengali Islam: Folk Islam.....	82
Mixture of Hinduism and Islam.....	83
A Textless Religion .....	89
Nascent Islamic Theology .....	91
Bengali Muslim Leadership: Fakiers.....	92
Bengali Sufism.....	98
Carey and Ward’s Evaluation of Bengali Islam.....	100
Bengali Islam within the Indian Caste System .....	101
Bengali Muslims and Superstition.....	111
Bengali Muslims and Ignorance .....	114
Bengali Muslims Were “Hindoos” Too.....	116
Conclusion .....	121
<b>4. WILLIAM CAREY’S MINISTRY TO BENGALI MUSLIMS.....</b>	<b>123</b>
Carey’s Perceived Responsibility to Muslims .....	124
Carey Initiating Dialogue.....	127
Muslims Initiating Dialogue .....	133
Carey’s Message to Bengali Muslims.....	135
Evangelistic Success among Muslims .....	142
Conclusion .....	148
<b>5. WILLIAM WARD’S MINISTRY TO BENGALI MUSLIMS .....</b>	<b>149</b>

Chapter	Page
Ward’s Primary Contribution: The Derby Printer .....	149
Ward’s Understood Contribution .....	149
Ward’s “Paper Missionaries”: Printed Scriptures and Pamphlets—Their Impact.....	154
Ward’s “Paper Missionaries”: The How of Distribution.....	159
Ward’s Secondary Contribution: A Minister in Bengal.....	167
Evangelizing Bengali Muslims Personally .....	167
Pastor at Calcutta and Serampore .....	178
Conclusion .....	180
6. THE FULLER-WARD PRINCIPLE: SELECTIVE REPRESENTATION.....	181
Selective Representation Established.....	181
The Process of Selective Representation .....	189
The Selective Representation Process .....	189
The Principle Applied: Additions .....	194
The Principle Applied: Omissions.....	196
A Nearly Faultless Process of Selective Representation .....	201
The “Persian Pamphlet”.....	202
Tensions and Resolutions in Bengal.....	208
Tensions and Resolutions in England.....	221
Conclusion .....	229
7. CONCLUSION .....	231

	Page
Fuller as Editor.....	231
Philosophy of Missions.....	233
Islam as Understood by Carey and Ward.....	234
Carey, Ward, and Ministry to Muslims.....	235
Conclusion .....	238
 Appendix	
EXAMPLES OF WARD’S JOURNAL COMPARED TO FULLER’S PUBLISHED VERSION .....	239
February 29, 1802 .....	239
Ward’s Journal.....	240
<i>The Periodical Accounts</i> .....	240
May 16, 1803 .....	240
Ward’s Journal.....	241
<i>The Periodical Accounts</i> .....	241
August 3, 1806 .....	241
Ward’s Journal.....	242
<i>The Periodical Accounts</i> .....	242
BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	243



## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BMS	Baptist Missionary Society
EIC	East India Company
LMS	London Missionary Society
SLCF	Second London Confession of Faith (1689)
SFA	Serampore Form of Agreement (1805)

## PREFACE

Many stories contain aspects that remain untold. Such is the case with William Carey (1761–1834), William Ward (1769–1823), and Islam. Although some authors have hinted at the interaction of the Serampore missionaries with Bengali Muslims, very little work has emerged that offers significant detail concerning this aspect of the Serampore story. This dissertation seeks to address this lacuna and offer a faithful account of their ministry to Bengali Muslims.

The general story of the Serampore mission is widely known within Baptist circles. As I researched this dissertation, it became evident that Carey, Ward, and Joshua Marshman (1768–1837) would not have accomplished so much without the tremendous support from their Western Christian community. I identified with this aspect of their experience throughout my dissertation process and find myself deeply indebted to many individuals who supported me over the last five years. Therefore, several notes of thanks are in order as no one can complete such a project without much support. First and foremost, my lovely wife, Danielle Henley West, deserves an enormous amount of praise for supporting me and encouraging me through this process. She experienced many good and bad events with me along this path, never discouraging me and always pushing me forward. Our children—David, Sally, and John—provided me with a wonderful source of joy during difficult times. When the days were full of long hours, the children were always ready to play, thus providing a healthy outlet on such days. My parents—James and Joy—offered unsolicited support throughout my graduate studies. Danny and Judy Henley, my wife’s parents, were more than willing to help us significantly as well. Both sets of parents blessed our family tremendously and enabled us to continue in this

journey. Additionally, Tom Nettles and Michael Haykin invested many hours into my academic development and writing process. Truly, they have shaped me in many ways and have thus exhibited the ideal nature of a supervisor-student relationship. Without this wonderful group of individuals, completing this dissertation would not be a reality.

J. Ryan West

Alpharetta, Georgia

May 2014

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

William Carey has become a highly celebrated figure in discussions concerning missiology, even being deemed the “Father of Modern Missions.” Generally, Carey’s importance to the early Baptist Missionary Society (hereafter, BMS) is an accepted point of conversation.<sup>1</sup> One may not realize, however, that leaders of the early BMS found a man of equal value to Carey in a little-known printer from Derby—William Ward. Together, they would shape the growing evangelical concern for the “heathen” through their various missionary endeavors and concerns. Their influence also extended well-beyond their missionary activity to include contributions, such as Carey’s botanical advancements. With such a broad range of influence, a large amount of secondary material has emerged over the last two hundred years. Despite the existence of such a large body of writings, one of the most important aspects of Carey’s and Ward’s ministry remains largely unexplored: their ministry to Bengali Muslims.

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<sup>1</sup>Originally, the BMS was called the Particular Baptist Society for Propagating the Gospel amongst the Heathen. For an introduction to the founding of the BMS, one should begin with Brian Stanley, *The History of the Baptist Missionary Society, 1792–1992* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1992), 1–35. Other helpful introductions are David Bebbington, *Baptists through the Centuries: A History of a Global People* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2010), 215–20; Samuel Pearce Carey, *William Carey* (New York: George H. Doran Co., 1923), 67–94; F. A. Cox and James Peggs, *History of the Baptist Missionary Society, From 1792 to 1842: To Which is Added a Sketch of the General Baptist Mission, in Two Volumes*, (London: T. Ward & Co., and G. & J. Dyer, 1842), 1:1–27; Timothy George, *Faithful Witness: The Life and Mission of William Carey* (Birmingham, AL: New Hope, 1991), 67–79; Michael A. G. Haykin, *One Heart and One Soul: John Sutcliff of Olney, His Friends and His Times* (Durham, England: Evangelical Press, 1994), 198–235; Peter J. Morden, *Offering Christ to the World: Andrew Fuller (1754–1815) and the Revival of Eighteenth Century Particular Baptist Life*, *Studies in Baptist History and Thought* (Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster, 2003), 128–56; E. Daniel Potts, *British Baptist Missionaries in India, 1793–1837: The History of Serampore and Its Missions* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 13–26.

## The State of Carey-Ward Scholarship

Adequately surveying the state of Carey and Ward scholarship requires a distinction as one's first observation. Researchers must delineate between secondary and primary source material.

### Secondary Source Material

William Carey has been the subject of some seventy English-language biographies and countless magazine articles since his death in 1834—all celebrating the man who stands as the iconic beginning of the modern missionary movement. Three primary problems exist in current Carey and Ward scholarship however. First, despite what one would logically conclude from the enormous amount of literature existing on Carey, very little of that material can be considered academic in nature. While popular-level material abounds, critical scholarly work on this figure has been a neglected area of study. Second, within the received historiography of Carey, a false perception of this figure has gone unchallenged because of the aforementioned scholarly lacuna within Carey literature. The received, yet false, understanding of Carey is that he expended very little ministerial effort to reach Muslims and was slow to pursue evangelistic opportunities among these people. Third, William Ward has received only minor attention in academic or popular literature despite being “the very man we wanted.”<sup>2</sup> The most authoritative material on Ward was written by Christopher A. Smith twenty years ago.<sup>3</sup> Although Ward receives some consideration within Carey scholarship, it serves

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<sup>2</sup>William Carey to Andrew Fuller, February 5, 1800, quoted in Stanley, *The History of the Baptist Missionary Society*, 43.

<sup>3</sup>Christopher A. Smith, “Mythology and Missiology: A Methodological Approach to the Pre-Victorian Mission of the Serampore Trio,” *International Review of Mission* 83, no. 330 (1994): 451–75; Christopher A. Smith, “William Ward (1769–1823),” in *The British Particular Baptists, 1638–1910*, ed. Michael A. G. Haykin (Springfield, MO: Particular Baptist Press, 2000), 2:255–71; and Christopher A. Smith, “William Ward, Radical Reform, and Missions in the 1790s,” *American Baptist Quarterly* 10 (1991): 218–44. In addition to these essays by Smith, one should consult Stennett’s biography of Ward to understand more fully this member of the Serampore Trio: Samuel Stennett, *Memoirs of the Life of the Rev. William Ward* (London: J. Haddon: 1825). Also, one should consult John Clark Marshman, *The Life and Times of Carey, Marshman, and Ward* (London: Longman, Brown, Green, Longmans & Roberts, 1859).

largely as parenthetical material that leads back to Carey and Ward is not a stand-alone subject in most existing BMS histories. This dissertation seeks to expand Carey and Ward scholarship by establishing a more complete perception of Carey and offering a foundational study for future research on Ward.

Several biographies exhibit high esteem within the traditional field of BMS historiography. Timothy George's work, published twenty years ago, will provide a foundation for this dissertation.<sup>4</sup> Cornerstone works penned by Eustace Carey, Samuel Pearce Carey, Mary Drewery, and George Smith were superseded by George's work at both the level of research and accessibility.<sup>5</sup> Of course, all of these biographies offer differing perspectives, written according to agendas unique to each author.<sup>6</sup> The last major biography on Carey was John Appleby's book, which provided a deeper examination of Carey than most of his predecessors.<sup>7</sup> Building on previously-written biographies of Carey, Appleby sought to address Carey according to the primary sources that this dissertation also examines. In this sense, his work offered a fresh look at what had become a fairly pedestrian topic of study. As readers will see immediately, however, he did not offer a thorough examination of the primary literature or address Carey's views of Muslims and ministry to these people. Appleby's other primary contribution

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<sup>4</sup>George, *Faithful Witness*.

<sup>5</sup>These biographies are standard works—along with the other material discussed in this section—for persons wanting to research BMS history and specific individuals within this broader history: Eustace Carey, *Memoir of William Carey: Late Missionary to Bengal, Professor of Oriental Languages in the College of Fort William, Calcutta* (Hartford, CT: Robins & Smith, 1844); Carey, *William Carey*; Mary Drewery, *William Carey: Shoemaker and Missionary* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1978); and George Smith, *The Life of William Carey, D.D.; Shoemaker and Missionary* (London: J. Murray, 1885).

<sup>6</sup>For a helpful understanding of the motives and intended outcomes of Carey's biographers, see Myron C. Noonkester, "Who Was William Carey? Missionary Encounters in Britain and Bengal Revisited" (lecture, Magnolia Literary Club, February 11, 2002) Center for Study of the Life and Work of William Carey, D.D. (1761–1834) Digital Library, <http://www.wmcarey.edu/carey/lectures/who-was-wc.pdf> (accessed June 15, 2013).

<sup>7</sup>John Appleby, *'I Can Plod': William Carey and the Early Years of the First Baptist Missionary Society* (London: Grace Publications Trust, 2007).

was his attempt to address Carey’s undergirding theology that guided his ministry. This author correctly placed Carey within the Particular Baptist stream of theology and showed the significance of this theology to his life and ministry. This work, therefore, will greatly aid my dissertation although it does not address my topic directly.

Several important scholarly works, generally relevant to this dissertation, deserve particular mention when considering the state of Carey and Ward scholarship. Some of these texts address topics closely related to this dissertation, thereby serving as important resources for the following work.<sup>8</sup> Myron Noonkester has offered the best scholarly review of literature within the field of Carey studies to date.<sup>9</sup> In a lecture, Noonkester examined the existing body of Carey literature and cut through the prevailing Carey storyline to arrive at a more accurate historical and theological view of this figure.

Numerous other scholarly writings also contribute to this dissertation even though the authors do not address Carey and Ward as their primary subjects.<sup>10</sup> Two articles that deserve special attention are essays written by Sunil Kumar Chatterjee and Galen K. Johnson. Chatterjee sought to examine the interactions of Muslims and the Serampore missionaries, arguing that these encounters were largely unsuccessful

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<sup>8</sup>Examples include Penelope Carson, *The East India Company and Religion, 1698–1858*, (Woodbridge, UK: Boydell Press, 2012); P. S. E. Carson, “Soldiers of Christ: Evangelicals and India, 1784–1833” (PhD diss., London, 1988); Stuart Piggin, et al., *Making Evangelical Missionaries 1789–1858: The Social Background, Motives and Training of the British Protestant Missionaries to India*, vol. 2 of *Evangelicals & Society from 1750* (Abingdon, England: Sutton Courtenay Press, 1984); Potts, *British Baptist Missionaries in India*; and Brian Stanley, *Christian Missions and the Enlightenment*, *Studies in the History of Christian Missions* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001). In addition to these books, numerous journal articles also offer helpful insights to the subject at hand as will be evident throughout this dissertation.

<sup>9</sup>Noonkester, “Who Was William Carey?”

<sup>10</sup>Examples include Paul Brewster, *Andrew Fuller: Model Pastor-Theologian*, *Studies in Baptist Life and Thought*, ed. Michael A. G. Haykin (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2010); Haykin, *One Heart and One Soul*; Morden, *Offering Christ to the World*; and Brian K. Pennington, *Was Hinduism Invented? Britons, Indians, and the Colonial Construction of Religion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).

according to the missionaries.<sup>11</sup> Chatterjee’s conclusion, however, proved to be far less than satisfactory, primarily because of his limited interaction with primary source material. Although he interacted somewhat with the primary sources, he heavily based his conclusions on biographies by Mary Drewry and F. Deaville Walker, and had limited interaction with the *Periodical Accounts*.<sup>12</sup> Johnson centered his article around the question, “Why . . . did Carey target only half of India’s non-Christian population, the ‘pagan’ or ‘heathen’ Hindus, for conversion?”<sup>13</sup> Based on a letter to William Carey’s father that was transcribed in Eustace Carey’s biography, Johnson concluded that Carey accepted a commission from the Baptist Missionary Society to minister to Hindus, not Muslims. According to Johnson, Carey’s statement that he was appointed as “a missionary to the Hindoos” meant that he ignored Bengali Muslims.<sup>14</sup> Johnson failed to understand, however, the etymological complexity of this word as used by BMS representatives, a topic of discussion within chapter 3 of this dissertation. Essentially, Johnson failed to interact at all with the primary sources and based his article on previously written works.<sup>15</sup> By perpetuating a received narrative concerning Carey’s

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<sup>11</sup>Sunil Kumar Chatterjee, “Serampore Missionaries and Christian Muslim Interaction in Bengal (1793–1834),” *The Bulletin of Christian Institutes of Islamic Studies* 3 (1980): 115–32; and Galen K. Johnson, “William Carey’s Muslim Encounters in India,” *Baptist History and Heritage* 39, no. 2 (2004): 101.

<sup>12</sup>This dissertation will cite regularly from the *Periodical Accounts Relative to the Baptist Missionary Society* published by the Baptist Missionary Society. Because of the difficulties associated with citing this source, I will follow this method when referring to this source that was published by the Baptist Missionary Society in London: all references will be the shortened form of the title—*Periodical Accounts*—followed by the volume number and page number. The publication year of each volume is correctly listed here: vol. 1—[1794]–1800; vol. 2—1801[–1805]; vol. 3—1806[–1809]; vol. 4—1810[–1812]; vol. 5—1813[–1816]. Although the *Periodical Accounts* were published beyond the fifth volume cited here, this volume was the last one that contains material that relates to the temporal parameters determined for this dissertation. Also, one will note the bracketed publication year for these volumes. The title page lists a year for material published with that volume, but each volume contains material from several years before or after the date listed.

<sup>13</sup>Johnson, “William Carey’s Muslim Encounters in India,” 100.

<sup>14</sup>Johnson, “William Carey’s Muslim Encounters in India,” 101.

<sup>15</sup>Offering relatively nothing new to this field of literature, Johnson relied heavily on



ministry, Johnson succumbed to a trap that has caught many authors.

Ultimately, researchers must devote a large amount of time to primary source material from the missionaries themselves. When one compares Carey's journal to various published selections of this document, it becomes clear, as A. de M. Chesterman argued correctly, that Carey was not "allowed to speak for himself."<sup>16</sup> Noonkester has also noted, "The history of Carey's reputation is compartmentalized, placing parrot-like versions of Carey in a series of gilded cages."<sup>17</sup> Throughout his article, Chesterman offered more than enough justification for his central assertion: "The foregoing may have enabled the reader to gauge a little the manner in which the journal of Carey has been conveyed to the public, and to note that among the hero worshippers there has been a slight tendency not to let him speak for himself."<sup>18</sup> Chesterman's assertion called into question the established perspectives of BMS history.<sup>19</sup> It is noteworthy that he did not lead readers to devalue completely these previous works, but rather held to a critical

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Chatterjee's article as well as biographies by Eustace Carey, F. Deaville Walker, and Timothy George.

<sup>16</sup>A. de M. Chesterman, "The Journals of David Brainerd and of William Carey," *Baptist Quarterly* 19, no. 4, (October 1961): 149. Particularly, Chesterman enlightens his readers concerning discrepancies between the original texts and the supposed direct quotes found in key works published by Eustace Carey, Samuel Pearce Carey, Andrew Fuller, and George Smith; Chesterman, "The Journals of David Brainerd and of William Carey," 148–50, 155. Terry Carter noted this concern as well, arguing that one must experience "Carey's version of his story" and "Carey's own thoughts on missions"; see William Carey and Terry G. Carter, *The Journal and Selected Letters of William Carey* (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2000), ix. This same observation applies to the writings of Marshman and Ward. For more information on this issue, see chap. 6 below.

<sup>17</sup>Noonkester, "Who Was William Carey?," 2.

<sup>18</sup>Chesterman, "The Journals of David Brainerd and of William Carey," 148. For an example of Fuller's alterations of Carey's original material, compare the following letter with the versions printed in the *Periodical Accounts*: William Carey to Committee, Mudnabatty, January 6, 1795, William Carey to the Baptist Missionary Society Committee, 1794–1824 MSS, IN/13, Angus Library Archives, Regent's Park College, University of Oxford, Oxford (hereafter cited as Carey to BMS MSS); compared to *Periodical Accounts*, 1:121–22. For more information on this issue, see chap. 6 below.

<sup>19</sup>An excellent example of this issue concerns the image of Dorothy Carey (1756–1807) that has been passed down through the established Carey storyline. See James R. Beck, *Dorothy Carey: The Tragic and Untold Story of Mrs. William Carey* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992), 211–12. On these two pages, Beck describes this problem with the image of Dorothy Carey in relation to primary and secondary source literature. He applies Chesterman's thesis—although he does not cite Chesterman directly—to his study of Dorothy and attempts to recapture a more accurate picture of William Carey's first wife.

evaluation of works that he valued deeply.<sup>20</sup> Within this tension, his essay offered a reasonable warning to historians: one must rely on original documents, written by the missionaries themselves, to come to accurate conclusions. Here, one must apply the Reformers' dictum—*ad fontes*—and return to the original sources.

### Primary Source Material

The personal journals of Carey and Ward offer insights that prove invaluable for this dissertation.<sup>21</sup> One can read a complete transcription of Carey's journal in Terry Carter's work, *The Journal and Selected Letters of William Carey*.<sup>22</sup> Unfortunately, Carey's journal only ran from 1793 to June 1795.<sup>23</sup> By only providing two years of journal entries, his work is less helpful than Ward's personal journal (1799–1811). As did Carter's work, Daniel Potts produced a helpful resource to make available Ward's

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<sup>20</sup>Readers should place tremendous value on the works evaluated by Chesterman and cited in this paragraph. But, one must recognize the limitations of these sources as well. The biographies and the *Periodical Accounts* listed above give readers the correct "sense" of the missionaries' intended meanings in most cases. Therefore, readers should not find it odd when the present work pulled quotes from the missionaries that are found in these sources. In some cases, readers will notice a discrepancy between a quote in this dissertation and what one finds in the *Periodical Accounts*. In such instances, the editor of that particular quote deviated too much from the missionary's original text. In cases when the editor remained true to the missionary's meaning but rearranged portions of the material, these instances are highlighted in a footnote. In all cases, readers should consult the original document if possible.

<sup>21</sup>William Carey, Journal MSS, IN/13, Angus Library, Regent's Park College, University of Oxford, Oxford, (hereafter cited as Journal MSS). One helpful aspect of Carey's journal is that each page is numbered with the year included at the top of each right hand page. It appears that Carey was not the one who wrote these references, however, as the writing is not his style. For example, one can compare the number '7' on page 72 with Carey's journal entry for 5.6.7. This example, along with the cursive letters used to spell the particular months, lead to this conclusion. William Ward, Journal MSS, IN/17A, Angus Library, Regent's Park College, University of Oxford, Oxford (hereafter cited as Journal MSS).

<sup>22</sup>Carey and Carter, *The Journal and Selected Letters of William Carey*, 1–59. Comparing many entries in Carey's original manuscripts to Carter's transcription, one will find Carter's work to be accurate other than in a few occurrences. In some places, Carter modernized or corrected some of Carey's spellings. For instance, compare William Carey, Journal MSS, July 1.2.3, with Carey and Carter, *The Journal and Selected Letters of William Carey*, 36. Carter changed Carey's original spelling of 'Hindoo' to 'Hindu.' Carter explained his six-fold editorial philosophy on pp. xii–xiv.

<sup>23</sup>Carter offered a quote from a letter that Carey wrote to John Sutcliff on November 27, 1800, in which he cited the reason he discontinued his journal. According to Carey, keeping a journal proved to be too difficult. Correctly, Carter noted that Carey included a type of journal entry in some of his letters to various individuals. See Carey and Carter, *The Journal and Selected Letters of William Carey*, 3.

journal.<sup>24</sup> Ward's journal offered, much like the shorter document given by Carey, daily happenings and his personal evaluation of various developments. One finds a significant lessening of entries in this source as the years pass. As Ward's ministerial responsibilities increased in Bengal, he gave less time to his journal, much to Fuller's dismay.<sup>25</sup> In certain places, Ward dated his journal incorrectly, which obviously proves problematic for researchers and necessitates that one have Potts' transcription close at hand when reading this source.<sup>26</sup> There is also Joshua Marshman's journal, which runs from 1799 to 1837 and provides invaluable information that undergirds the events and perspectives discussed in Carey's and Ward's writings.<sup>27</sup> In light of the public nature of the missionaries' journals, personal letters from the missionaries offer an equally important resource to researchers.<sup>28</sup> In these sources, one encounters the missionaries' thoughts as

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<sup>24</sup>William Ward, "William Ward's Missionary Journal, 1799–1811," transcribed by E. Daniel Potts, Microfilm Roll 45, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives, Nashville, TN. Potts sought to publish his transcription of Ward's journal but could not raise the necessary funding to complete the project; see E. Daniel Potts, "William Ward's Missionary Journal," *The Baptist Quarterly* 25, no. 3 (1973): 111–14. A comparison of many entries in Ward's original journal to Potts' transcription reveals that Potts' work to be mostly accurate. In no cases, did Potts' transcription prove to alter Ward's original text in a significant way. Rather, his changes appear to be instances in which the text was extremely difficult to read. Comparing Potts' transcription to Ward's journal extracts reveals several such instances; see William Ward, Extracts from Ward's Journals to Andrew Fuller MSS, IN/17, Angus Library, Regent's Park College, University of Oxford, Oxford (hereafter cited as Extracts from Ward's Journals MSS). Therefore, one should consult Potts in cases when Ward's text is difficult to read.

<sup>25</sup>In the 1806–1807 winter, Ward's entries became less frequent. He began skipping several days between entries at this point, only to stop this effort completely in the next few years.

<sup>26</sup>Readers should compare his entries with Potts' transcription before quoting Ward's journal to ensure that the correct date is cited.

<sup>27</sup>While serving as a valuable resource, Marshman's personal journal does not contribute to this dissertation as directly as those of Carey and Ward. Largely, Marshman referred Ryland and other readers to the journals of Carey and Ward for specific details concerning specific ministerial encounters experienced by the other two members of the Serampore Trio. For example, see Joshua Marshman, Journal MSS, Bound Letters of Joshua Marshman MSS, IN/19A, Angus Library Archives, Regent's Park College, University of Oxford, Oxford (hereafter cited as Marshman MSS), December 16, 1803. His journal is helpful to find additional confirmation and a different perspective on various situations and ministerial opportunities. For example, see his journal entries that discuss the moral failings of the missionaries' first baptized convert, Krishnu: Marshman, Journal MSS, April 29, 1802; May 19, 1802; and March 19, 1803.

<sup>28</sup>This comment conveys the reality that their journals and private letters are of equal value for this dissertation because their journals were for public reading. If the missionaries had intended to keep private thoughts in their journals, without the intention of allowing others to read the entries, then these

they summarized events, and, in many cases, reflected on various topics with personal remarks that were not intended for the public but the recipient only.<sup>29</sup> Chesterman captures the value of missionary journals well: “A journal kept abreast of the time enables one to share the successive problems as they first appear, in fact to live with the man. It carries an insight not found in the beautiful letter written at convenience nor in the history well told.”<sup>30</sup> Hence, the journals and personal letters written by Carey and Ward offer the most important data for this dissertation.

Closely related to the missionaries’ journals are personal letters and reports to the BMS Committee. In these documents, one can find material related to specific topics. Whereas the missionaries’ journals chronicle daily events—some of which provide invigorating reading while others prove to be mundane—the missionaries wrote these letters after having time to process their experiences. Carter’s work is extremely helpful as he offered introductions to categorized extracts of Carey’s letters to various recipients.<sup>31</sup> He summarized Carey’s sentiments accurately in his introductions and provided a word-for-word transcription of Carey’s text with only minor changes. Currently, there is no equivalent to Carter’s transcriptions for Ward’s letters. Their journals and these letters, therefore, offer readers unique material that is specific to the intended purpose of that particular document.

### **Primary Research Question, Thesis, and Parameters**

Within this larger body of research on Carey and Ward, a specific question emerged as unaddressed to this point. This research question guided the examination of

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sources would have been more valuable than personal letters.

<sup>29</sup>See chap. 6 below concerning the editorial process that the missionaries came to expect from their close friends in Britain. They knew that not all of their material would be available to the broader Western audience without first going through a process of ensuring a message that would uphold a helpful image of the Baptist Missionary Society.

<sup>30</sup>Chesterman, “The Journals of David Brainerd and of William Carey,” 148.

<sup>31</sup>Carey and Carter, *The Journal and Selected Letters of William Carey*, 61–294.

primary source documents, which led to a specific perspective that became the thesis of this dissertation.

### **Statement of Primary and Secondary Research Questions**

The primary goal of this dissertation is to address a two-part question: what was the view of Bengali Islam held by William Carey and William Ward and what was the nature of their ministry to Muslims in Bengal during the first twenty years of the BMS? Since this ministry to Muslims was shaped by the Serampore *Form of Agreement* (1805), therefore, a secondary research question that must be addressed is how this document informed their ministry to Muslims.<sup>32</sup>

### **Statement of Thesis**

This dissertation will argue that Carey and Ward had a deeply-held interest in Muslim evangelization and carried out that interest in an active ministry to Bengali Muslims. Not only were they willing to share the Christian gospel with Muslims they encountered, but they actively sought out such opportunities. During the first twenty years of BMS efforts in India, their ministry included excursions to various locations to preach the gospel to both Hindus and Muslims. While not considered their sole ministerial effort, evangelizing Muslims was a central part of their perceived calling as gospel ministers in India.

### **Statement of Parameters**

This dissertation will answer these research questions and argue the stated thesis within certain parameters of inquiry. First, I have chosen the years 1793 to 1813 as the temporal parameters for the material examined within this dissertation. While several markers emerge as possible delimiting factors, 1793 serves as this dissertation's

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<sup>32</sup>Hereafter, all references to the Serampore *Form of Agreement* will appear as *SFA*.

beginning point with Carey's arrival in Bengal. Obviously, Carey had to be present in Bengal to minister to Muslims of that territory. The year 1813 became the ending point for the present work based on the East India Company's inclusion of missionaries in its renewed charter.<sup>33</sup> Although EIC officials continued to find ways to exclude Protestant missionaries at will, the missionary enterprise became significantly less tenuous at this point. Therefore, the years examined for this dissertation were ones in which Carey and Ward faced constant uncertainty and instability regarding their status in Bengal. At any moment, their work could be in jeopardy of coming to an end. If their ministry to Muslims threatened the EIC's primary goals, the Serampore missionaries would be ousted with little to no regret by their British adversaries. This uncertainty became attenuated following the EIC's renewed charter in 1813.<sup>34</sup> Therefore, these factors make 1793 to 1813 good temporal parameters for this dissertation.

A second delimitation imposed on this dissertation concerns the exclusion of Joshua Marshman. The present work will address the ministry of Carey and Ward to Bengali Muslims, but not that of Marshman.<sup>35</sup> At first, it may appear odd that Marshman is not part of this dissertation's research. Why would he not receive more than an acknowledgement in this work? Ultimately, Marshman's ministry to Muslims was not documented to the same degree as that of the other two members of Serampore's famous Trio.<sup>36</sup> In light of Ward's almost daily journal entries and the missionaries'

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<sup>33</sup>The East India Company is hereafter referred to as EIC. For a helpful discussion on this issue, see David Kopf, *British Orientalism and the Bengal Renaissance* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), 136–44.

<sup>34</sup>See Stanley, *The History of the Baptist Missionary Society*, 26.

<sup>35</sup>For an example of his work among Bengali Muslims, see William Ward, Journal MSS, July 26, 1803.

<sup>36</sup>Neither Carey, Ward, nor Marshman document his encounters with Bengali Muslims on a significant level. Apparently, Marshman had other interests, such as overseeing the Serampore educational efforts, and he became the primary liaison to various officials during times of difficult relations with the British and Danish governments. Concerning his individual interests, Marshman's journal gives a good deal of attention to evangelizing Brahmans and "Hindoo idolaters." For example, see Marshman, Journal MSS,

correspondence to England, one of three conclusions becomes reasonably apparent. Possibly ministry to Muslims was not a high priority or interest for Marshman. Therefore, he exerted himself to evangelize Bengali Muslims at a much lower level than Carey and Ward. This possibility seems improbable, as Marshman was diligent in his ministerial responsibilities in Serampore. Neglecting a specific portion of Bengal's population would have violated the missionaries' general principle of widespread evangelism.<sup>37</sup>

Another explanation could be that Marshman largely ministered to Muslims when Ward was away on his preaching tours, which would explain why Ward failed to record such interactions. This explanation appears to be unlikely, as Ward's journal would have given an account of Marshman's ministry when they were together. A third possibility was that Marshman had interaction with Muslims on rare occasions and thus the scarce records. Although not clearly indicated in the available primary source literature, this explanation appears to be a reasonable probability. Ward confirmed the likelihood of this reason: "Bro[ther] Chamberlain . . . will be understood better than Bro[ther] Marshman can, whose way of speaking the language is much below his knowledge of Grammar. To know the rules of a language & to speak it intelligibly are two very different things."<sup>38</sup> Marshman did not develop the skill of dialoguing with Bengalis in their native tongue, this being an inhibiting factor in his evangelistic ministry to Bengalis. After living in Bengal for more than six years, Marshman continued to struggle with speaking Bengali intelligibly. Whatever the case may have been, Marshman received little mention by Carey and Ward concerning his evangelistic work among

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May 4, 1802; December 11–12, 16, 18, 1802; January 3, 1803; December 11, 1803; August 3, 1804; and September 20, 1804. Clearly, Marshman ventured out into Serampore's neighboring villages to preach the gospel, but, in such entries, Marshman rarely mentions Muslims specifically. For an instance in which he gave an explicit account of sharing the gospel with Muslims, see Marshman, *Journal MSS*, August 3, 1804. One should note, however, that the Muslims came to Serampore and sought out a missionary to hear the gospel. Marshman was not actively seeking out an opportunity for such an encounter.

<sup>37</sup>See the *SFA*, Article IV.

<sup>38</sup>Ward, *Journal MSS*, November 3, 1805.

Bengali Muslims. Moreover, his own writings are equally sparse in regard to any mention of ministry to Muslims. Therefore, this work excludes him from detailed consideration.

A final parameter for the present work regards the exclusion of Bengalis who practiced the Hindu religion. One should note that the term “Hindu” applied broadly to anyone living in India at this time. The Serampore missionaries used this term to refer to Bengalis as a people, including individuals who practiced the Islamic, Christian, and Hindu religions.<sup>39</sup> When referring to people who practiced the Hindu religion, the missionaries were explicit by indicating the worship of Hindu gods or referred to a person’s caste. Also, readers will discover in the following pages that Bengali Muslims lived according to Hindu beliefs in many ways. Although they were not separate from their Hindu neighbors completely, Bengali Muslims were a distinct group within the larger culture nonetheless. Therefore, this dissertation addresses instances within the primary source literature examined in which Muslims were explicitly mentioned or likely present in the larger audience present at that time. Passages that discussed Carey’s and Ward’s work among persons of the Hindu faith are excluded from the present work based on this delimitation.

### **Importance of the Study**

This dissertation will prove to be an important contribution to the broader scholarship regarding Carey, Ward, and the Baptist Missionary Society. Not only will it reexamine the received story of the Serampore Mission by studying closely the primary source documents, but also, it will address a topic that previous authors have glossed over for the most part or neglected completely. Carey and Ward actively ministered to Bengali Muslims as the following material will argue conclusively.

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<sup>39</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, September 22, 1799. For other examples, see his journal entries for November 2, 1800; November 9, 1800; May 10, 1801; October 8, 1801; January 10, 1802; and August 12, 1802. In these entries—as well as numerous others not listed here—Ward’s use of the term ‘Hindoo’ referred to Bengalis as a people rather than a person’s religious beliefs in many cases.



## **Dissertation Summary and Overview of Context**

The following paragraphs will summarize the chapters of this dissertation as well as provide an overview of the context encountered by Carey and Ward.

### **Dissertation Summary**

This introductory chapter discusses the context within which Carey and Ward received the Particular Baptist inheritance that they took to India, surveys the current state of scholarship on Carey and Ward in relation to this dissertation, and establishes the research questions that this work addresses. Also, this chapter states the thesis of this work, which answers the research questions based upon the defined parameters.

Accomplishing these goals enables readers to understand the importance of a dissertation on this topic and the present contribution to the existing field of literature on this subject.

Chapter 2 establishes a framework through which one should interpret the ministry of Carey and Ward. This framework becomes the answer to the dissertation's secondary research question: they conducted their ministry to Bengali Muslims according to the *SFA*. All of the expressions of this framework—such as preaching the atonement of Christ, Scripture translation, and communal discipleship—were foundational commitments that determined their view of and way of reaching Bengali Muslims.

Surveying the philosophy of missions that guided Carey and Ward provides an essential and foundational insight into their ministry to Muslims. What readers find in this chapter is a short exposition of their most important statement—which was written by Ward and signed by the other Serampore missionaries—on their philosophy of missions. Following this survey, the remainder of the chapter addresses three of these principles that meet a certain requirement: although other authors have addressed these principles to varying degrees, the scholarship to this point does not make certain essential connections to the ministry of Carey and Ward to Bengali Muslims. The seven principles of the *SFA* excluded from this section—although equally important—are adequately discussed

elsewhere. This content proves necessary to understand correctly their ministry to Bengali Muslims. Otherwise, some developments and efforts within the Serampore Mission might prove to be perplexing. For example, the specific expression of Carey's ministry shifted from his earlier forms of daily Muslim evangelism, but his pursuit of establishing Christian beliefs among these people never flagged. This shift in expression of ministry was not an abandonment of former commitments. It was, rather, an incorporation of new approaches to accomplishing the same desired end—seeing Bengalis become worshippers of the one true God—based on an evolved philosophy of missions, formulated in conjunction with Marshman and Ward.

The third chapter of this dissertation provides clarity concerning the theology and religious expression of Islam in Bengal. The primary question this chapter answers concerns the personal evaluation of Carey and Ward regarding Bengali Islam. For them, most of their preconceived notions of this religion, as influenced by North African and Ottoman versions of Islam, had to be adjusted to understand the specific version of Islam as found in Bengal. Islam in post-Mughal India was much different than that of Algeria, Morocco, and Asia Minor, which were the three primary scenes of British interaction with Muslims before the mid-eighteenth century. Within this process of reorientation was the relationship between Bengali Islam and the Indian caste system: Muslims in Bengal lived according to this social construct of their Hindu neighbors. In many cases, the Muslim listeners of Carey and Ward were willing to embrace their arguments intellectually, but they were unwilling to convert to Christianity for fear of losing social status within the larger Hindu society. Muslims were a respected social class and to crossover to Christianity would cause one's family to become no better than a Dalit. Additionally, Carey and Ward believed Muslims in this territory were superstitious, ignorant, and in need of the gospel. Exploring their depictions of Muslims helps readers comprehend their fundamental views of this targeted audience. William Carey's

understanding of Muslims in Bengal established a new perspective for his BMS contemporaries; a new perspective informed by seven years of exposure to a particular strain of Islam. It was Carey who shaped Ward's views of Bengali Muslims based on his seven-year experience before other BMS missionaries landed in Serampore. Together, they applied Ward's *SFA* when ministering to Muslims and found the result to be thrilling.

As persons familiar with Carey can attest, he was not one to evaluate merely from a distance. His views, after all, led him to "attempt great things for God." The fourth chapter of this dissertation, therefore, addresses his efforts to evangelize his Muslim neighbors in Bengal. Although Carey's personal ministry became more refined in order to contribute according to his primary abilities, his commitment to evangelizing Muslims in Bengal did not subside completely over the years after his arrival. This chapter specifically devoted to Carey's ministry is appropriate at this point to understand better the framework that Ward received upon landing in India. Carey's established ministerial pursuits shaped Ward during his early ministry to Muslims. The model that Carey established included his pursuit of evangelizing Muslims personally, receiving the inquiries of Bengali Muslims, and a specific message to his hearers.

Chapter 5 turns to William Ward specifically. Ward was a man well-prepared for the Society's greatest need: to propel the ministry forward through print. Although Ward participated—along with Carey—in Muslim evangelism through consistent preaching and occasional debate, he contributed in a unique way to the BMS mission in Bengal. Therefore, a specific chapter devoted to his unique ministry is in order. His days as a politically radical printer in Derby honed a skill that he would use for a much different cause in Bengal. Through his efforts, the Society experienced new-found streams of revenue that funded missionary activity all over the world. Also, his efforts enabled the BMS effort in Bengal to reach out to individuals through the means of print

in ways that were inconceivable through personal interaction.

The sixth chapter concerns a framework that Andrew Fuller and William Ward used to determine the best way to carry out Ward's print contribution discussed in chapter 5. Ward's print ministry caused turmoil in some situations, particularly in regards to his Muslim ministry. His *An Address from the Missionaries at Serampore to all persons professing the Mohammedan religion*, the "Persian Pamphlet," became the source of political and religious turmoil in 1807 and almost brought an end to the BMS effort in Bengal. Potential war between Britain and Denmark loomed over the matter and Ward was at the center of this controversy. This incident furthered the arguments of the anti-missions movement in Britain and caused Andrew Fuller considerable consternation. Ultimately, Ward's print and missionary ministry was a vital contribution to the BMS cause in Bengal despite this negative episode.

Finally, the conclusion summarizes this dissertation's primary contributions to the field of Carey-Ward scholarship based on the material argued throughout this work. Utilizing four categories, the conclusion illustrates how the preceding material answers the research questions of this dissertation by restating the thesis as a firm and logical outworking of such inquiries. Truly, the ministry of Carey and Ward to Bengali Muslims is well represented in this work as restated in the conclusion.

## **Overview of Context**

During the "long eighteenth century," the English experienced a new reality.<sup>40</sup> Various factors led to an English identity unlike anything experienced by previous

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<sup>40</sup>Linda Colley designates the years 1707–1837 as the "long eighteenth century," beginning with the Act of Union that joined Scotland to England and Wales and closing with the advent of the Victorian Age; see Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707–1837* (Bath: The Bath Press, 1992), 1. Other scholars date the "long eighteenth century" as beginning in 1688 with The Glorious Revolution and ending with the close of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815.

generations; changes were found everywhere.<sup>41</sup> First, national security was the most pressing issue of the day. According to Linda Colley, Britain was “an invented nation superimposed, if only for a while, onto much older alignments and loyalties. It was an invention forged above all by war. Time and time again, war with France brought Britons, whether they hailed from Wales or Scotland or England, into confrontation with an obviously hostile other and encouraged them to define themselves collectively against it.”<sup>42</sup> Through war with France, Britain created itself through antagonism and residents of previously-discordant territories united to ward off the Catholic enemy.<sup>43</sup> Within these developments—particularly during the 1790’s—missionary activists leaned upon the Puritan perception of providence. According to many British authors of this time, God was providentially giving them the opportunity to spread the gospel globally like no other prior epoch.<sup>44</sup> A second change experienced by British citizens during this era was increased religious freedom. Although certain oppressive religious standards remained intact, Dissenters found themselves with less religious pressure than their forefathers.<sup>45</sup> In many ways, British Dissent secured its own religious freedom by gaining political favor as they contributed to Britain’s national causes based on their eschatological

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<sup>41</sup>This time was one of movement, speculation, inequalities and injustices, and full of bitter strife. For helpful resources concerning late eighteenth-century England in relation to Carey and Ward, see Appleby, *I Can Plod*, 25–30; and J. L. Hammond and Barbara Hammond, *The Bleak Age* (London: Pelican, 1947). For a helpful discussion on the relationship between Carey and Ward and the British government, see Jeffrey Cox, *The British Missionary Enterprise since 1700* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 9–13.

<sup>42</sup>Colley, *Britons*, 5.

<sup>43</sup>Closely associated with French political interests, from the British perspective, was Roman Catholicism. A call to defend Britain against France, therefore, included a religious appeal to protect Protestant interests, thereby ensuring popular Protestant beliefs concerning millennialism and Britain’s appointed place in God’s plan to spread the gospel throughout the world. Colley argues that it was this very aspect that caused Britain’s successive wars after 1688 to result the formation of Great Britain; see Colley, *Britons*, 368.

<sup>44</sup>See Cox, *The British Missionary Enterprise since 1700*, 72–73.

<sup>45</sup>See Haykin’s discussion of discrimination against Dissenters: Haykin, *One Heart and One Soul*, 199–201.

expectations.<sup>46</sup> A third area of change during this time concerned social shifts during the latter decades of the eighteenth century. Colonial expansion brought about new-found wealth within British culture, which resulted in the improvement of basic social conditions.<sup>47</sup> Duncan B. Forrester asserts that evangelicals were concerned with several pressing social issues such as social equality as well as humane conditions and human dignity.<sup>48</sup> According to Forrester, these concerns led to a spirit of radicalism, resulting from the denial of the proper claims of the individual and the expected reaction. In turn, the BMS missionaries applied these ingrained concerns, inherited from their British context, by attacking Indian caste. For them, caste became a major front for addressing perceived social injustices according to Forrester. This spirit of radicalism and social consciousness helps explain the BMS missionaries' consistent concern with such matters in their writings and social action. Fourth, British citizens found themselves in a time of massive intellectual change that we now call the Enlightenment. While British evangelicals reacted strongly against the influence of certain elements within Enlightenment thought, they assimilated other aspects of this movement that reinforced their biblical worldview.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>46</sup>As discussed in chap. 1 of this dissertation, British Dissenters, such as the BMS leaders, believed that they were on the verge of the Holy Spirit's outpouring that they expected to take place in the end times. They saw the various forms of increased freedom as providential opportunity to spread the gospel abroad. Therefore, they had a strong desire to see Britain succeed as a nation. See Colley, *Britons*, 368–69.

<sup>47</sup>Brian Stanley, *The Bible and The Flag: Protestant Missions & British Imperialism in the Nineteenth & Twentieth Centuries* (Leicester, England: Apollos, 1990), 59.

<sup>48</sup>Regarding the issue of social injustices that pressed for evangelical consideration at the turn of the nineteenth century, see Duncan B. Forrester, *Caste and Christianity: Attitudes and Policy on Caste of Anglo-Saxon Protestant Missions in India*, London Studies on South Asia (London: Curzon Press Humanities Press, 1980), 8–10.

<sup>49</sup>Bebbington, *Baptists through the Centuries*, 221–22. For a lengthy discussion on this matter, see Stanley, *The Bible and The Flag*, 61–78. Within this discussion, Stanley identifies two primary contributions of the Enlightenment on evangelical thought and missionary thought. First, evangelicals placed a high value on reason although they denied the all sufficiency of it for one's epistemology. Second, evangelicals utilized the physics of Isaac Newton to explain the universe and God's natural laws placed upon it to better explain God's divine providence over the natural order. Then these two contributions had

Carey and Ward took with them to India a defined theology as inherited from their Particular Baptist faith, an identity to which they held more closely than their British nationality. After all, their British identity was forced, only recently invented, and one of political policy rather than a union of affection.<sup>50</sup> As self-proclaimed Dissenters, Carey and Ward identified with certain ideals associated with this strain of Christianity that enabled them to press forward year after year in a context rife with uncertainties and discouragements.<sup>51</sup> For them, their identity within Dissent was an aspect their Particular Baptist inheritance. This heritage included a tradition of abiding by confessions of faith as Scriptural summaries. These documents provided a means to state clearly what one believed and guided believers in moments of personal doubt or uncertainty concerning biblical teaching.<sup>52</sup> Carey and Ward were in the stream of Baptists who adhered to the 1689 Second London Confession of Faith.<sup>53</sup> They valued the SLCF to the degree that Ward decided to translate it and pass it along to the next generation of believers in

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implications for missionary convictions regarding “heathen idolatry,” the natives’ eternal state, God’s providence and missionary responsibility, the missionaries’ relationship to imperialism, and the missionaries’ eschatology. When reading the journals and correspondence of Carey and Ward, these themes are obviously evident, thus revealing the Enlightenment’s positive influence on these two men.

<sup>50</sup>Colley, *Britons*, 11–12. For Colley’s discussion of Protestantism within British society during this time, see her chap. 1.

<sup>51</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, August 22, 1809. In this entry, Ward identified the topic of discussion at their evening BMS prayer meeting: “Why are we Dissenters.”

<sup>52</sup>See Brewster, *Andrew Fuller*, 181–87. Brewster provides a helpful summary of the role of confessions in the minister’s ordination process and includes Andrew Fuller’s personal confession of faith that he wrote for his own examination and ordination process. Some Baptist historians have questioned recently the role of confessions of faith, claiming that such documents become the creedal means of imposing differing perspectives of doctrine. For example, see Michael E. Williams, Sr., and Walter B. Shurden, eds. *Turning Points in Baptist History: A Festschrift in Honor of Harry Leon McBeth* (Macon: Mercy University Press, 2008). Unfortunately, this historiographical grid is evident throughout their text. Such an argument advocates an agenda of “Soul Liberty” epistemology, which jettisons objective and extrinsic standards of determining truth. These arguments are not new, however, as late-eighteenth, early-nineteenth century Particular Baptists faced criticism for this practice and felt the need to justify this requirement; see Nigel Wheeler, “Eminent Spirituality and Eminent Usefulness: Andrew Fuller’s (1754–1815) Pastoral Theology in his Ordination Sermons,” (Philosophiae Doctor diss., University of Pretoria, 2009), 102.

<sup>53</sup>Hereafter, SLCF.

Bengal: “I have begun to translate the Baptist Confession of faith into Bengalee for our native Brethren,” he wrote in his journal in 1810.<sup>54</sup> During the ordination of pastors at their installments in Particular Baptist churches, the pastor would offer his own personal confession of faith that was grounded in the SLCF.<sup>55</sup>

While they remained faithful to this inherited tradition, the Serampore Trio and their closest friends in England also found themselves in a context of dramatic doctrinal change, which included an altered understanding of the meaning and application of their inherited beliefs. The lives and work of the Serampore Trio were inseparably linked to their Particular Baptist heritage and that of their close friends: Andrew Fuller (1754–1815), John Sutcliff (1752–1814), John Ryland, Jr. (1753–1825), and Samuel Pearce (1766–1799). Together, these men—along with other significant contributors—changed a missiologically paralyzed people into a global missionary force within a few years. As Michael A. G. Haykin wrote, “Indeed, their friendship was a central factor in the revival . . . which was a watershed in the history of their denomination. From an inward-looking body the Calvinistic Baptists were transformed into one that was outward-looking and committed to fervent evangelism.”<sup>56</sup> This significant theological change was a shift from several specific doctrines, prevalent among this denomination during the eighteenth century, to what became known as Fullerism.<sup>57</sup> Of course, Fullerism was the doctrinal

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<sup>54</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, July 1, 1810. Although Ward never identified this confession as the SLCF, this confession was most likely the confession he translated. First, this language was common among Particular Baptists to reference the Second London Confession (1689). Also, using the definite article 'the,' Ward clearly referenced a specific established document; a document with recognized authority. For an overview of this document as well as the full text of the confession, see William Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, Rev. ed. (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1969), 235–95.

<sup>55</sup>For an excellent study on this issue, see Wheeler, “Eminent Spirituality and Eminent Usefulness,” 94–117. Specifically, see 101–8, where Wheeler provides summaries of typical categories expressed in these confessions on topics such as Scripture, Trinitarianism, original sin, the atonement, Christology, the ordinances, and the duty of pastors to teach and uphold these beliefs among his new congregation.

<sup>56</sup>Haykin, *One Heart and One Soul*, 14.

<sup>57</sup>For an overview of Fuller’s Calvinism, see Haykin, *One Heart and One Soul*, 134–52. Also



system in which Andrew Fuller modified the Calvinism of his Particular Baptist predecessors to include a number of doctrinal distinctives developed by Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758) and his New England heirs.<sup>58</sup> No longer were Particular Baptist ministers bound by plaguing fears that they were violating God’s sovereign choice when they made an open call to their listeners to repent and believe in Christ. Fuller and his contemporaries believed that their denomination had become infested with an unbiblical theological system. Fullerism was not, therefore, a compromise of biblical fidelity, but rather a return to the teachings of Scripture on these matters. This freedom, along with other emphases that gained in significance among the Particular Baptist people, led to the advent of the BMS.

It was from these contextual influences and shifting cultural and theological assumptions, then, that Carey and Ward emerged as two primary leaders within the modern missionary movement. They were the individuals who defined this movement through their philosophy of missions as well as decades of personal efforts. The question to which this dissertation now turns concerns the framework that offered parameters, which brought about the results they so desired.

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see the summaries provided by James Leo Garrett, *Baptist Theology: A Four-Century Study* (Mercer, GA: Mercer University Press, 2009), 187–89; and Robert Torbet, *The History of the Baptists*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1963), 79–80. One should not miss the connection between the establishment of Fullerism and the broader intellectual and theological landscape that changed during the latter half of the eighteenth century: Stanley, *The Bible and The Flag*, 58–61.

<sup>58</sup>Jonathan Edwards, *The Freedom of the Will* (1754). The best summary of Fuller’s assimilation of Edwardsean thought is Nathan A. Finn, “Andrew Fuller’s Edwardsean spirituality,” in *The Pure Flame of Devotion: The History of Christian Spirituality*, ed. G. Stephen Weaver Jr. and Ian Hugh Clary (Kitchener, ON: Joshua Press, 2013), 387–404. A more detailed study is Chris Chun, *The Legacy of Jonathan Edwards in the Theology of Andrew Fuller*, Studies in the History of Christian Traditions 162 (Boston: Brill, 2012). For other helpful works, see the Finn article, n. 7. A clear recovery of Andrew Fuller’s theologically informed missiology has occurred over the past decade with the founding of the Andrew Fuller Center for Baptist Studies by Michael Haykin on the campus of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, KY. Haykin’s center—along with works by several scholars such as Brewster, *Andrew Fuller*, 129–44; and Morden, *Offering Christ to the World*, 130–39—has given renewed emphasis to the theology behind the BMS. For a helpful essay on the resurgence of Fuller scholarship, see Nathan Finn, “The Renaissance in Andrew Fuller Studies: A Bibliographic Essay,” *The Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 17, no. 2 (Summer 2013): 44–61.



## CHAPTER 2

### WILLIAM CAREY AND WILLIAM WARD: PHILOSOPHY OF MISSIONS

Carey and Ward operated within the Particular Baptist fold, who were Dissenters from England's Established Church. Many authors correctly address the Particular Baptist theology that accompanied Carey and Ward to the mission field. The way that they processed the connection between their theology and experience on the mission field, however, has not been the primary concern of biographers and scholars who discuss these figures. Generally, missiologists love to discuss Carey's methodology while barely addressing the theology that led to such methods.<sup>1</sup> Thus, it appears that such an approach seeks to do the impossible—copy a formula for missionary success without adhering to the underpinning theological convictions. Of course, such thoughts are naïve since methods follow completely divergent trajectories depending on one's theological commitments. Others, however, expound endlessly on Particular Baptist theology with minimal connections to Bengal.<sup>2</sup> It seems that readers must choose one of the two parallel

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<sup>1</sup>For instance, see Aalbertinus Hermen Oussoren, *William Carey, Especially His Missionary Principles* (Leiden: A. W. Sijthoff's Uitgeversmaatschappij, 1945), 122–218. Oussoren devotes ninety-six pages to Carey's methodology without addressing his theological principles at all.

<sup>2</sup>Fuller, Carey, and other BMS leaders were deeply concerned about theological vibrancy, but their theology led to a particular end—to spread God's glory among their fellow men; see Andrew Fuller, "The Establishment of the Glasgow Missionary Society," in *The Complete Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller with a Memoir of His Life* (Harrisonburg, VA: Sprinkle, 1988), 3:823–25. In this text, Fuller wrote, "If the exertions of our Society have contributed to excite the public spirit which now prevails through the kingdom, it is no small reward. We have found the undertaking particularly useful in uniting and quickening us in religion; and I trust it will produce similar effects among Christians in general. Where no object of magnitude attracts our regard, we are apt to pore on our own miseries; and where nothing exists as an object in which we may all unite, we are apt to turn our attention chiefly to those things in which we differ. It is well for ourselves, therefore, to be engaged in some arduous undertaking which shall interest our hearts, bring us into contact with one another, and cause us to feel that we are brethren." Fuller believed that theology led to global activism and without such, a group of believers would spiral into anemic spirituality. For examples of an author not giving enough attention to this connection, see Brian Stanley, who devoted barely three pages to the Serampore missionaries' view of God's sovereignty in relation to their mission work; Brian Stanley, *The History of the Baptist Missionary Society, 1792–1992* (Edinburgh: T

discussions, which separate Carey and Ward from their context and their theological context from what the Particular Baptists came to hold most dear: making Christ's name known to the ends of the earth. Therefore, a hybrid approach that discusses their theologically-driven missiology, which served as foundational to their missionary experience, is in order.

The missionaries had very few precedents to follow when defining their philosophy of missions, but looked to certain predecessors to guide them on various issues as the following material will indicate.<sup>3</sup> Jeffrey Cox may have overstated his assessment, but he was not completely inaccurate when he wrote, "Carey had no clear theory of missions at first."<sup>4</sup> Joined by Marshman and Ward in 1799, these three men worked together to answer many questions that perplexed Carey deeply before their arrival.<sup>5</sup> What should be the points of the gospel on which their preaching should focus?

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& T Clark, 1992), 36–39. As discussed above in chap. 1 of this dissertation, the fact that these two men were Calvinists is obvious. Generally, their Calvinism is assumed by their biographers and serves as a backdrop to various interpretative remarks. Such is the case with Samuel Pearce Carey's biography of William Carey. For another example of Carey's assumed Calvinistic beliefs, see James Leo Garrett, *Baptist Theology: A Four-Century Study* (Mercer, GA: Mercer University Press, 2009), 173–75. Garrett describes Carey as an evangelical and missionary Calvinist. Despite such discussions, however, he offered very little material that addresses how Carey and the other missionaries utilized their view God's sovereignty as an interpretative framework for their missionary experiences. The three texts that best connect these two conversations are Paul Brewster, *Andrew Fuller: Model Pastor-Theologian*, Studies in Baptist Life and Thought, ed. Michael A. G. Haykin (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2010), 129–44; Michael A.G. Haykin, *One Heart and One Soul: John Sutcliff of Olney, His Friends and His Times* (Durham, England: Evangelical Press, 1994), 198–235; and Peter J. Morden, *Offering Christ to the World: Andrew Fuller (1754–1815) and the Revival of Eighteenth Century Particular Baptist Life*, Studies in Baptist History and Thought (Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster, 2003), 128–56.

<sup>3</sup>For example, Carey's *Enquiry* was not unique, but rather utilized an existing eighteenth-century genre in which authors appealed to their readers for missionary efforts; see Jeffrey Cox, *The British Missionary Enterprise since 1700* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 70–71. Readers should note that Cox considers Carey's *Enquiry* to be "the most important missionary document at the beginning of the voluntarist phase of British missions"; see Cox, *The British Missionary Enterprise since 1700*, 253. Although Cox places Carey in the wake of preceding authors, he is careful to note that Carey went beyond these missiologists by actually organizing a missionary society. For another perspective concerning the place of the BMS founding and Carey's *Enquiry* within the overall advent of the modern missionary movement, see Brian Stanley, *The Bible and The Flag: Protestant Missions & British Imperialism in the Nineteenth & Twentieth Centuries* (Leicester, England: Apollos, 1990), 55–58.

<sup>4</sup>Cox, *The British Missionary Enterprise since 1700*, 81.

<sup>5</sup>To understand the relationship between these three men, see Timothy George, *Faithful*

How should they address specific realities encountered by Bengalis who converted to Christianity? How would the work of ministry continue after their death or return to England? A resolution of these questions, along with many other ones, came through the development of their missiological philosophy as they worked together over the next six years, stating their thoughts officially in the fall of 1805. Early in the life of the Serampore Mission, Carey, Ward, and Marshman felt the need to state clearly the principles that represented their deepest missiological convictions. Eventually, the Serampore Trio formalized their mature philosophy of missions in Ward's 1805 *SFA*, which became the guiding set of principles for the Mission's ministry foci going forward.<sup>6</sup> This formal document contained the ten summary principles that stated the

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*Witness: The Life and Mission of William Carey* (Birmingham, AL: New Hope, 1991), 120–25.

<sup>6</sup>At this point, Ward had come to a firm commitment on these matters and led his fellow missionaries to commit to this philosophy officially along with him. See Journal MSS, IN/17A, Angus Library, Regent's Park College, University of Oxford, Oxford (hereafter cited as Journal MSS), October 5, 1805. According to Ward, he "delivered to each Bre[thre]n. A copy of a Form of Agreement respecting the Principles upon which we think it our duty to act in instructing the Heathen.' I wished much that we should leave to our successors something like this, & therefore drew it up, read it to the Brethren, & to-night gave to each a copy for their corrections & additions." After reading Ward's document, Marshman comprised a "plan of Union for the family which will accompany the family rules, as this agreement will accompany the Station Rules. The station rules are also of my drawing up." Ward proposed—a proposal to which the other missionaries agreed—that these documents, along with Fuller's public letter on marriage, be collected into one volume that they would publish under the title, "Memorandums respecting the Mission at Serampore." Potts identified Ward as the author of the *SFA*. Also, he observed that the missionaries asked Ward to write this document to guide their work and provide a more elaborate code of conduct. See E. Daniel Potts, *British Baptist Missionaries in India, 1793–1837: The History of Serampore and Its Missions* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 23. The *SFA* served as an objective set of policies to guide the growing BMS missionary community. One example of the statement's application was addressing missionary misconduct. On September 25, 1807, the missionaries evaluated Robinson for complaints of his harsh treatment of a Hindu servant. Robinson was violating Point VI of the *SFA*: he was not being impartial and kind and was displaying behavior that would "sink their characters" in the Indian estimation. See Ward, Journal MSS, September 27, 1807; and *Periodical Accounts*, 3:202. To read the entire *SFA*, see *Periodical Accounts*, 3:198–211. Also, to read a copy of the text, with minor alterations, see "Appendix A" in Oussoren, *William Carey, Especially His Missionary Principles*, 274–84. For a sampling of the original text, see Appleby, 'I Can Plod', 212–20. One should note that an exasperated Carey reported that the *SFA* was found impracticable and "consigned to oblivion" within a year of its inception; see Stanley, *The History of the Baptist Missionary Society*, 43. Readers should understand two points about this observation. First, the apparent problem did not involve the Trio but rather some of the junior missionaries who despised the financial arrangements established by their senior contemporaries. Second, Carey, Marshman, and Ward continued to live by this covenant throughout the remainder of their ministry as is evident in Stanley's discussion.

convictions of their missiological philosophy and governed their missionary endeavors.<sup>7</sup> The genesis of this official document came from a practice of putting forward native brethren as leaders in ministry opportunities. As the missionaries developed the piety and ministerial abilities of these native believers, what began as embryonic conceptions became solidified positions. It was not a situation, therefore, in which Carey took certain perspectives to the field that the other missionaries simply adopted, but rather one in which they developed their missiological principles in the midst of ministering together. This chapter summarizes these principles while incorporating statements of these principles from their other writings, followed by an expanded account of three particular ones that receive comparatively little attention in Carey and Ward scholarship.<sup>8</sup>

### **Philosophy of Missions Stated**

**Basis of mission.** The missionaries' first desire was to see the people of Bengal become worshippers of the one true God.<sup>9</sup> According to them, Bengalis who do

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<sup>7</sup>Some authors believe that there are eleven principles in the *SFA*. The section in question begins with the word "Finally"; see *Periodical Accounts*, 3:210–11. This position is incorrect, however, because the missionaries identified clearly the start of a new principle with a roman numeral. Also, this portion of the *SFA* contains a paraphrased statement of material discussed in other sections of the document. Therefore, it is accurate to consider these paragraphs as a lengthy conclusion rather than an eleventh principle.

<sup>8</sup>Readers may wonder why the *SFA* serves as a statement of the missionaries' philosophy of missions rather than Carey's *Enquiry*. It would be wrong to assert that Carey altered the principles he established in the *Enquiry*. Rather, Carey's convictions, stated in that important text, evolved to full expression after several years of ministering alongside Marshman and Ward in some cases. For instance, the basis of his missiology as informed by his Particular Baptist heritage came to a mature position in the *SFA*, Article I, concerning the basis of their mission. To see this development, compare this article to his thoughts stated here: William Carey, *An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians, to use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens* (Leicester: Ann Ireland, 1792), 3–6. In this section within the *Enquiry*, Carey rooted his basis for missions in the character of God himself. Correctly, George asserts that this conviction served as the basis of Carey's missiology and that one will misunderstand Carey unless he grasps this aspect of Carey's thought; see George, *Faithful Witness*, 58. For extracts from a sampling of letters from Carey to various recipients concerning his missions strategy, see William Carey and Terry G. Carter, *The Journal and Selected Letters of William Carey* (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2000), 129–91.

<sup>9</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 3:199.

not worship God are destined for eternal punishment and this brought about compassion for the perishing heathen in the missionaries' thought. Compassion for their perishing neighbors would not be ill spent ultimately. They held to an assured hope: Christ's ability to overcome the natives' superstition and idolatry to make them true worshippers of God. Scripture and historical evidence provided assurance that their compassion and labors in Bengal would come to fruition. This was the basis of the Serampore brethren's missionary efforts.

**Cultural understanding.** Second, the missionaries were careful to understand the people with whom they sought to share Christ and disciple unto Christian maturity.<sup>10</sup> On September 28, 1805, Ward proposed that the BMS missionaries study deeply Indian culture and religion in order to spread Christianity more effectively. To minister to Bengalis successfully, he believed that one must know the ways and thoughts of the target audience.<sup>11</sup> Based upon this thinking, he made two proposals to increase the Mission's effectiveness:

They [the Serampore missionaries] agreed to another proposal also which I made, viz. to form a Library of all the Hindoo & Musselman shasters as a part of the Mission Library. They also agreed to a third shasters as a part of the Mission Library. They also agreed to a third motion which I made, viz. to have a lecture in the family once a fortnight on the Languages & Religions of the East. Bro[ther]. Carey already delivers a lecture every Monday afternoon on Astronomy, Geography, &c. &c. The other subjects will now be incorporated & form one weekly lecture . . . Each brother will take a part according to his ability.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 3:200. For other discussions on this principle, see Stephen Neill, *A History of Christianity in India, 1707–1858* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 191–92.

<sup>11</sup>Correctly, Forrester highlights this felt need among evangelical missionaries, especially concerning adequately addressing caste in relation to a detailed understanding of the Hindu tradition; see Duncan B. Forrester, *Caste and Christianity: Attitudes and Policy on Caste of Anglo-Saxon Protestant Missions in India*, London Studies on South Asia (London: Curzon Press, 1980), 6.

<sup>12</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, September 28, 1805. The author chose to offer bracketed spellings for words that could prove to be confusing otherwise. For example, “C[arey]” was inserted for the original “C.” and “Br[ethre]n” was used for the original “Brn.” In such instances, the author felt that these brackets would make the text more clear when extracting quotes from instances where the intended meaning of such letters might be difficult to ascertain apart from the original context. In other passages, however, the author

The missionaries agreed with Ward’s proposal and established a context to study the writings of Hindus and Muslims as well as teach one another on such subjects twice per month. Through this method of community-based learning, they shared with one another their growing understanding of Bengali religion and customs, thus being better equipped to spread the Christian message to their listeners. Of course, Ward’s thinking on this subject would climax in his *A View of the History, Literature, and Mythology of the Hindoos*.<sup>13</sup>

**Missionary conduct.** A third principle that guided the missionaries was their commitment to avoid anything that would unnecessarily increase the natives’ prejudices against the gospel.<sup>14</sup> They sought to allow no English mannerisms, perceived cruelty, disrespect to religious idols, or intentional disruptions of indigenous idol worship become points of stumbling for the Bengali people. Rather than being a source of such offenses, the Serampore missionaries sought to represent the manners and likeness of Christ and his apostles, even to the point of receiving abuse from the natives. In conducting

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left original letters as the missionaries wrote them. For instance, it is clear that “Xt.” means “Christ” and “Xty” refers to “Christianity.”

<sup>13</sup>William Ward, *A View of the History, Literature, and Mythology of the Hindoos; Including a Minute Description of Their Manners and Customs, and Translations From Their Principal Works*, 2nd ed. (London: Printed for Kingsbury, Parbury, and Allen, 1822). Before the publication of this resource, the missionaries decided to begin sending small reports concerning Indian manners, beliefs, and customs to their readers in England. They hoped to cultivate interest in England to gain additional support financially and additional personnel. For example, see “Miscellaneous Intelligence, and Brief Notices Relative to Indian Literature, Manners, Etc. Etc.: Immolations on the Funeral pile.,” *Circular Letters Relative to the Missions in India* 5 (January 1812): 20, in Serampore Circular Letters, 1807–1819, IN/26, Angus Library Archives, Regent’s Park College, University of Oxford, Oxford (hereafter cited as *Circular Letters Relative to the Missions in India*). Many scholars agree that Ward’s greatest work was his *A View of the Hindoos*. His motive for writing this work was two-fold. First, he hoped this work would provide future missionaries from the West with an easier time adjusting to Indian culture. Second, he believed an effective missionary would thoroughly know his target audience. Therefore, such in-depth research was meant to provide him with a personal understanding of Indian culture for this end. The title of Ward’s work can prove to be confusing as he changed his title between editions and even used a different title when printing different volumes of the same edition. Currently, Low Price Publications offers an edition available for purchase: William Ward, *History, Literature and Mythology of the Hindoos* (Dehli: Low Price Publications, 1990).

<sup>14</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 3:200–1.



themselves according to these standards—according to biblical standards of love and respect—their actions would reinforce the message they proclaimed.

**Stewarded opportunity.** Fourth, the missionaries agreed to make the most of their short time in India.<sup>15</sup> This principle set a high standard for themselves and their junior missionaries. Only preaching two or three times per week was unacceptable. It would make them “highly culpable” according to their perspective. Expending themselves by evangelizing the natives in Serampore’s surrounding villages, preaching in the markets throughout the nearby areas, and sharing the gospel “with the natives almost every hour in the day...to be instant in season and out of season—this is the life to which we are called in this country.” Their summary of this principle within the *SFA* offered a taste of their daily endeavors. They guarded their community of faith from becoming “lax in these active exertions” by fixing “it in our minds, that life is short, that all around us are perishing, and that we incur a dreadful woe if we proclaim not the glad tidings of salvation.” As Christ’s ambassadors, they were good stewards indeed.

**Doctrinal foundation.** The atonement served as their fifth commitment as it was the core doctrine for the missionaries’ theologically-informed philosophy of missions.<sup>16</sup> The missionaries sought to follow the example of Paul and make Christ the crucified the great subject of their preaching. This conviction explains the sense of urgency felt by the missionaries, which compelled them to press ahead despite a slow response or hardship. While on a trip in the Bengal countryside for itinerate preaching, Ward’s Bengali co-laborer, Presaud, came to the point that he did not think some

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<sup>15</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 3:201. All quotes in this paragraph are from p. 201. For other discussions on this principle, see George, *Faithful Witness*, 125–29; Neill, *A History of Christianity in India*, 192–95.

<sup>16</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 3:201–2.

Bengalis capable of ever receiving the gospel. Ward recorded, “Presaud says the people of these upper parts will never be converted, they are so destitute of all reflection & judgment.”<sup>17</sup> He disagreed: “‘Never’ is saying too much, but I feel towards them as much pain as I should if I were to see a person drowning & on account of the distance of the water I was unable to help him.”<sup>18</sup> A few years later, Ward offered an account of a conversation with an inquirer in which he stated this doctrinal conviction again:

I briefly explained who I was, & as he seemed very glad to see me I without delay entered into conversation with him respecting his state of mind, & was much pleased to find he gave up all hopes of Salvation from any good work that he shall ever do, & rests his hope entirely in the merit & atonement of Jesus Christ... I advised him to be earnest in prayers for Grace to enable him to see his need of a Redeemer & power to take up his Cross.<sup>19</sup>

The Trio saw Bengalis as drowning people, drowning in their idolatry and good works, which amounted to feeble attempts to satisfy their false gods. Because they understood Christ to be the only hope for Bengalis, they believed that the atonement of Christ must be the missionary’s continual theme if one wants to be a good steward of his ministry.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, November 23, 1803.

<sup>18</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, November 23, 1803.

<sup>19</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, July 15, 1807.

<sup>20</sup>Brian Pennington argues that Ward was guilty of moral superiority in his writings, especially in his *Manners and Customs of the Hindus*; see Brian K. Pennington, *Was Hinduism Invented? Britons, Indians, and the Colonial Construction of Religion* (New York: Oxford Press, 2005), 82–84. For other authors who argue the same point, see Jeffrey Cox, *The British Missionary Enterprise since 1700* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 129–31; Jeffrey Cox, *Imperial Fault Lines: Christianity and Colonial Power in India, 1818–1940* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002); Sita Ram Goel, *History of Hindu-Christian Encounters* (New Delhi: Voice of India, 1989); K. M. Panikkar, *Asia and Western Dominance: A Survey of the Vasco Da Gama Epoch of Asian History, 1498–1945* (New York: Collins Books, 1969); and Arun Shourie, *Missionaries in India: Continuities, Changes, Dilemmas* (New Delhi: ASA, 1994). A survey of Ward’s examples of “moral depravity” that he witnessed in Bengal, however, raises the question of whether one can pass moral judgment on such practices as did Ward. Also, one should question whether Pennington is justified in questioning Ward’s moral judgment on these practices. Through the efforts of Ward and other Westerners, such practices were put to an end for the most part. The debate then centers on the question of whether or not these individuals were justified in stopping these forms of religious and social oppression. Surely, applying this same standard of ignoring local practices that are moral evils, such as American slavery, to go unaddressed would be unacceptable. Also, one should remember that the missionaries placed the same moral standards upon other Westerners that they placed on indigenous Indians and used the same forms of discipline when addressing perceived immorality, whether the person under discipline be Western or Indian. Therefore, the BMS missionaries displayed a moral consistency in all matters considered. For a

Their compassion for souls and desire to see Bengalis become worshippers of God drove them to continue preaching although their listeners appeared unaffected by their message at times.

**Dignity of Bengalis.** The sixth conviction expressed by the Serampore missionaries concerned the dignity of their native brethren.<sup>21</sup> They felt the need to treat Bengalis with the utmost respect, never belittling them or being haughty toward them. In essence, they rejected any hint of moral and cultural superiority, which is so often a point of criticism among recent scholarship that incorrectly connects missionaries to imperialism.<sup>22</sup> Rather than treating Bengalis according to these false perceptions, the missionaries were “willing to hear their complaints . . . every thing brought before us in the most open, upright, and impartial manner.”<sup>23</sup> They tied directly their treatment of Bengalis in these respectful ways to an expected sacrifice of their own interests and potential pride for the sake of their listeners’ eternal salvation. Anything less was

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summary of Ward’s examples, see Pennington, *Was Hinduism Invented?*, 82. Concerning the general European social superiority to Asian cultures at this time, see Marshall G. S. Hodgson, *The Gunpowder Empires and Modern Times*, vol. 3 of *The Venture of Islam: Conscience and History in a World Civilization* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1974), 177–222. Hodgson argues that the British mindset was one of cultural superiority and an assumption that Asian culture and indigenous life patterns would mature once British cultural commitments were transmuted to native populations. One can see this mentality evident within the missionaries. It was an assumption that Christianity would bring a cultural change among the people of Bengal; a change that they assumed would “improve” the cultural failures that they identified in their writings. For a balanced criticism of Ward’s text, including negative and position aspects of his work, see Neill, *A History of Christianity in India*, 449. Also, note that Rammohun Roy considered the Serampore missionaries to be “the best qualified and the most careful observers of the foreign countries in which Europeans have settled,” quoted in Potts, *British Baptist Missionaries in India*, 7.

<sup>21</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 3:202–3.

<sup>22</sup>Although this issue is discussed in more detail in chaps. 3 and 6, it is helpful here to point readers to Brian Stanley’s accurate assessment of the rhetoric used by Carey and Ward. Although it may appear that they used antagonistic rhetoric when dialoguing with individuals or preaching, they were intentionally utilizing potentially offensive terms to magnify the gospel’s emancipations from “heathen” barbarism; see Brian Stanley, *Christian Missions and the Enlightenment* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), 170. For an excellent summary of this issue and the historiography related to the scholarly discussion surrounding it, see Kelly R. Elliot, “‘Chosen Race’: Baptist Missions and Mission Churches in The East and West Indies, 1795–1875” (PhD diss., Florida State University, 2010), 14–26.

<sup>23</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 3:202.

unacceptable according to this principle.

**Communal discipleship.** Seventh, they possessed a strong view that solidifying a gospel presence in Bengal would come only through a close community of believers committed to caring for one another deeply.<sup>24</sup> In their minds, this commitment included the needs of native converts, caring for their disciples' physical—as well as spiritual—needs.<sup>25</sup> Realizing that Bengalis would lose caste and face social ostracism, the missionaries believed if they “do not sympathize with them in their temporal losses for Christ, we shall be guilty of great cruelty.”<sup>26</sup> Within this principle generally, they laid out several specific implications of their assertion regarding the meaning of true gospel community. First, this community of Christ's disciples had to honor their magistrates according to the Carey, Marshman, and Ward. Doing otherwise brought dishonor to the supposed peace that Christians embodied. Also, they expected lapses in the faith and conduct of their disciples and sought to be gracious in such instances. Recognizing that growth in one's faith may include setbacks, the missionaries stated this principle and put it into practice on many occasions throughout their tenure in Bengal. Third, they felt the weight of leading exemplary lives before their disciples, understanding that the missionaries' various failures would be points of stumbling for native believers and inquirers. Additionally, the female missionaries among them were the best ones,

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<sup>24</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 3:203–5. Concerning their approach to communal living, see George, *Faithful Witness*, 122–24; and David A. Schattschneider, “William Carey, Modern Missions, and the Moravian Influence,” *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 22, no.1 (January 1988): 10–12.

<sup>25</sup>Within this stated principle, the missionaries discussed the realities encountered by Bengalis. They knew that Bengali converts would face hardships. Hence, the missionaries stated here a principle that they carried out during their time in Bengal: they met their disciples' physical needs through aid to the sick and poor as well as starting businesses to provide income for their fellow believers. Concerning the missionaries' care for the sick and poor, see Potts, *British Baptist Missionaries in India*, 62–70. Concerning implications of this principle regarding other social issues—within the Serampore community of faith as well as the Bengali culture at large—see Appleby, *I Can Plod*, 266–72; and Neill, *A History of Christianity in India*, 156–85.

<sup>26</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 3:203.

according to their perspective, to disciple native women. Much like the women of the early church, the Serampore missionaries believed their female contemporaries to have a vital role in spreading the faith among Bengali women. All of these implications for growing a vibrant body of Christians in Bengal had to be cultivated if they wanted to experience a close community disciples. Ultimately, they expected their fellow covenant members—whether indigenous or European—to embody the peace of Christ toward one another as well as outsiders. Caring for one another was a strong testimony to the love of Christ, a testimony concerning the effects of Christ’s atonement; one that tore down caste distinctions and offered a counter-cultural ethnic and social unity. A community that upheld this principle would be truly attractive to perishing souls, drowning in their idolatry.

**Indigenous leadership.** An eighth conviction formalized in the *SFA* concerned the missionaries’ thoughts on indigenous ministers.<sup>27</sup> They believed that developing some of their native disciples into effective ministers of the gospel was the way to spread Christianity throughout Asia. According to them, “it is only by means of native preachers that we can hope for the universal spread of the gospel throughout this immense continent.”<sup>28</sup>

Generally, the *SFA* marked a general shift in their ministry efforts that occurred, a shift that was evident in the content of Ward’s journal.<sup>29</sup> From his arrival in India until the month of August in 1805, Ward went out on frequent itinerant preaching tours throughout the Bengali Presidency. This first phase of his ministry (1800–1805)

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<sup>27</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 3:205–8.

<sup>28</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 3:205.

<sup>29</sup>Note that these shift are general and by no means stringent markers. Therefore, many of the ministry endeavors that were Ward’s focus in phase one of his time in Bengal were efforts that he pursued in the following years although not to the same intensity.

was one of personal preaching and printing; he carried out personally the Mission's print ministry and dissemination of the gospel throughout Bengal. The second phase of his Bengali ministry, following late 1805, brought about a general shift in his journal entries, was marked his proposal concerning indigenous ministers and a reassessment of the role of British missionaries in establishing the gospel in Bengal.

For the Serampore missionaries, this conviction meant that they needed to form their native brethren into separate indigenous churches that were led by indigenous pastors. Oussoren wrote, "A real missionary becomes a father to his people. Indeed, just as a father educates his children to independence, so William Carey tried to bring up the native, not as transformed Europeans, but as converted Indians with an Indian life."<sup>30</sup> This conviction was not one of simple pragmatism in that the missionaries only took into consideration issues of needing more ministers or the cost of sending out native preachers compared to European ministers. While such matters were major points of consideration, Carey, Marshman, and Ward had a desire to ensure that indigenous believers would remain native in their customs, while addressing adequately the realities faced by Bengali converts.<sup>31</sup> An implication of their sixth conviction—the dignity of Bengalis—coupled with this eighth principle meant that they let natives lead the Bengali church, trusting

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<sup>30</sup>Oussoren, *William Carey, Especially His Missionary Principles*, 217.

<sup>31</sup>For other discussions on this principle, see Neill, *A History of Christianity in India*, 197–99; and Oussoren, *William Carey, Especially His Missionary Principles*, 212–15. Oussoren offered an excellent summary of the pragmatic value Carey and Ward placed upon indigenous leadership, such as their ability to communicate more effectively than Europeans and the lower cost of supporting them than their Western counterparts. Also, Neill tied the missionaries' efforts to provide formal education directly to this principle of indigenous leadership; see Neill, *A History of Christianity in India*, 199–201. While I agree with Neill to some degree on this assertion, the missionaries created schools for other purposes as well. Through his correspondence with BMS leaders in England, Carey came to the conviction that Bengalis were ignorant on many levels. Then needed instruction on matters of general knowledge as well as religious instruction because they did not understand their own Islamic teachings and other such matters. His educational efforts, therefore, included more than training indigenous believers for the ministry. For another perspective, see Oussoren, *William Carey, Especially His Missionary Principles*, 207–11. Correctly, Oussoren asserts that the eighth and ninth principles within the *SFA* as closely connected. He argues that education and Scripture translation were not subordinate to evangelism in Carey's mind, but rather equal in importance. Therefore, he intertwines his discussion of indigenous leadership and the place of Scripture in the missionaries' covenant.

Bengali leaders to address Bengali realities. When thinking through various Bengali cultural realities, they believed that indigenous believers could conform such matters to scriptural teaching under the Holy Spirit's guidance. Rather than forcing native converts to forsake certain questionable native customs, the missionaries sought to overlook temporarily practices that were unpleasant to their European sensibilities and guide their native brethren gently. By personal example and mild persuasion, the missionaries believed they could help Bengali Christians "open and illuminate their minds in a gradual way, rather than use authoritative means."<sup>32</sup> They believed that forcing their disciples to abandon such practices would lead to hypocrisy if they did not first develop a personal conviction concerning an issue.

**Centrality of Scripture.** Ninth, as Particular Baptists, the Serampore missionaries held closely to the centrality of Scripture as the standard for correct religious belief as well as the guide for personal religious experience.<sup>33</sup> The missionaries believed, therefore, that they needed to labor with all their might to translate the scriptures into the native tongues.<sup>34</sup> According to Timothy George, Carey continued in the vein of Luther and Erasmus, seeking to make the Scriptures available to the men and women of common people in India. George summarized Carey's emphasis on the Bible's central position in

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<sup>32</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 3:208. For a sampling of the social issues that the missionaries helped indigenous leaders address, see Oussoren, *William Carey, Especially His Missionary Principles*, 174–76, 191–95.

<sup>33</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 3:208–10. For other discussions on this principle, see Neill, *A History of Christianity in India*, 195–97; and Oussoren, *William Carey, Especially His Missionary Principles*, 198–201.

<sup>34</sup>Scholars have documented this aspect of the missionaries' ministry significantly. Therefore, there is no need to give much attention to this issue here. For a helpful overview of their emphasis on Scripture translation, see George, *Faithful Witness*, 137–43; and Potts, *British Baptist Missionaries in India, 1793–1837*, 79–90. Whereas George cited the shortcomings of the missionaries' translations, of which they were aware and openly admitted, Potts took a negative view of their work to the point of nearly dismissing their efforts as insignificant. For a helpful collection of excerpts from Carey's letters to various recipients regarding his translation work, see Carey and Carter, *The Journal and Selected Letters of William Carey*, 153–66.

his missionary efforts: “Carey held firmly to the conviction [that] the Bible was the very Word of God, uniquely inspired by the Holy Spirit; a totally truthful revelation from God; an infallible authority for doctrine, ethics, and all matters pertaining to the Christian life.”<sup>35</sup> Once they made the Bible available, they could distribute it widely, a philosophy that made Ward, as a printer, central to BMS efforts in India.<sup>36</sup> Also, they sought to use the translated scriptures to establish and operate native free schools, where they fulfilled their dream of raising up indigenous leadership that they held so dear. Thus, the missionaries placed a high level of value on this process and revealed this conviction by stressing their progress in Bible translation within their reports.<sup>37</sup>

**Personal piety.** Finally, the Serampore brethren committed themselves to a tenth principle—deep personal piety.<sup>38</sup> As Particular Baptists, the missionaries placed tremendous value on personal and corporate piety. In order to faithfully discharge their perceived missionary responsibilities, as stated in the other nine articles, the Serampore brethren believed they had to cultivate a deep personal piety. Through prayer, which they saw as the root of personal godliness, the missionaries sought to develop their own spirituality before ministering to others. It was through personal and corporate prayer, for instance, that the missionaries sought to cultivate such a piety and to secure this

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<sup>35</sup>George, *Faithful Witness*, 137.

<sup>36</sup>Concerning the quality and value of the missionaries’ translated Bibles, see the discussion in Potts, *British Baptist Missionaries in India, 1793–1837*, 79–90. The implications of this conviction regarding Ward’s role are discussed in greater detail in chap. 5 of this dissertation.

<sup>37</sup>See William Carey, Joshua Marshman, and William Ward to the Society, Serampore, July 28, 1802, William Carey, Joshua Marshman, William Ward, and Others to the Baptist Missionary Committee, 1800–1827 MSS, IN/21, Angus Library Archives, Regent’s Park College, University of Oxford, Oxford (hereafter cited as Carey, Marshman, and Ward MSS); and William Carey et al. to the Society, Serampore, January 29, 1803, in *Periodical Accounts*, 2:360–61.

<sup>38</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 3:210. For other discussions on this principle, see Oussoren, *William Carey, Especially His Missionary Principles*, 201–3. For extracts from a sampling of letters from Carey to various recipients concerning a missionary’s expected piety, see Carey and Carter, *The Journal and Selected Letters of William Carey*, 247–72.



continued favor of God upon their lives and ministry.<sup>39</sup> They viewed prayer as the means to walk in a manner worthy of their calling. Carey, Marshman, and Ward wrote,

Let us abound in prayer;—for grace to preserve the life of religion in our own souls, without which we can do little in a right manner in the work of God and for the souls of others;—for our native brethren, who have more to combat than even we ourselves, while their acquaintance with divine things must necessarily be more limited;—for the infant churches; these unless watered by the dews of divine grace, cannot increase, but will on the contrary become extinct;—and for the heathen around, that the number brought in this year may exceed any thing yet seen by us.<sup>40</sup>

Prayer, for the Serampore brethren, was essential to continued faithfulness personally and in ministry; both for themselves and their native brethren. Vibrant spirituality brought about expected results: positive developments in one's ministry were the Lord's blessing and directly connected to their piety. They wrote, "In a word, the Lord has been pleased to set before us an open door, and to shew us that there is no blessing we need for his work, which he is not both able and willing to grant."<sup>41</sup> The missionaries believed their piety was essential to ensure the continued ministerial blessing of the Lord: "This plainly points out both our duty and our highest interest: let us walk humbly before him, seeking to please him in all things, and to abound therein more and more, recollecting that memorable declaration of the prophet to Asa and the men of Judah, '*The Lord is with you while ye are with him.*'"<sup>42</sup> Piety, as passed down within the Particular Baptist fold, was the foundation for effective ministry. Such observations lead to a specific conclusion: as Particular Baptists, Carey and Ward were within a firmly established tradition of relating ministry effectiveness to spirituality.

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<sup>39</sup>For example, see William Carey et al. to the Society, Serampore, January 1811, Carey, Marshman, and Ward MSS. In this letter, the missionaries stated that they value monthly prayer meetings because it would be only because of God's blessing that their efforts would be successful.

<sup>40</sup>"Review of the Mission at the close of the year 1811," *Circular Letters Relative to the Missions in India* 5 (January 1812): 9.

<sup>41</sup>"Review of the Mission at the close of the year 1811," *Circular Letters Relative to the Missions in India* 5 (January 1812): 8.

<sup>42</sup>"Review of the Mission at the close of the year 1811," *Circular Letters Relative to the Missions in India* 5 (January 1812): 8–9.

**Conclusion.** The Serampore missionaries concluded their document by stating the importance of these convictions. Only by adhering to these ten principles would they be faithful in giving “ourselves up unreservedly to this glorious cause.”<sup>43</sup>

### **God’s Sovereignty and Millennial Expectations Provide an Assured Hope**

Their beliefs concerning God’s sovereignty and their millennialism led to an assured hope that Christ’s name would become great in Bengal. At first, the connection of these two doctrines to their missionary efforts were conceptual theological points that served as hope during trials and a lack of desired results. Such hopes were not empty as they began to see their expectations become realities after several years of working together.<sup>44</sup>

### **Basis of Mission: God is Able to Establish His Glory**

Not tied to their mixture of successes and failures, Carey and Ward displayed a hope that superseded their circumstances. Frequently, these two missionaries expressed a longing for heaven; a release from the concerns of this world. After receiving the news of a friend’s death, Ward wrote, “I preached a kind of funeral sermon for my dear friend Sedgwick. Oh! that God may prepare me to follow him. To me the world gets poorer every day, when my friends are gone & my work done, all the rest is dung & dross.”<sup>45</sup>

These missionaries were not ones to doubt the sovereign control of God over all things. Therefore, the missionaries continued to hope that their work was not in vain, even during the darkest times. For example, Ward recorded a journal entry that illustrated

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<sup>43</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 3:210–11.

<sup>44</sup>Concerning the missionaries’ millennial views, Crawford Gribben has a forthcoming volume that will address this doctrine from the view of Particular Baptists: Andrew Fuller, *Expository Discourses on the Apocalypse*, ed. Crawford Gribben, vol. 15 of *The Works of Andrew Fuller*, ed. Michael A. G. Haykin (Boston: Walter de Gruyter, 2018, forthcoming).

<sup>45</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, April 13, 1806.

this firm stance during extremely discouraging days. His description of the circumstances was not favorable:

Petumber, jun. is gone home with his father; it is said, to return no more. We are ready to despond at this falling away: Petumber, jun. Lochon, Neloo, (Petumber's brother) Ollah (Petumber's Sister), Radakanta, Seeboo (the brahman who tore his poitou), Rogenaut, Chundee & his Sister, &c. &c. are gone from us. Samdas is dead. Gokol & Bykanta worse than dead. A widow named Basee, for whom we run up a small hut, on account of her being turned out by her friends, gives us little hopes. These are very discouraging circumstances, added to the utter contempt of the gospel expressed by the people of Serampore.<sup>46</sup>

The missionaries had much justification for despairing under these circumstances. Their gaze would not become introspective, however. Ward ended this entry with a resolute trust in God's providence in the midst of such pain: "Yet we do not despair." Elsewhere, this belief served as a source of comfort as the BMS missionaries processed encounters with death—especially unexpected ones—according to God's sovereignty. Joshua Marshman offered an exemplary evaluation following the unexpected death of Sister Chamberlain: "On reviewing this mysterious event we are struck with amazement. After all the searchings of heart which it has occasioned, and these have been not a few, we are obliged to receive it into the sovereign will of God. We can scarcely see how we could have done anything to prevent the melancholy event."<sup>47</sup> In such circumstances, they held to a belief in God's sovereign control over all things as their comfort.

Throughout their early years in Bengal, Carey and Ward oscillated between an exuberant expectation that God would spread the Christian faith throughout Bengal in the near future and a felt weightiness that they could do nothing to bring about this

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<sup>46</sup>William Ward, Journal MSS, November 1, 1802. Note: the relationships listed in this journal entry were constantly shifting, serving as a source of encouragement at one moment and discouragement at the next one. For example, Ward believed Petumber jun. has abandoned them and Christianity in this journal entry. Petumber returned to the mission ten days later, however, stating his intent to live with them permanently. Readers can understand the severity of this highly emotional situation if one realizes that Petumber Jun. was the first Bengali that showed promise of being truly converted and had the ability to further BMS efforts in the area.

<sup>47</sup>Joshua Marshman to John Sutcliff, Serampore, January 8, 1805, Bound Letters of Joshua Marshman MSS, IN/19A, Angus Library Archives, Regent's Park College, University of Oxford, Oxford (hereafter cited as Marshman MSS).

movement. For example, Carey wrote, “The obstacles in the way of the gospel are very great and if it was not that God is Almighty, and True, would be insurmountable.”<sup>48</sup> A few years later, the missionaries expressed their hope that God would overcome all obstacles to their ministry in a letter to the BMS:

The state of sinners, and the way of salvation, have been faithfully declared; their refuges of lies have been often attacked, and their detestable idolatries and superstitions plainly exposed; and though the peculiar nature of their diabolical system is such as to render their hearts apparently impenetrable, yet we rejoice that there is One who is stronger than the strong man armed, and who will in due time bind him and spoil his goods. We rejoice that our Saviour is almighty. We recollect with exultation that he has triumphed over the gods of Greece, of Rome, and of Britain; and are persuaded that he will not suffer Satan to battle him in India. We desire to bless his name that he has been pleased to station us, unworthy as we are, in this part of his vineyard; and would persevere in the patient discharge of our duty, constantly looking to him, till he be pleased to pour down his Spirit from on high, and turn this wilderness into a fruitful field.<sup>49</sup>

Carey, Marshman, Ward, and Brunsdon thus expressed a grounded expectation that Christ would overcome Indian idolatry in the near future, a belief based on their understanding of God’s sovereignty.

As results lingered because of such difficulties, Carey must have thought of hyper-Calvinist critiques of his work by some of his British contemporaries.<sup>50</sup> Seeing the permeation of Christ’s glory throughout Bengal, however, was not possible apart from an outpouring of the Holy Spirit. George correctly assessed Carey’s hope of the Holy Spirit’s coming in the midst of discouragement: “He knew the gospel in India would

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<sup>48</sup>William Carey to Committee, Mudnabatty, August 5, 1794, William Carey to the Baptist Missionary Society Committee, 1794–1824 MSS, IN/13, Angus Library Archives, Regent’s Park College, University of Oxford, Oxford (hereafter cited as Carey to BMS MSS).

<sup>49</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 2:69. For an additional example of the missionaries’ expectation that God would soon move among their consistent Hindu and Muslim hearers, see William Carey, Joshua Marshman, and William Ward to the Society, Serampore, July 16, 1802, in *Periodical Accounts*, 2:294. In this letter, the missionaries described the numerous unconverted Hindus and Muslims who came to hear their preaching on a regular basis. They recounted their prayers in which they called upon God to convert these men and women through their preaching and called upon Western Christians to join them in this supplication.

<sup>50</sup>Records show a certain level of pressure on Carey. Occasionally, he would comment on his sorrow in not being able to report vast numbers of conversions. For example, see *Periodical Accounts*, 1:480–87. For further insight into this pressure, also see George, *Faithful Witness*, 113.

make its way not by coercion and force but only as the Holy Spirit broke through the barriers of ignorance, superstition, and unbelief to bring the lost out of darkness into the light of truth.”<sup>51</sup> Carey expressed this sentiment after laboring for years in Bengal without being able to report a baptized convert to his supporters in England. In a report to the BMS, the “Father of the Modern Missions Movement” clearly illustrated his source of confidence: “At present, being incapable of preaching, I can say nothing of success; but my heart is engaged in the work, and I know that God can convert the most obstinate and superstitious; and he has promised to do it. Here is the foundation of my hope, and in this confidence I engage in the work.”<sup>52</sup> This hope, in the midst of such systemic and religious superstition, would not wane as months became years without substantial results. For example, he wrote, “Upon the whole, I trust the prospect of the conversion of the heathen is not so gloomy as to give room for despondency; the natural obstacles, such as ignorance of the language, &c. are in some measure surmounted; and we have the promise of God that the moral ones shall also be overcome.”<sup>53</sup> Elsewhere, his view surfaced in slightly different terms: “Though the Cast, and a great number of other superstitions be great obstacles, yet I know there are only two real obstacles in any part of the earth; viz. a want of the Scriptures, and the Depravity of the human heart. The first of these God has begun to remove: and I trust the last will be removed shortly.”<sup>54</sup> It is key to note his hopeful tone despite such a woeful report: “I am sure the work of God must

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<sup>51</sup>George, *Faithful Witness*, 111. This paragraph, as well as the following one, are excellent examples of the fact that Carey’s assured hope was already present before Ward’s *SFA*. In this case, his thinking came to be expressed in the *SFA* discussed in chap. 2.

<sup>52</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 1:92. Also see *Periodical Accounts*, 1:224, where Carey states, “the superstitions of the East may gradually die away under the sound of the gospel. *This* is the end at which my soul aims, and I trust that I feel more and more enjoyment in the work of a missionary, as I become more acquainted with the language, and find my discourses better understood by them.” In reference to the title “Father of the Modern Missions Movement,” see Carey and Carter, *The Journal and Selected Letters of William Carey*, ix.

<sup>53</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 1:226.

<sup>54</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 1:361.

prevail; and I think it cannot be long ere it does so: for God having graciously brought the gospel hither, and excited some to attend to it in a hopeful manner, is a kind of pledge to me that he will not forsake his work.”<sup>55</sup> Such was the hope on which he stood as well as extended to his audience. God would be faithful to work according to his own timing to bring his purposes about and God’s faithful fulfillment of these promises would come through his appointed means. For example, he wrote, “Some mahometans have declared their determination of abandoning their superstitions; and I think I may say, that there is already a stirring among the dry bones; but, alas! the Spirit of life from God has not entered into them yet.”<sup>56</sup> Elsewhere, he wrote, “The Husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the forms and latter Rain. So when the Holy Spirit shall be poured from on high this Wilderness shall become a fruitful field.”<sup>57</sup> Although the Spirit had not entered his Muslim hearers, he had no doubt of this future reality coming about.

Ward reflected also on the lack of positive responses among his Bengali hearers in his journal:

Every conversation that I have with the natives makes me perceive more and more at what a distance these immense multitudes of immortals are from embracing the truth as it is in Jesus. Their prejudices, habits, cast, aversion to English manners & people, & ignorance of the religion of nature & conscience, proves that God only can make them put on the profession of Xt. in sincerity. Yet still the work seems nearer than ever: – Who can despair – ‘God’s eternal thought moves on’ – & miracles have been performed already.<sup>58</sup>

Bringing about a sincere belief in Christ was God’s work according to Ward. A few

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<sup>55</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 1:361.

<sup>56</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 1:124.

<sup>57</sup>William Carey to Committee, Mudnabatty, December 9, 1796, Carey to BMS MSS; *Periodical Accounts*, 1:388.

<sup>58</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, September 28, 1803. About this same time, Marshman sent a letter to John Ryland using similar language, requesting his prayers for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit to overcome the darkness of Bengali religious beliefs. The missionaries must have felt the weight of their circumstances at this time and sought the blessing of God for their work. See Joshua Marshman to John Ryland, Serampore, November 10, 1803, Marshman MSS.

weeks later, he offered a similar expression of this conviction when reflecting on an unresponsive group of Bengali Muslims:

These people seem to be all body & no soul. They come with their salam in their hand, they hear, or look about them; they go away making their salam. But nothing moves them; they neither think either of embracing or rejecting, or that it is any thing of theirs but to sit & hear at the invitation or command of Sahaib...& I think it very possible for the most energetic preacher to be amongst them 10 years, & be understood, & yet never make them either angry, or please, or afraid, or any thing else... Yet with God all things are possible.<sup>59</sup>

Clearly, Ward did not believe the problem underlying their lack of a response was poor communication; it was much deeper. He believed they were dead spiritually, with no interest in biblical piety whatsoever. With years of such experiences came Ward's conviction that Bengalis would not respond to his message positively apart from something more than human argument.

Therefore, they consistently requested prayer from their supporters and family members concerning this issue and their felt need to continue their work among the Bengali people.<sup>60</sup> As a group, the missionaries expressed the same perspective in a letter to the BMS leadership. They wrote, "On reviewing the whole affairs of the mission, we still have reason for abundant gratitude, and desire still to abound in the work of the Lord. But we greatly long for the out-pouring of the Holy Spirit, without which we shall live and labour in vain. Permit us to invite you to a closer union with us in prayer, for the attainment of this all-important blessing."<sup>61</sup> Later that year, they wrote, "The remaining

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<sup>59</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, November 2, 1803. The term "salam" referred to a type of blessing pronounced at a greeting or departure of two or more people. While non-Muslims employ this gesture, it is associated particularly with Islamic cultures. See "Salaam," in *Collins English Dictionary – Complete and Unabridged* (2003), <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/salaam> (accessed May 31, 2013).

<sup>60</sup>For example, see William Carey to his father, Calcutta, October 13, n.d., William Carey Collection–Letters to his Father, Brother, & Sisters MSS, FPC 19, Angus Library Archives, Regent's Park College, University of Oxford, Oxford (hereafter cited as William Carey Collection MSS). Also, for extracts of letters in which Carey asked for prayer, see Carey and Carter, *The Journal and Selected Letters of William Carey*, 201–3.

<sup>61</sup>William Carey et al. to the Society, Serampore, March 25, 1807, in *Periodical Accounts*, 3:346–47.

corruptions in many of our Native Brethren is often [ongoing] and is a source of much grief to us. Those who are searching and escaped from heathenism need much of the sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit. May the Lord bestow it upon them in a rich abundance.”<sup>62</sup> The Serampore brethren were under no delusion that Bengalis would embrace their message and persevere in the Christian faith apart from the Spirit’s active ministry in that place to their listeners. But, they fully expected the Spirit to do this very thing.

### **Millennial Expectations: God Will Establish His Glory**

Their grounded expectation of God’s sovereign movement, coupled with their eschatology, proved to be the basis for their sustained effort over years of fruitlessness and tragic experiences.<sup>63</sup> Ultimately, tragedy brought out affirmations of the missionaries’ deepest trust in God’s providence and their humble submission to His designs, which were evident particularly in two deaths during the month of December, 1807. While giving an account of Dorothy Carey’s death, the missionaries stated that she acknowledged fear associated with dying and her eternal state, but she “knew who would preserve her.”<sup>64</sup> A few lines later in this same letter, they provided an account of John Biss’ (1776–1807) death and a similar response:

We have been informed by our American friends of the death of dear Brother Biss. The dispensations of Providence in this instance, both as it respects him and us have been very mysterious. We would submit to the Divine Will and trust our God when we cannot trace him. Brother Carey [led] the solemn event from a passage which Brother Biss left for this purpose – “What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shall know hereafter.” John XIII.<sup>7</sup><sup>65</sup>

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<sup>62</sup>William Carey et al. to the Society, Serampore, December 25, 1807, Carey, Marshman, and Ward MSS.

<sup>63</sup>For an overview of Particular Baptist eschatology, see Garrett, *Baptist Theology*, 186–87.

<sup>64</sup>William Carey et al. to the Society, Serampore, December 25, 1807, Carey, Marshman, and Ward MSS.

<sup>65</sup>William Carey et al. to the Society, Serampore, December 25, 1807, Carey, Marshman, and



Other letters expressed a similar perspective: “In looking over the last three months, we are struck with a sense of the divine goodness as manifested towards us. Some things it is true have been discouraging; but our God has more than balanced them with encouraging circumstances; so that upon the whole, we cannot but rejoice in the hope of still greater success in seeking the increase of our Redeemer’s Kingdom.”<sup>66</sup> When advancing the gospel in Bengal or wading through tragedy among the mission family, the BMS missionaries held tightly to their belief in God’s sovereign providence. Through all experiences, they sought to submit to such events as what they deemed to be his sovereign will.

Carey and Ward had a view of millennial beliefs that offered encouragement in the midst of great heartache and provided the strength to endure years of fruitless efforts. If Christ had set them apart for this work, he would establish a Christian community of Bengalis according to their perspective. At certain points of their ministry, the missionaries expressed their belief that God would bring about the long-anticipated dividends of their hefty investment. For example, the missionaries recorded their encouraged spirit in a quarterly report to the BMS: “We hope we may say, to the praise of God...that the darkness which appeared to hang over the mission is past: those years of painful suspense are gone . . . we seem now, in many things, to have received the fulfillment of that promise: *Before they call, I will answer; and while they are speaking, I will hear.*”<sup>67</sup> During such moments, encouraging developments in their ministry assuaged the pain of various setbacks.

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Ward MSS.

<sup>66</sup>William Carey et al. to the Society, Serampore, September 25, 1809, Carey, Marshman, and Ward MSS. For another example, see William Carey et al. to the Society, Serampore, December 21, 1810, Carey, Marshman, and Ward MSS. In this letter, the missionaries recounted the faithfulness of God over the past twelve years. They highlighted examples such as the establishment of five churches in Bengal with approximately 170 members, the BMS’ expansion into other countries, and nineteen baptisms over the past three months at the Serampore church.

<sup>67</sup>William Carey, Joshua Marshman, and William Ward to the Society, Serampore, July 16, 1802, in *Periodical Accounts*, 2:289.

During such seasons of discouragement, the missionaries found much hope because of these millennial views. For example, the missionaries expressed their eschatological hopes that the gospel would bring about an eternal harvest in a letter to the BMS. They wrote,

May God also give us native brethren full of the holy Spirit, and plentifully pour out the same on the inhabitants of Bengal! . . . And above all, how infinitely worthy of God does the plan of redemption appear, when we compare it with the devices of the heathen! Therefore, seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not. . . . United in these glorious truths, and in this blessed work on earth, oh that we may at length meet you in the worlds of light—you with many, many English; and we with many, many Hindoos and Mussulmans, redeemed by the blood of the Lamb!<sup>68</sup>

They expected to meet with Fuller, Sutcliff, and other English believers along with their Bengali converts in glory. Elsewhere, Ward recorded a disappointing effort in the fall of 1803: “About ½ past 9 we had Bengalee worship, but many servants were absent through the rain. I spoke with some feeling, & used all the persuasions I could to bring them to Xt.”<sup>69</sup> Despite his content and entreating the congregation to trust in Christ, Ward could not record any salvific responses. When the missionaries pleaded with their listeners to no avail as in this journal entry, they leaned on their eschatology for strength to continue their work.

Of course, the missionaries processed all of these thoughts through a specific lens: a hope based on their millennial expectations. For them, the days of the Holy Spirit’s outpouring were near. This belief had various implications—especially supporting the growing British nationalism when appropriate—that became assumptions during this time. In many ways, the British missionary awakening had an unmistakable connection to British imperial expansion.<sup>70</sup> BMS missionaries did not have a problem

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<sup>68</sup>William Carey, Joshua Marshman, William Ward, and John Chamberlain to the Society, Serampore, January 29, 1803, in *Periodical Accounts*, 2:364.

<sup>69</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, October 23, 1803.

<sup>70</sup>Brian Stanley, *The Bible and The Flag*, 58.

with this connection to a certain degree as they stood within a Puritan tradition in which this mentality was commonplace.<sup>71</sup> As British citizens, BMS missionaries believed their country to be favored by God for the very purpose of carrying the gospel to the ends of the earth. Yet, their respect for and support of the British government paled in comparison with their theological concerns.<sup>72</sup> They were, first and foremost, ambassadors of Christ.

### **Hopes Realized: God is Establishing His Glory**

These two implications of their millennial expectations—their conviction that God would establish his church in Bengal and their enduring encouragement during trials—provided the missionaries with an abiding sense of purpose as well. In one journal entry, Ward described a disappointing effort in Moorshedabad, followed by his evaluation: “Perhaps in all these labours we are casting bread on the waters, which will not be seen till after many days, but I never felt myself more in the path of duty.”<sup>73</sup> They continued to press forward in their work, longing for a day when all impediments would be a distant memory:

The general aspect of things as it relates to the calling in of the heathen here is not discouraging. As our first publishing the gospel in Serampore and its

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<sup>71</sup>For example, see Michael A. G. Haykin, “*To Honour God*”: *The Spirituality of Oliver Cromwell* (Dundas, Ontario: Joshua Press, 1999), 53–55. These pages contain a letter from Oliver Cromwell to William Lenthall, written on June 14, 1645, after a victorious battle, in which Cromwell attributes his success to God. His providentialism, viewing himself as a ruler ordained by God, in light of Puritan covenant theology is evident throughout Haykin’s section on his piety; see pp. 19–35. For two helpful overviews of the Puritan view of missions, see Sidney H. Rooy, *The Theology of Missions in the Puritan Tradition* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965); and William Travis, “William Carey: The Modern Missions Movement and the Sovereignty of God,” in *The Grace of God, the Bondage of the Will*, ed. Thomas R. Schreiner and Bruce A. Ware (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1995), 2:323–30.

<sup>72</sup>Stanley, *The Bible and The Flag*, 59.

<sup>73</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, October 5, 1803. Eventually, this territory became characterized by evangelistic success among Muslims and Hindus alike, primarily through the ministry of John Chamberlain (1777–1821). See “Cutwa. (Kutwa).,” *Circular Letters Relative to the Missions in India* 2 (July 1809): 30. Although Ward did not bring about his desired results personally, his early efforts provided the foundation for Chamberlain nevertheless.

neighbourhood the natives seemed pleased with the novelty of hearing Europeans talk in their own language and especially to hear them recommending religion. To this succeeded, in our own neighbourhood, a general alarm lest Hindoos should be persuaded to forsake the gods. Now the alarm has subsided; a general impression in favour of the Bible has been produced; the benevolence of our motives is in many places admitted... We now only want the day of God's power, and then all the obstacles that remain will be removed, and the new cast, and the new Shasters will be welcomed by thousands who now are ignorant of the blessings of the kingdom of Jesus.<sup>74</sup>

The missionaries continued to labor, despite numerous difficulties, based on their hope that God would spread his glory among the Bengali people. Although they experienced numerous disappointments, Carey and Ward believed they were acting according to duty. A glimmer of hope became evident from time to time, leading them to believe this fulfillment was close at hand. Such a sense of purpose, mixed with such hope, was both derived from and reinforced by their millennial expectations.

Although the missionaries did not experience their expected movement of God for many years, they held firm to the assurance of God's ability to break through various expressions of Bengali resistance to the Christian gospel. After seven years of ministry in Bengal, the missionaries reflected upon their hope that the Holy Spirit would bless their ministry. With the advantage of a perspective informed by realized expectations over these years, the missionaries were able to express their evaluation:

Permitted by Divine Goodness to close the 7<sup>th</sup> year since our union as a family and a church, we feel it a duty to pause a moment and recall to mind the way in which we have been led, that we may charge it upon our souls to give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name.

The circumstances in which the year 1800 found us . . . we were then a large family, in a new part of the country entering on a scene of things perfectly untried. Uncertain with respect even to our daily subsistence, and the probability of our existing together in our new connection—our church in an infant state and the Mission—without a single seal and without any to give hope, or to cheer us with the probability of a Hindoo's conversion, we did hope, it is true, but like the patriarchs of old it was almost against hope. We knew that God was able to do above what we could ask or think, but whether he would thus extend his mercy to us, unworthy as

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<sup>74</sup>William Carey et al. to the Society, Serampore, June 25, 1809, Carey, Marshman, and Ward MSS. The alarms that the missionaries discussed in this letter referred to the anti-mission movement among British officials discussed in chap. 6 of this dissertation.

we appeared, was a matter about which we had great searchings of heart.<sup>75</sup>

The letter continued to list the ways that they understood God to have blessed their work since 1800. Included in their account of blessings were the guidance of God through various trials, the baptism of numerous people, and the addition of several European missionaries to their efforts in Bengal. The last paragraph of this letter expressed the missionaries' thankfulness to God for his provision and their submission to God's providence in the midst of various trials. Several years later, the missionaries reported that God had, certainly, blessed their efforts and rooted the church firmly in Bengal.<sup>76</sup> They believed the Spirit moved in Bengal indeed. No longer were their hopes noble, yet potentially unfounded, expectations. They were realized results of God sovereignly overcoming all hindrances.

Fulfilling their duty, the missionaries experienced realized expectations eventually and processed their ministerial success in light of their millennial beliefs: "We live in eventful and amazing times, and ought to expect much from that God, who, in his millenium [*sic*] glory, appears to be coming very near to us. The work here has been carried to such a state – and is capable of producing such great consequences in a few years, that the whole Christian World will rise up against you, notwithstanding all you have done, and us also, if we suffer it to come to nothing."<sup>77</sup> At the close of the nineteenth century's first decade, Carey and Ward believed they had remained true to their scripturally-founded millennial expectations and had begun to experience the

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<sup>75</sup>William Carey et al. to the Society, Serampore, December 25, 1806, Carey, Marshman, and Ward MSS.

<sup>76</sup>William Carey et al. to the Society, Serampore, January 1811, Carey, Marshman, and Ward MSS. Of particular interest for this dissertation is the report concerning the Jessore church. A combined effort of itinerant BMS personnel and long term ministry by native ministers brought about thirty-two baptisms in 1810, including fourteen Muslim converts. A noteworthy comparison existed between the Jessore church and the combined baptisms of the Serampore and Calcutta churches in the same year. The Jessore church only had six fewer baptisms than the two churches in Serampore and Calcutta combined, a number that included also several Europeans and some of the missionaries' children.

<sup>77</sup>William Carey, Joshua Marshman, and William Ward to the Society, Serampore, November 1, 1808, Carey, Marshman, and Ward MSS.

realized hopes of their theological commitments. To open their January 1810 *Circular Letters*, the missionaries included a lengthy review of missionary efforts in Bengal since John Thomas first began preaching to natives in 1788. They acknowledged that initial results were discouraging if only measured by numerical outcomes: “From the year 1788, when brother Thomas began to converse with the natives in Bengalee, to the end of December, 1800, when Krishna was baptized, the work of God in Bengal made but little apparent progress. It is however true, that a great deal of rubbish was cleared away, and many materials were collected; and there can be no doubt but that a great deal of important preparatory work was performed.”<sup>78</sup> Such preparatory efforts led to joyous results: “From the whole of this review, dear Brethren, you will perceived the highest ground for thankfulness, for trust in Jehovah, and for the most ardent and persevering pursuit of the glorious object of our Missionary calling. Mountains of difficulty, common to first efforts, have been removed.”<sup>79</sup> After listing eight developments in their mission that occurred over the previous nine years, which they could only explain as acts of God, the report stated, “These circumstances, however, form matter of gratitude and encouragement principally from the aspect which they bear toward *future* blessings. *His* work is perfect; what his mercy begins, his power and wisdom carry forward to its full accomplishment . . . it may not be amiss for us to direct our attention to the signs of the times in which we live.”<sup>80</sup> According to the missionaries, such advances led to a particular evaluation—Christ’s kingdom was at hand. They pointed to three signs that led them to believe the advent of Christ’s earthly kingdom was eminent: (1) an increased unity among Christians of different denominations rather than “those many unhappy

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<sup>78</sup>“Review of the State of the Mission at the close of the year 1809,” *Circular Letters Relative to the Missions in India* 3 (January 1810): 3.

<sup>79</sup>“Review of the State of the Mission at the close of the year 1809,” *Circular Letters Relative to the Missions in India* 3 (January 1810): 8.

<sup>80</sup>“Review of the State of the Mission at the close of the year 1809,” *Circular Letters Relative to the Missions in India* 3 (January 1810): 8.

controversies which distracted the church” allowed Christians to turn their “attention to the great object of its [the church] existence in the world”; (2) the ecumenical effort to spread the knowledge of Jesus were then “greater perhaps than has ever been known since the days of the apostles”; and (3) “the destruction of the power of Antichrist” was evident in that the Pope no longer controlled nations and bound consciences, which was God’s gracious honored the prayers and longings of the missionaries’ Protestant forefathers.<sup>81</sup> These three signs were fulfillments of Scriptural millennial developments and gave the missionaries increased confidence that they were witnessing the advent of Christ’s earthly reign. As they established the gospel among Bengali Muslims and commissioned former Muslims for the gospel ministry, Carey and Ward viewed these developments as a “matter of encouragement” and “signs of the times.” Reflecting on such developments, they wrote,

Were Musulmans once deemed impenetrable to the gospel? Musulmans have not only received it, but preach a crucified Saviour to their former fellow-musulmans . . . let us expect from him this year and onwards a still more abundant blessing . . . . And when must all these things be accomplished, but in these ‘last days,’ of which however above seventeen hundred years are already gone. Let us not then measure what is to come by what has been already, but rather look forward to brighter things.<sup>82</sup>

Successfully evangelizing Muslims was not an impossible task for the missionaries. Although initial results took time to develop, the ultimate outcome of their efforts was inevitable—promised by Christ, carried out dutifully, and realized after many years of plodding.

### **A Close Communal Life**

Their assured hope would not, however, come about without meticulous

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<sup>81</sup>“Review of the State of the Mission at the close of the year 1809,” *Circular Letters Relative to the Missions in India* 3 (January 1810): 8–9.

<sup>82</sup>“Review of the Mission at the close of the year 1811,” *Circular Letters Relative to the Missions in India* 5 (January 1812): 8–9.

oversight of Christ's kingdom according to their perspective. According to their conviction, an assured hope was assured only to the degree that Christ's disciples were closely bound together. Hence, the Serampore brethren believed that they should use certain means in carrying out their responsibilities as Christ's under-shepherds, means that would cultivate lasting discipleship through life lived together in close community. Carey departed to India with a conviction regarding the necessity of close Christian community. He wrote to Fuller that he wanted to develop such a community, consisting of seven or eight families, in Bengal.<sup>83</sup> Although he held this conviction, he was unable to practice this theoretical notion before the arrival of Marshman and Ward. When the three men—and their families—united in Serampore, theory became a solidifying conviction that became a formalized practice eventually.

**A solidifying conviction.** From the earliest days of the Serampore Mission, the missionaries sought to live out a truly intimate relationship with one another by meeting each other's physical and spiritual needs while working together to accomplish their primary reason for being in Bengal—to spread Christ's glory.<sup>84</sup> Shortly after establishing their living arrangements in Serampore, they established rules that would guide their community of faith.<sup>85</sup> For example, Joshua Marshman wrote, "We live as one family, in one house, but we have all our separate apartments, one to each family, very many indeed. Now, Carey has a small house on one side of the yard and I on the other on acct.

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<sup>83</sup>William Carey to Andrew Fuller, Serampore, November 16, 1796, Carey to BMS MSS.

<sup>84</sup>For a helpful overview of the Moravian influence upon the Serampore missionaries, see George, *Faithful Witness*, 40–42, 122–24; and Oussoren, *William Carey, Especially His Missionary Principles*, 250–69. On p. 41, George identified five foundational principles that influenced Carey's thinking and that the Serampore brethren adopted into their *SFA*: first, missions and education go together; second, the Scriptures must be available in the indigenous language(s); third, a missionary must study and understand indigenous culture and customs; fourth, missionaries must preach Christ and pray for their conversion; and, fifth, indigenous Christians must lead the indigenous church as quickly as possible.

<sup>85</sup>For an overview of the Serampore communal life, see Stanley, *The History of the Baptist Missionary Society*, 39–43.



of our families. We rise about 6 . . . . Then we assemble in the hall for family worship, which each will lead, in his turn.—this consists of singing, reading the word in rotations and prayer.”<sup>86</sup> Marshman’s letter went on to describe the missionaries’ daily routine, which included schoolwork for the children, caring for their house, taking meals together, and evening prayer.

But, this approach to caring for one another did not apply to European brethren alone. Bengalis who embraced the missionaries’ message faced certain realities. For a Bengali to become a Christian in Bengal raised many questions in the minds of one’s neighbors. Had the Bengali forsaken his people in favor of the English? Was Christianity for Europeans only or could a Bengali follow this religion as well? Various responses to such questions engendered a few common experiences for Bengalis who believed the missionaries’ message and embraced Christianity openly. Therefore, the Serampore missionaries cultivated the faith of Bengali Christians with an equivalent approach to increasing their own piety. For example, Ward recorded, “This morning before breakfast we had a church-meeting, when we entered upon a solemn enquiry into the state of the souls of our native brethren and sisters, particularly Peroo, Bhyrub, Rasoo, Koomal, &c.”<sup>87</sup> This examination of one another’s piety rested upon their growing understanding of the Scriptures. Ward offered a picture of this process: “We have begun to go thro’ the Testament daily with our native brethren. Each one reads a verse & tries to give the meaning, & one of us helps them out.”<sup>88</sup>

In addition to spirituality, one of the expected implications of a Bengali professing Christianity was the loss of caste and, therefore, an individual’s ability to be

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<sup>86</sup>Joshua Marshman to His Parents, Serampore, August 17, 1800, Marshman MSS.

<sup>87</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, March 4, 1804. Although Ward spelled Peeroo’s name ‘Peroo’ in this journal entry, the missionaries, including Ward individually, spelled this convert’s name as Peeroo in the majority of cases.

<sup>88</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, April 15, 1804.

financially self-sustaining. Ward reflected upon this problem: “As begging is inconsistent with the gospel, if they become Xn. that means of subsistence is cut off; if it were not inconsistent, yet nobody would give them a cup of cold water for the sake of Jisu Khreest. If they would work, no heathens are willing to employ them. This is a great obstruction.”<sup>89</sup> What solution should the missionaries offer to converts without a means to feed themselves or their families? The Serampore brethren found this question to be difficult as they felt the weight of needing to help their new converts find physical provision. To ignore a convert’s need for financial provision was not an option for Carey and Ward. Ward wrote,

This evening we sat up till late to determine what we can do about providing support for our new brethren & sisters coming out. We resolved upon proposing to join Bro[ther]. Fernandez in business; to propose to him also the joint purchase of the Chintz Manufactory next door to us; & we talked of beginning at a future time the printing-business at Calcutta, thro’ Felix & one of our new brethren perhaps.<sup>90</sup>

They were willing to create financial opportunities for Bengali converts as part of a holistic discipleship process. Finding ways to create self-supported Bengali Christians, such as going into business with Fernandez, became a means to send out native missionaries without placing financial strain on the Mission.

Associated with losing caste was the realistic possibility to encounter persecution for a Bengali’s new beliefs.<sup>91</sup> Futick, a Bengali convert, found a less than positive reaction to news that he became a Christian:

This day Kawny & Ramkanta returned from their village. They relate that our Bro[ther]. Futick, who lives in the same village, was lately seized by the chief Bengalee man there and dragged from his home; his face, eyes & ears clodded up with cow-dung, his hands tied, & in this state confined several hours in this man’s house. They also tore to pieces all the papers & the copy of the Testament, that they

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<sup>89</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, June 30, 1803.

<sup>90</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, August 25, 1804.

<sup>91</sup>Eventually, the missionaries tried to found ‘Christian villages’ that would be a refuge for persecuted Bengali Christians; see Potts, *British Baptist Missionaries in India*, 226.

found in Futick's house.<sup>92</sup>

Futick and Kawny continued to face strong persecution over the coming years, including threats against their lives when Ward sought to preach the gospel in their village.<sup>93</sup> When Bengali converts sought to tell other natives about their newfound religion, they encountered verbal abuse on certain occasions. Ward wrote,

Mobs follow our brethren through the streets [of Calcutta] & give them every kind of abuse, clapping their hands, &c. Some abuse them as Feringees – others for losing cast, others for eating beef . . . . People come to their doors & point at them as they pass along . . . . One person said to one of the native brethren – ‘O salla! why did you not come a begging to my house; I would have given you a morsel to eat, rather than you should have become a Feringee.’<sup>94</sup>

By labeling their fellow Bengalis “Feringees,” these people recognized the converts as changed people; they were no longer Indians. Approximately two weeks later, Ward gave another account of persecution: “The idolators leave no species of malice unfinished. However, he [Krishnoo of Ram Krishnupore] did not cease to declare to the native men in power that he was a Xn. when they gnashed upon him with their teeth.”<sup>95</sup> Other accounts of converts enduring persecution continued to surface as the Christian faith took root among Bengali natives.<sup>96</sup> In such instances, Bengalis who embraced Christianity and tried to replicate the missionaries’ ministerial efforts often encountered an unfavorable

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<sup>92</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, November 24, 1804.

<sup>93</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, November 12, 1805. Also, see his entry for November 15, 1805, in which he discussed the persecution encountered by Bengali believers throughout the territory of Bengal close to Dhacca.

<sup>94</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, June 29, 1806. Readers should note the derogatory term ‘Feringee,’ which Bengalis used to describe Europeans as non-Indian. The term had a broad use to describe the ‘other’ in a racial and cultural sense. The missionaries were careful to emphasize that they did not want Bengalis to view native converts as ‘Feringees’ as this misunderstanding would give a false impression. They did not want to make Bengalis forsake their cultural heritage. See Potts, *British Baptist Missionaries in India*, 225. Although the topic is outside the parameters of this dissertation, one should be aware of missiological questions such as this one surfaced during the early 1820’s as the indigenous church throughout Bengal and its surrounding area took root. The *Friend of India* periodical is full of material related to issues that current missiologists discuss on a regular basis.

<sup>95</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, July 23, 1806.

<sup>96</sup>For example, see Ward, Journal MSS, December 23, 1806. This journal entry discussed a believer who endured various forms of religious oppression: extortion, physical beatings, and intimidation.

response among their former friends and neighbors.

In certain instances, these two realities came together in a Bengali's experience. Such was the case in late October 1805 for a man who read Ward's tracts and a testament. Ward recorded the difficulties encountered by this convert: "Since his open profession of Xnity the inhabitants of his village have ceased to give him any thing. He used to live upon what he begged or rather took from their houses & shops; for he used to put his hand among their rice, &c. & take what he liked. Now, however, they abuse him, & are ready to kill him."<sup>97</sup> Not only did this convert lose his means of living, but he also feared for his life. In a culture ruled cyclical determinism, Bengalis were not willing to allow him to beg for food any longer because he professed Christ and lost caste.

Including their indigenous brethren, therefore, the Serampore missionaries regularly examined the motives of each member, tested each other concerning their sincerity of faith, and sought to address physical realities in one another's life. This practice became the norm for discipling their converts as well caring for their own souls.

**A formalized conviction.** Discipling native converts meant a complete reorienting of native thought patterns and moral actions according to biblical teaching. Because caste was an all-pervasive element of Bengali existence, it was not a reality easily overcome. At the death of a native convert from Jessore, other Bengali Christians hesitated to bury him:

This morning Balukram was buried. We helped the native brethren to carry him. One of the native converts dug the grave. In the future we think of helping to dig the graves, in order to bring our native folks into the practice of self-denying duties; at present some of them object to dig a grave lest people should abuse them, or refuse to speak to them; something like losing cast. For my part, I am persuaded that it was Xt's intention to leave the example of washing his disciples' feet as a custom among believers, to try their mutual love to keep down pride, & to habituate Xns. to do the meanest offices for one another... In order to set the example, as Balukram's grave

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<sup>97</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, October 12, 1805.

was a little too short, I jumped into the grave before them all, & finished it.<sup>98</sup> The problem, according to Ward, was that the hint of former mental processes—concerning losing one’s caste standing—affected the relationship between this group of Bengali believers rather than them handling this issue according to the gospel. Ward refused to let the implications of a remnant system of caste distinctions blossom within their community of faith. The gospel applied to serving one another through demeaning acts of service such as digging graves. Such actions did not affect one’s standing in the Christian faith; all caste considerations were demolished by the gospel.

Another representative example of this reorientation stemmed from moral considerations and potential instances of licentiousness. Ward recorded a perplexing problem in late 1806, in which native converts were drinking too heavily and not exercising moderation. He wrote, “This is one of the bad effects of our drinking spirits, for we are hardly able to forbid them what we do ourselves; & they even quote scripture in favour of drinking; not being used to drink any thing except water they know not how to take little enough.”<sup>99</sup> Carey, Marshman, and Ward sought to guide their new brethren through this issue with biblically-informed discipleship: “We are now labouring to put an effectual check to this, before worse come on it.”<sup>100</sup> In addition to moral failings, the missionaries had to help their converts think through Bengali cultural norms that were not conducive to biblical teaching. For instance, Bengali converts were polygamists in certain situations.<sup>101</sup> Carey, Marshman, and Ward worked with these men without dismissing

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<sup>98</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, June 14, 1807.

<sup>99</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, December 1, 1806.

<sup>100</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, December 1, 1806.

<sup>101</sup>For example, see Ward, Journal MSS, December 24, 1806. In this journal entry, Ward reported dryly that one of their disciples had two wives, but he did not evaluate the situation. He did not indicate how the missionaries counseled such converts in polygamist marriages. It is unclear from this text whether the polygamist was Sheetaram or Bykuntu. Ward listed the two men in the journal entry, but his personal pronouns do not state clearly which one of the men had two wives. For another example of a Bengali convert who was a polygamist, see Ward, Journal MSS, February 22, 1807.

them because of cultural norms that misaligned with Scripture. The missionaries knew that setbacks in the lives of new believers would arise and they were willing to disciple them through such matters patiently.

This plan included the BMS women as well. An untapped force for disseminating the gospel throughout Bengal, according to Ward, was the ministry of women speaking the truths of Christ through formal meetings and informal conversations with other women. He pushed this vision forward, eventually seeing the response he wanted from other BMS missionaries: “Sister Marshman met our native sisters & held an experience meeting with them. This is what I have long urged & longed for. I cannot bear that our sisters should be mere house-wives.”<sup>102</sup> He believed the missionaries’ wives could serve a greater ministerial end as well as seeing Bengali female converts reach other women.

While their approach to this issue certainly applied to their own faith community, it also had implications for outsiders. Their reliance on Moravian thought concerning community also impacted the way they related to persons outside their immediate body of believers. Ward looked to his Moravian mentors for guidance when interacting with government officials. Trying to wade through the problematic circumstances created by Ward’s “Persian Pamphlet” illustrated this approach of relying on Moravian thought. Ward urged his fellow missionaries to follow the Moravian pattern and go to the Governor-General in person, which undermined prejudices and improved trust and relations.<sup>103</sup> As an overall approach, then, the Serampore missionaries sought to live a communal approach to discipleship. They intended this pattern of discipleship to be attractive to outsiders as they witnessed the deep care expressed toward one another, thus making their discipleship contribute to their evangelistic goals. Hence, their communal

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<sup>102</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, May 25, 1807.

<sup>103</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, September 21, 1807.

life was a culture of evangelistic discipleship, which contributed to their ultimate goal—as expressed in article one of the *SFA*—to further the glory of God by creating worshippers through evangelism and cultivating their worship through discipleship.

### **The Centrality of Indigenous Leadership**

As the missionaries utilized the means of establishing their culture of communal discipleship most effectively, they arrived at a particular belief regarding a sustainable model of leadership. To root the gospel in Bengal permanently, the indigenous population would lead the Bengali Christian cause—a principle that galvanized over time.

**A nascently-defined practice.** Long before the missionaries issued a formal statement stating their developed conviction, they developed a growing sense of value regarding leadership capabilities of their indigenous brethren. While on preaching tours in Bengal, the missionaries would often step aside and entrust the conversation to Petumber or Creeshnoo.<sup>104</sup> When inquirers would come to Serampore to hear about Christianity, Carey and Ward approached these opportunities in a similar fashion. For instance, two men from Serampore came to their house wanting to discuss the gospel on January 23, 1803. Ward talked with them for some time before turning them over to Creeshnoo, who hosted the inquirers, sharing his home and his faith. Their willingness to approach ministry in this way emerged as their confidence in the Bengali believers' abilities grew over the months of ministering together. Ward recorded one such instance in February 1802: "Yesterday Creeshnoo had some talk with two Mussulmans, who appeared pleased with his account of the way of salvation by Xt. I invited him to take his

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<sup>104</sup>For one of the numerous examples in the missionaries' journals, see Ward, Journal MSS, January 31, 1802.

testament, & go to see them.”<sup>105</sup> An informal approach to mentoring the indigenous believers in the Christian faith and practice of ministry occurred during such times as seen in this quote. One should note from this account that Ward did not perceive the need to respond to this opportunity personally, but rather he pushed this responsibility toward Creeshnoo. Ward observed Creeshnoo’s presentation of the gospel to these Muslims and advised him concerning next steps. Through such developments, the missionaries witnessed the growing ability of their indigenous counterparts to communicate the gospel effectively. As they observed their Bengali brothers’ evolving abilities, the missionaries’ initial considerations became clearer. Carey and Ward thus saw the way that the gospel would take root in Bengal to rest heavily on indigenous evangelists.

Eventually, this principle began solidifying as Ward came to value deeply the approach of utilizing the abilities of Petumber and Creeshnoo. His journal entry for November 15, 1802, captured this perspective:

We are about to adopt a plan from which I cannot help hoping much: Old Petumber has grown in knowledge & the Xn. temper very much since his residence amongst us. The testament is his companion night & day; & his conduct hitherto has been highly honourable. Indeed he meets with universal respect; & I hope he is baptized into the gospel; so that he mixes none of the superstitious ideas of the country with it... We are, therefore, after a good deal of weighing & consulting, sending him to a place at a little distance, where he will rent, for the sake of making a trial, a small hut. Here he will reside in his own hired house & receive all who come to him. He will also itinerate in the villages all round.<sup>106</sup>

This entry indicated the early stages of thought regarding the commissioning of indigenous evangelists and entrusting the work of ministry to them. The Bengali converts gave Carey and Ward much justification for this growing conviction through their efforts and ability to engage with other Bengalis. For instance, Ward recorded: “I was highly pleased while sitting on the boat to see Creeshnoo Presad sitting with one group & Ram

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<sup>105</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, February 26, 1802.

<sup>106</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, November, 15, 1802.



Rotten with another explaining the way of Xt. & avowing their own conversation.”<sup>107</sup> On the next day, Ward indicated that he “called a man to us & after him a number more came up to whom I spoke with freedom; & after I [was] done Creeshnoo Presad spoke very well indeed, declaring his own conversion, & pressing the value & necessity of Xt’s death as the only sacrifice for sin.”<sup>108</sup> Ward continued his entry by indicating how pleased he was by the abilities of his native co-laborers: “I am glad that our friends make no hesitation in declaring every where that they are become Xns. I retired & left Creeshnoo Presad & Rotten. They then all went down & heard more of this way from our Brethren who gave them papers & a testament.”<sup>109</sup>

**Patiently developing native Bengalis.** The process of releasing Bengalis for the work of ministry was not without uncertainty. Ward recorded his observances concerning a disagreement between their two most promising converts. He wrote, “This day two quarrels have taken place among our Bengalee friends. Creeshnoo & old Petumber before many of the heathen. Oh! how are our souls pained by these things. Heat & passion are here national sins.”<sup>110</sup> Ward seemed dismayed by this instance as it only confirmed his low view of Bengali character. This dispute produced a considerable amount of caution in Ward’s mind. He journaled two days later,

This evening we had a church-meeting, in which the dispute between Creeshnoo & Petumber was discussed, & the importance of brotherly love, with the heinousness of the contrary temper, were pointed out. Creeshnoo confesses his sin & deep sorrow for it. It is well if jealousy & many of the little passions are not at the bottom of these quarrels . . . . We have been very uneasy under these instances of the

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<sup>107</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, September 30, 1803. A few days earlier—on September 25, 1803—Ward indicated a similar sense of pleasure at the ability of these Bengali Christians to share the gospel and testify to their faith.

<sup>108</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, October 1, 1803.

<sup>109</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, October 1, 1803.

<sup>110</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, May 19, 1802.

depravity of our converts, ready to think that we had laboured altogether in vain.<sup>111</sup> Also, the missionaries encountered the constant reality that the Bengali Christians might abandon the Mission's cause at any moment. Petumber was prone to disappear at the first signs of persecution.<sup>112</sup> The missionaries restored Petumber to their fellowship following this momentary lapse and eventually sent him out as an itinerant as originally planned on December 5, 1802. He abandoned the missionaries a second time, however, on December 24, 1802, only to seek reconciliation again on January 5, 1803. Such was the unstable pattern of the younger Petumber. Also, Petumber exhibited a lack of gentleness in some of his sermons: "In the evening Old Petumber preached, & was very severe upon the Hindoo superstitions."<sup>113</sup> Ward was not exaggerating Petumber's harsh tone as the following day several of the missionaries' employees asked permission to forego worship. He recorded,

This morning a number of our head-servants presented a petition, desiring they might have some relief, as they were compelled in our Bengalee worship to hear so many blasphemies against their gods. Bro[ther] Carey & I had a strong contention with them in the printing-office, & Bro[ther] C[arey] invited them to argue the point with Old Petumber as his sermon had given them offence; but they declined it; though Bro[ther] C[arey] told them that they were ten & he only one; that they were Brahmans & he only a Sooder.<sup>114</sup>

It is no wonder Ward and Carey, at this point, were uncertain about the reality of this principle of entrusting ministerial responsibility to native Bengalis. Additionally, Creeshnoo proved to be unstable in many respects. For example, he became envious when the Serampore missionaries chose to send out the older Petumber as a preacher rather than giving that honor to him.<sup>115</sup> Therefore, he began conducting his own worship

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<sup>111</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, May 21, 1802.

<sup>112</sup>For example, see the following journal entries: Ward, Journal MSS, November 1, 9, and 12, 1802.

<sup>113</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, April 1, 1804.

<sup>114</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, April 2, 1804.

<sup>115</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, January 2, 1803. Creeshnoo's anger toward Petumber continued over the coming months and became so heightened that Ward considered him an unbeliever and refused to be in

services and administering the ordinances for a time without Carey and Ward's endorsement. A serious case emerged against him the following year when multiple Bengali converts from the Serampore congregation accused him of living with a local prostitute.<sup>116</sup> The missionaries found that a Bengali Christian would abandon them for so long that all hope was gone that he might return. After a prolonged period of abandonment, these wayward disciples returned, exhibiting a sincere desire to be restored: "This morning, to our great surprise, Taxoo returned. He has never been here since his baptism, & I fear has lived in all manner of sin."<sup>117</sup> Clearly, Creeshnoo, Petumber, and other native brethren needed to mature spiritually if the Trio were to entrust a large portion of their evangelistic efforts to them.

The missionaries did not discard these Bengali partners despite such indiscretions. Rather, they sought to be patient with these inconsistencies, ever seeking to help them express their new nature in Christ rather than the one inherited from their surrounding culture. Such was the case when they responded to a group of Muslims requesting a minister from Serampore to live among them and preach the gospel by

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his presence; see Marshman's description: Joshua Marshman, *Journal MSS*, Marshman MSS, May 19, 1803. One could highlight many other examples of Bengalis abandoning the missionaries. In some cases, the missionaries invested heavily in the person over the course of months, only to find that the Bengali left them for various reasons. For another example of abandonment by two men they believed were true converts, see Ward, *Journal MSS*, February 28, 1804. In this entry, Ward also included a list of disappointing decisions by several other Bengalis in their Serampore community. The two persons that Ward believed abandoned them—Rasoo and Koomal—returned on March 2, 1804. One can follow the missionaries' attempt to process this situation spiritually in subsequent journal entries. Ultimately, they found it difficult to determine if these men were true believers.

<sup>116</sup>Ward, *Journal MSS*, April 7, 1804. For another example, see Marshman, *Journal MSS*, Marshman MSS, November 23, 1804. Marshman's account regarded a Muslim convert, named Berksheew, who was charged with fornication, which "he does not deny. These are heart-rending things." Also, see Marshman, *Journal MSS*, Marshman MSS, January 6, 1805. In this journal entry, Marshman provided an account of Nasseer—a Muslim convert—who they suspected of having questionable motives for coming to them at times. According to the missionaries, he came seeking money rather than spiritual nourishment.

<sup>117</sup>Ward, *Journal MSS*, November 29, 1804. Although Ward misspelled the name as 'Taxoo,' it is clear that this individual was Boxoo. The next evening's journal entry from Ward recorded, "Last night Boxoo was found drunk in the street." This case was typical of many of the difficult experiences the missionaries encountered with Bengali Christians. Certain individuals appeared to be progressing in the faith, so the missionaries entrusted them with greater ministry responsibilities only to see them regress through situations like this one.

sending out a party of two consisting of Creeshnoo and Gokol.<sup>118</sup> The Trio sent out these two brethren with 1,000 pamphlets to reinforce their preaching efforts. Obviously, the missionaries were willing to equip and release their native brethren for ministry despite occasional uncertainties regarding their character or abilities. The three men returned a few weeks later with a report of preaching the gospel in several villages, two of which were ones comprised of Muslims predominately.<sup>119</sup> While the respect that Carey and Ward gave to their Bengali counterparts, the work of expanding their influence in Bengal through indigenous leadership was not more than a hopeful development at times because of such inconsistencies.

Other examples of indigenous Bengali ministers substituting for the missionaries became more frequent. Carey stepped aside and the missionaries asked old Petumber, for example, to preach to a crowd of Bengalis on one occasion.<sup>120</sup> Ward offered an account of this event as one overwhelmed with hope:

His text was a small pamphlet of his own writing, & our printing, of 8 pages. After praying for a short time with fervency & consistency, he sat down, & with his hands joined together & stretched out he craved their attention. He then spoke for an hour with faithfulness & much propriety. He closed the whole with prayer. We were much please with this first attempt. He is the first Hindoo who has become a preacher. This is another new era in the Mission, for which we have reason to bless God. May God increase the number of faithful native labourers. This is the grand desideratum that is to move the Hindoo nation.<sup>121</sup>

This instance thus marked a revealing moment in the Trio's philosophy of mission; one in

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<sup>118</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, January 28, 1803. Creeshnoo and Gokol accompanied Boodheesa to his village. Boodheesa came from his Muslim village carrying a letter from the villagers requesting a minister from Serampore to come and speak of the gospel among them. Inquirers continued to come from these Jessore villages; see Ward, Journal MSS, February 22, 1807 and March 7, 1807. Eventually, they tried to get the believers from Jessore to come to Serampore to form them into a church; see Ward, Journal MSS, April 4, 1807.

<sup>119</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, February 14, 1803. The two Muslim villages were Boodheesa's own village and Ponchittaluckfool's village, which became the first village in which Carey, Ward, and Marshman had strong hopes of placing an indigenous church.

<sup>120</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, March 6, 1803. This crowd included Muslims along with Hindus and some Europeans.

<sup>121</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, March 6, 1803.

which they witnessed a shift to include indigenous leadership without doubt. Ward saw Petumber's emergence as a minister as the advent of their ultimate hope: indigenous Bengalis effectively reaching other Bengalis in a way that British missionaries could only imagine.<sup>122</sup> Not only did he preach the gospel faithfully, but he was using a pamphlet that he wrote himself.

The first sign of the Serampore missionaries' firm conviction that a native brother could bear this load alone came shortly thereafter. Ward recorded, "This day Creeshnoo Presad went to Calcutta to talk to some of his friends there. Before he went, he told me he thought of going out on a Lord's-day to speak the word in the neighbouring villages. Blessed thought!"<sup>123</sup> Creeshnoo thus indicated his desire to preach without the safety of a British minister accompanying him. Within a few weeks, the missionaries blessed this desire with their affirmation:

This morning we had a long consultation about Creeshnoo & that part of the Mission connected with him. It is absolutely necessary to have a native family at Serampore to break the distance betwixt the natives & us; to entertain enquirers from a distance, & to afford a continual means of instruction to new comers. They do not understand our words so well; nor can they open their minds so freely to us, as to our native brethren.<sup>124</sup>

Ward restated the missionaries' conviction regarding the superior ability of indigenous Bengalis to communicate the message of Christianity in their native culture. At this point, however, the question that the missionaries had to address was whether their native counterparts had matured enough to exceed their doubts from the previous year or if they needed more time and development. Could the Serampore Mission's primary evangelism be entrusted to Bengali Christians? Ward continued,

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<sup>122</sup>Ward became critical of proselytization efforts that were not carried out in the native tongue. For example, he criticized Catholic missionaries—after Muslims murdered one of them—for their method of evangelism. According to Ward's perspective, they were not conversant in native Indian languages and considered a native to be converted if the Indian could mutter a few words in Latin. See Ward, Journal MSS, August 3, 1806.

<sup>123</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, April 18, 1803.

<sup>124</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, May 9, 1803.

In these respects Creeshnoo & his family greatly serve the Mission. We have not that leisure that is required for young enquirers, who are in a state of utter darkness respecting the different doctrines & precepts of the Scripture. Almost all our Members lately have been brought forward in their first impressions thro' Creeshnoo & his family; sometimes they sit up [the] great part of the night with a new comer.<sup>125</sup>

According to this text, Ward expressed their opinion that utilizing Creeshnoo in ministry was more than simple desire. It was time to act on their principle:

On these accounts we have taken Creeshnoo wholly from his worldly business; we allow him 12 rupees a month, & three rupees additional when he travels. We allow also so much a day for each stranger who eats at his house, if they are desirous of Xn. instruction, & appear to be really concerned to find the way of life. The cast prevents the abuses which this in other countries might be attended with.<sup>126</sup>

Spreading Christianity throughout the area would happen only if more preachers could be found—preferably indigenous evangelists—in addition to Ward’s “paper missionaries.”<sup>127</sup> Creeshnoo displayed enough ability and consistency to push the Serampore missionaries to the point of action. Bengali Christians began to be included in the Mission’s leadership structure officially.

The first instance of Bengali Christians taking initiative to conduct ministry on their own accord did not belong to Creeshnoo however. Four Bengali converts went to Buddabatty to preach the gospel two weeks before the missionaries set him apart as an evangelist.<sup>128</sup> A few weeks later, the young Petumber braved the Serampore bazar alone.<sup>129</sup> Ward recorded, “Yesterday evening young Petumber went out of his own [desire] into the Market Place to talk about the Gospel. This is the first instance of their

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<sup>125</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, May 9, 1803.

<sup>126</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, May 9, 1803.

<sup>127</sup>For a discussion on Ward’s “paper missionaries,” see chap. 6 below.

<sup>128</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, April 23, 1803.

<sup>129</sup>Readers should note that two men were in the Serampore fellowship at this point who had the name “Petumber.” Often, the missionaries distinguished between the two individuals in their correspondence with persons in England by designating them “old” and “young.” For the sake of clarity, “Petumber, jun.” was the younger of the two individuals.

going alone into the public streets. We hope this spirit will soon increase.”<sup>130</sup> Along with the missionaries’ desire to entrust more ministry responsibilities to their native brethren emerged the Bengali Christians’ longing to spread Christianity out of their own initiative. At this point, the contributions of the missionaries and Bengali converts began to shift as the community of faith matured to include indigenous evangelists.

**A solidifying conviction.** Their plan was not simply a matter of needing more preachers. Carey and Ward were convinced increasingly concerning the value of native preachers communicating the gospel to their own people as more effective than European attempts. In his journal, Ward stated,

We think of drawing Kreeshnoo from his worldly concerns, and of send[ing] him out itinerating, if possible. I am ready to doubt whether Europeans will ever be extensively useful in converting souls by preaching, in this country. God can do all things. Paul could become a Jew to win Jews, & as a Gentile to win Gentiles; but, however needful, we cannot become Hindoos to with them, nor Mussulmans to win Mussulmans.<sup>131</sup>

The missionaries sensed a need for ministers who could connect with Bengalis on a deeper level than they were capable personally. Elsewhere, the missionaries expressed this conviction openly in a letter to be published in the *Periodical Accounts*:

Hindoos or Mussulmans will as certainly fall under the doctrine of the Cross, as Greenlanders or Hottentots. The reason why this work has never been done yet, is, because hitherto the means have never been suited to the end. It will be in vain to expect that the gospel will every widely spread in this country, till God so blesses the means as that native men shall be raised up . . . and prove from the scriptures, that this is indeed the Christ that should come into the world.<sup>132</sup>

They needed a Bengali to reach Bengalis. Their indigenous ministers were more than willing to respond to this perceived need. Ward recorded,

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<sup>130</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, July 15, 1803.

<sup>131</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, November 15, 1802. Note the alternate spelling of Creeshnoo at this point. In writings by Carey and Ward, his name appeared consistently in several ways: Creeshnoo, Krishnu, and Kreeshnoo.

<sup>132</sup>William Ward to Dr. Ryland, Serampore, April, 11, 1803, in *Periodical Accounts*, 2:426.

This forenoon Creeshnoo brought a Byraggee named Boodheesa, who had come 8 days journey, having got a paper, & having for some time judged with his acquaintance about this news. He said he was much pleased with what was told him, & so were his friends with the paper they had seen, but they wanted somebody to go & live with them & instruct them in the ways of Xt. Creeshnoo wished to go.<sup>133</sup>

Bengali converts were beginning to respond to the spiritual needs of their own people. Additionally, the missionaries found that Bengalis were hesitant to explore their questions when they were present in some instances, thus offering greater impetus to emphasize native leadership. Ward and Carey believed that their lack of ministerial success was because they were not Bengali. Ward lamented, “At present, tho’ Bro[ther] C[arey] goes to the place of worship at Calcutta at a fixed time, yet scarcely any Bengalese attend; nor do I expect they will till a little more stir is raised, or a native brother goes to preach.”<sup>134</sup> Also, the missionaries were aware of their insufficiencies regarding public speaking. Ward observed Carey’s struggles on one occasion: “After the baptism we had preaching in Bengalee. Brother Carey was the preacher, & tried to mix some Hindostannee with his Bengalee, but he is a poor hand, like the rest of us, in Hindostannee, having never studied.”<sup>135</sup> Therefore, they would gather a crowd and begin the encounter for the purpose of withdrawing personally and allowing Bengali Christians to continue the conversation. For example, Ward recorded, “In the evening before dusk, we got to Ryo. I hastened out into the Bazar, & we soon go a large attentive congregation. I spoke till I was hoarse almost, & then left Presad & Rotten to give away

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<sup>133</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, January 10, 1803. Boodheesa sought baptism six days later and was received by the missionaries as a baptismal candidate on January 21, 1803. Eight days later, the missionaries listed him among the baptized member of the Serampore church: William Carey, Joshua Marshman, and William Ward to the Society, Serampore, January 29, 1803 in *Periodical Accounts*, 2:360. The missionaries’ principle of their larger theology of mission becomes clear in this instance nonetheless. Several months later, Boodheesa led his brother, Sadutsa, to convert and receive baptism. Sadutsa, therefore, became the second Bengali Muslim to convert under the missionaries’ ministry; see William Carey et al. to the Society, Serampore, April, 16, 1803, in *Periodical Accounts*, 2:428.

<sup>134</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, April 19, 1803. Marshman reiterated this view several years later; see Joshua Marshman to John Ryland, Serampore, February 10, 1807, Marshman MSS. Not only did this letter offer Marshman’s perspective, but it showed that the missionaries continued to hold to this principle.

<sup>135</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, July 3, 1803.



tracts, &c. I frequently leave these to finish, that the people without embarrassment may ask questions & take books.”<sup>136</sup> Their official statement in 1805 came about after a series of observations as exemplified in these texts. Not being an indigenous Bengali was something they could not change. The solution, therefore, was to send out native converts as evangelists.

Bengali Muslims themselves also provided confirmation of their thoughts concerning empowering Bengali believers to be the Mission’s primary evangelists. In fact, Muslims requested an indigenous evangelist to come and live among them occasionally. Ward recorded, “He [a Muslim inquirer] says it would be well for one of our Xn. brethren to go & live there.”<sup>137</sup> Muslims wanted to hear the gospel and understood Christianity much clearer when one of their fellow Bengalis explained it. To this end, Carey and Ward hoped greatly that Muslim converts would emerge as leaders of their Bengal ministry.<sup>138</sup> Thus, Carey and Ward’s principle concerning the superior evangelistic ability of indigenous Christians became more than mere theory; it was their established and preferred practice.

**A formalized conviction.** By the time the missionaries solidified their developed convictions through a formal statement in 1805, their position on indigenous leadership had become one of their core values. Based on observations made over approximately five and a half years of working together before penning this covenant, the Serampore missionaries were convinced of the concept’s accuracy. One should note that

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<sup>136</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, October 11, 1803.

<sup>137</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, July 26, 1802.

<sup>138</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, July 6, 1806. Readers will notice a shift in missionary reports to the BMS Committee as well as in published material from Serampore’s press as the missionaries entrusted more ministry opportunities to their native brethren. This shift is evident clearly in Serampore’s *Circular Letters*. Very few of these newsletters contain information concerning the ministry of Carey, Marshman, or Ward. The highlight of the *Circular Letters* concerned the efforts of their native brethren, particularly the evangelistic ministries of Carapeit and Aratoon in Jessore.

Ward gave more space to this principle in his *SFA* than any of the other nine principles.

Ward detailed the Serampore missionaries' evolved understanding of the superior ministerial abilities of Bengali Christians:

Another part of our work is the forming our native brethren to usefulness, fostering every kind of genius, and cherishing every gift and grace in them. In this respect we can scarcely be too lavish of our attention to their improvement. It is only by means of native preachers that we can hope for the universal spread of the gospel throughout this immense continent. Europeans are too few, and their subsistence costs too much, for us ever to hope that they can possibly be the instruments of the universal diffusion of the word amongst so many millions of souls, spread over such a large portion of the habitable globe. Their incapability of bearing the intense heat of the climate in perpetual itineracies, the heavy expences of their journies, not to say any thing of the prejudices of the natives against the very presence of Europeans, and the great difficulty of becoming fluent in their languages, render it absolute duty to cherish native gifts, and to send forth as many native preachers as possible.<sup>139</sup>

In Ward's mind, Bengali Christians offered a more realistic hope of spreading the gospel throughout India than European missionaries for several reasons: there were not enough of them willing to take on this task, native believers could live on much less financial sustenance than their Western counterparts, the climate made Europeans less effective than Bengalis, achieving fluency in Indian languages was a difficult task, and Bengali predispositions against Westerners made their message slow to take root. In his journal, Ward reflected further upon this principle:

I have suggested an idea to the brethren, which we seem all to think ought to be adopted, viz. that in planting separate churches native pastors shall be chosen, & native deacons, & that the missionaries shall preserve their original character, giving themselves up to the planting of new churches, & superintending those already planted. The benefits of this plan are detailed in the Form of Agreement which we are printing.<sup>140</sup>

Based on this principle, the missionaries worked together to establish an official plan to send out native evangelists: "Bro[ther] Marshman & Bro[ther] Carey were at home laying down to the native brethren a plan of universal itinerancy by which native brethren, two

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<sup>139</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 3:205–6.

<sup>140</sup>Ward, *Journal MSS*, October 19, 1805.

& two, should be daily employed in going thro' the country in every direction diffusing the gospel."<sup>141</sup> They deemed it a wise commitment to entrust greater ministry responsibilities to their native brethren to their own people.

Not only were Bengali Christians better at ministering to Bengalis, but the Serampore missionaries began to perceive that they should serve in a different capacity personally in order to establish permanently the church in Bengal. The *SFA* stated,

Still further to strengthen the cause of Christ in this country, and, as far as is in our power, to give it a permanent establishment, even when the efforts of Europeans may fail, we think it our duty as soon as possible, to advise the native brethren, who may be formed into separate churches, to choose their pastors and deacons from amongst their own countrymen . . . without the interference of the missionary of the district who will constantly superintend their affairs, give them advice in cases of order and discipline, and correct any errors into which they may fall; and who, joying and beholding their order, and the stedfastness of their faith in Christ, may direct his efforts continually to the planting of new churches in other places, and to the spread of the gospel in his district, to the utmost of his power. By this means the unity of the missionary character will be preserved, all the missionaries will still form one body, each one moveable as the good of the cause may require; the different native churches will also naturally learn to care and provide for their ministers, for their church expences, the raising places of worship, &c., and the whole administration will assume a native aspect; by which means the inhabitants will more readily identify the cause as belonging to their own nation, and their prejudices at falling into the hands of Europeans will entirely vanish.<sup>142</sup>

They envisioned their role as equippers of pastors who oversaw local churches rather than shepherding these congregations themselves. Establishing a permanent Christian presence in Bengal would occur through native believers according to the Serampore perspective.

Their first application of this formalized position came a few weeks later as they commissioned several of their Bengali converts to go to Dinagepore and establish a mission there. Ward wrote, "Futick & family, Kawny, & Kanta are going up to

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<sup>141</sup>Ward, *Journal MSS*, August 15, 1806. Also, one should consult Marshman's summary of this meeting: Joshua Marshman to John Ryland, Serampore, August 20 and 31, 1806, *Marshman MSS*. Marshman wrote this letter in two parts and sent the two parts to Ryland on separate dates, but he intended them to be merged together. In this letter, Marshman provided a summary of the meeting with these native preachers in which he and Carey proposed the missionaries' plan.

<sup>142</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 3:206–7.

Dinagapore with Bro[ther] Biss . . . a few native Brethren may do more in a short time than Europeans have been able to do in 7 years.”<sup>143</sup> The missionaries were convinced that they should continue to minister in the area, but their role should shift to invest in the native leaders and correct errors within these new churches rather than being intimately involved in leading the Christian populace.<sup>144</sup> Leading the pastors of native churches in this way would bring about a maturation of the Bengali church without unnecessary turmoil:

In other respects we think it our duty to lead our brethren by example, by mild persuasion, and by opening and illuminating their minds in a gradual way, rather than use authoritative means. By this they learn to see the evil of a custom, and then to despise and forsake it; whereas in cases wherein force is used, though they may leave off that which is wrong while in our presence, yet not having seen the evil of it, they are in danger of using hypocrisy, and of doing that out of our presence which they dare not do in it.<sup>145</sup>

Additionally, the Serampore brethren believed this commitment to native pastoral leadership would allow European missionaries to retain their original purpose: to spread the gospel in new territories.<sup>146</sup> Once a church was planted, they could move to a new field of service. These reasons, based on years of observation, led them to formalize this

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<sup>143</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, October 25, 1805. Futick was a Hindu from the writer caste, who converted and became a leading member of the budding church in Jessore. Futick was the victim of severe persecution by the head of his village. His faithfulness, despite this persecution, was a source of great encouragement for Christians in Bengal. Concerning the events surrounding his persecution, see Marshman, Journal MSS, Marshman MSS, December 1, 1804. For a detailed account of his conversion, see “Account of Bhanee, the sister of Futika, a Hindoo, and late a member of the Church at Serampore,” *Circular Letters Relative to the Missions in India* 1 (December 1807): 13–14. Also, see Joshua Marshman to John Daniell, September 14, 1804, *Periodical Accounts*, 3:65–66.

<sup>144</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 3:207.

<sup>145</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 3:208.

<sup>146</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 3:207. This evolving philosophy of ministry also enabled the missionaries to focus on other perceived responsibilities. For instance, William Carey following this formalized commitment to indigenous leadership. This observation is obvious when reading his letters to his father, brother, and sisters, in which he rarely reported of previously typical ministerial patterns when speaking of his own work in Bengal after 1806. In general, his primary subject matter addressed his translation work, his teaching at Fort William College, the contribution of their native brethren, the Mission’s expansion and work within other territories, and personal matters. These letters are available here: William Carey Collection MSS.

commitment in Ward's 1805 *SFA*. Fuller's approval of their plan was not far behind:

I like your plan of having native officers to the native churches, and of the missionaries retaining their missionary character, & so I think do all my brethren. The influence which a missionary in a district will have over the church or churches in that district will not be authoritative, but persuasive; not official but natural, that is the mere influence which arises from superior wisdom & experience. If it sh[oul]d so happen that a native pastor sh[oul]d have more wisdom and rectitude than the missionary of his district, he will have just as much right to advise and admonish him, as the missionary him.<sup>147</sup>

Fuller agreed that the missionaries' role should be that of advisor and advancing the gospel into new territory, but he admonished the Trio to avoid hints of the Established Church's authority structure.<sup>148</sup> Thus, the plan for moving the church forward in Bengal was established with native Bengalis as local pastors and BMS personnel pressing into new areas as well as overseeing their fellow Bengali ministers.

The missionaries began applying this principle by the end of 1805 with increasing consistency. A noticeable shift occurred by the end of the year. The result was that he and the other Serampore began transitioning personal pastoral ministry to the oversight of indigenous Bengali Christians. Whereas the majority of his time in the early years focused on personally printing evangelistic material and distributing this material while personally preaching, he entrusted those efforts to native brethren and focused on discipling native pastors as well as evaluating Indian culture more deeply. Rather than continuing to cultivate new work among Bengalis, Ward enhanced existing efforts and mentored indigenous ministers.<sup>149</sup> When given an opportunity to minister through

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<sup>147</sup>Andrew Fuller to William Ward, "The Letters of Andrew Fuller," December 2, 1806.

<sup>148</sup>Throughout his letters to the missionaries, Fuller sought to avoid the issues within Anglicanism that he believed to be unbiblical. Two topics that Fuller highlighted repeatedly were compulsory belief and the proper recipients of the ordinances. On these two topics, Fuller believed the Established Church perpetuated a religious system that violated personal faith and the autonomy of local churches, which led to innumerable abuses throughout society.

<sup>149</sup>Ward continued to preach during worship services in Calcutta and Serampore throughout the remainder of his ministry, but his itinerant preaching efforts became largely nonexistent by the end of 1805. Throughout the remainder of his missionary career, he continued to preach the gospel and proselytize individuals when opportunities arose. For example, see Ward, *Journal MSS*, January 4, 1808. In this entry, Ward recorded a lengthy entry concerning the dialogue he had with a British inquirer concerning the gospel

evangelism or preaching during a worship service, the Trio began to defer to their native brethren. For example, Ward recorded, “Bren. Mardon & Chater at home. Bro[ther] Des Granges at Calcutta. Krishnu in Bengalee at Serampore. Roop at Calcutta. Krishnu, jun. at Chandernagore, & Deep Chund at Chinsurah.”<sup>150</sup> Significantly, only one European preached on this Sunday according to Ward’s journal entry. Also, it is noteworthy that the missionaries did not believe that Bengali preachers should minister to other Bengalis only. The missionaries submitted themselves to the preaching and pastoral insights of their native brethren. On another occasion, the missionaries sent Krishnu to baptize two converts living away from Serampore rather than going themselves.<sup>151</sup>

In mid-1808, Ward sent Fuller a work that gave an account of his daily activities.<sup>152</sup> The entries revealed that Ward focused on three efforts: conducting the mission business, translation work, and proofing existing translations. Clearly, he perceived his primary focus to be translating and editing works that would establish the gospel in numerous cultures over the coming years. Hence, he spent himself in efforts that did not include as much preaching personally as in previous years.<sup>153</sup>

The result, however, was less than satisfactory, although strengthening the work long-term according to Ward. Expanding the faith “among the natives goes on very

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and eternal matters.

<sup>150</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, October 12, 1806.

<sup>151</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, December 29, 1806 and January 5, 1807.

<sup>152</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, June 13, 1808. Ward inserted the previous year’s recordings at this point of his journal. The examples he sent to Fuller were July 1, 1807 through August 10, 1807. Ward abandoned this effort because he found himself recording the same activity each day and felt that this effort was too redundant to justify the need to continue it.

<sup>153</sup>This statement does not mean that Ward stopped preaching. On the contrary, he preached approximately once per week, but his primary focus shifted to the other responsibilities discussed in this section. For an example of his personal preaching during this phase, see Ward, Journal MSS, March 18, 1810 and July 1, 1810. One should note that Ward’s personal preaching efforts increased again at the end of 1809, but the majority of his efforts were among Europeans while Krishnoo and other native Bengalis preached to their fellow Bengalis.

slowly, or rather not at all.”<sup>154</sup> Reflecting on an undesired implication of their philosophy of ministry, Ward wrote, “On Friday Bro[ther] Cornish & two native brethren went to two or three neighbouring villages & talked to the natives and gave away Scripture tracts. We have been uneasy for some time that we have been able to do no more in the itinerating line in this [Serampore] neighbourhood.”<sup>155</sup> Accompanying this shift in focus was a reduction in evangelistic results until the native brethren became more adept in ministry.<sup>156</sup> The Serampore Trio were committed to this philosophy of ministry nonetheless.

By applying this principle, the missionaries proclaimed, “The word has been widely diffused through the country, and we have reason to think that the disposition to hear the truth of the gospel has been gradually increasing for some time past.”<sup>157</sup> They were able to see the effects of native preachers. This conclusion was confirmed time and time again over the coming years. For instance, Carey rejoiced over the fact that “God has endorsed several of our Native Brethren with ministerial gifts, and they have been called to the Ministry.”<sup>158</sup>

As native brethren reported on their evangelistic efforts, it was clear that they followed the typical pattern established by Carey and Ward in previous years.<sup>159</sup> They

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<sup>154</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, August 9, 1808.

<sup>155</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, April 14, 1811.

<sup>156</sup>As discussed in the following material, Bengali Christians became the leaders of ministerial efforts in the Bengal Presidency based on the principles laid out in Ward’s *SFA*. Between late-1808 and mid-1811, Bengali ministers became highly successful in evangelism and caring for members of local churches in the area.

<sup>157</sup>William Carey, Joshua Marshman, and William Ward to the Society, Serampore, September 2, 1806, Carey, Marshman, and Ward MSS.

<sup>158</sup>William Carey to his Sisters, Calcutta, August 9, 1808, William Carey Collection MSS.

<sup>159</sup>For example, Carapeit’s method of evangelizing Muslims in Jessore followed Ward’s pattern. See “Jossore. (Jusohura). The Journal of Bro. Carapeit.,” *Circular Letters Relative to the Missions in India* 2 (May 1809): 21. Throughout the journal extracts included in this section of the Circular Letters, Carapeit offered several accounts of evangelizing Muslims and Hindus according to Ward’s pattern.

conducted tours of itinerant preaching and distributed Ward's printed material to reinforce their message.<sup>160</sup> According to Carey, they travelled great distances throughout Bengal and beyond.<sup>161</sup> The effect of these native itinerant efforts brought about a constant stream of Muslim inquirers who then journeyed to Serampore to learn more about their message.

As new converts in Bengal formed into churches, the missionaries believed it unwise to set a European over them as their pastor.<sup>162</sup> This developing philosophy of releasing their native brethren to independent ministry did not mean, however, that the Serampore missionaries withdrew completely. Ward, for example, continued to preach to Bengalis over his remaining ministry in the area.<sup>163</sup> Also, European missionaries continued to offer value when ministering alongside native believers according to Ward: "Presad & Rotton were out in the forenoon talking at Free Krishnanpore, Dabapore & Manpore; but the natives do not collect around a native, as they do about a Sahaib... In the evening we went into one of the bazars, and had a very large congregation. I talked till my voice began to be rough, & Kreeshnoo Presad added."<sup>164</sup> Ward knew that he could gather larger crowds than the native brethren. He also understood that the great value of communicating the gospel effectively resided with Bengali Christians. In Ward's mind, the best scenario during the first decade of his Bengali ministry included a combined European and Bengali Christian effort. Native brethren would lead local churches while

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<sup>160</sup>For example, see Ward, Journal MSS, January 7, 1810.

<sup>161</sup>William Carey to his Sisters, Calcutta, February 25, 1807, William Carey Collection MSS.

<sup>162</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, April 4, 1807. This entry discussed the church in Jessore that the missionaries formed from the converts there. Ward's reason was twofold: to uphold their position on native leadership as well as to ensure that BMS missionaries were focused on their current ministries.

<sup>163</sup>For a few examples, see Ward, Journal MSS, June 27, 1809; July 9, 1809; August 7, 1810; August 12, 1810; August 19, 1810; November 25, 1810; and June 23, 1811. In these instances, Ward preached sermons in the Bengali language to native listeners.

<sup>164</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, October 20, 1803.



European missionaries would serve as overseers and mentors.<sup>165</sup> The *SFA* defined the various ministerial roles going forward; roles that capitalized on strategic contributions by Europeans and Bengalis alike.

With such strategies defined, the missionaries and native Bengali believers pressed forward in spreading the Christian faith in the Presidency. Ward wrote, “I preached in Bengalee at Krishnu’s house at Calcutta at noon, & had a good deal of liberty, but whether it is advisable to preach in Bengalee in Calcutta or not I know not. It is a pity but it was.”<sup>166</sup> Ward contributed to Krishnoo’s ministry but doubted his own effectiveness, especially compared to the success of his native counterpart. Krishnoo offered weekly reports to Ward concerning his ministry throughout Bengal; reports that pleased Ward tremendously. Additionally, other native ministers journeyed consistently into Bengal, ministering to Hindus and Muslims alike and finding a highly favorable response from their countrymen.<sup>167</sup> Such reports of native preachers’ effectiveness confirmed the missionaries’ conviction regarding the primacy of native believers in reaching Bengalis.

These representative cases illustrated the fact that the missionaries truly believed their theory—Bengalis would reach Bengalis. The application of the *SFA* brought about a changing landscape for ministering in Bengal as is evident in the

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<sup>165</sup>An example of the missionaries serving as mentors to the native pastors came from the expanding church in Jessore. Ward recorded a situation in which the missionaries’ had counsel to Aratoon as he sought to address the decision of two of his thirty converts who acted like Hindus to have lodging and a meal one evening while travelling; see Ward, Journal MSS, November 25, 1810.

<sup>166</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, November 27, 1808. As mentioned above, the missionaries bought a house in Calcutta for Krishnoo, so that he could reside there permanently and preach the gospel full time.

<sup>167</sup>For example, see “Jossore. (Jusoru.),” *Circular Letters Relative to the Missions in India* 1 (March 1808): 34. Rama Mohuna and Manika reported to the Serampore missionaries concerning their eight day itinerant preaching tour in Jessore, which included several significant encounters with Muslims in the territory. Also, this article highlighted the ministry of Seetarama, who reported two ongoing ministry opportunities with Muslims in Jessore.

occurrences examined above.<sup>168</sup> In the midst of their developing ministerial philosophy, however, the missionaries remembered a key theological assumption: it would be the Spirit of God, not this principle, which would spread the Christian faith in Bengal. They believed that they needed “the influence of the Holy Spirit more than any thing else. Were these influences [of the Spirit] shed down abundantly, this wilderness would soon become a fruitful field. It is an easy thing with God to convert hundreds or thousands of Hindoos, and to give them the judgment of an Edwards, the zeal of a Whitfield, and such ministerial gifts as would be calculated to spread his truth in this country.”<sup>169</sup> Truly, native ministers reached Bengalis in a way that only Bengalis were able to do. Native Bengalis would do so if the Spirit moved among the Bengali people.

### **Conclusion**

As is evident in this chapter, the missionaries stood upon a doctrinally-based philosophy of missions. Their missionary efforts were undergirded by a rich set of doctrines. Derived from biblical teaching, these doctrines offered a sure hope that was not moved by circumstance or moments of great difficulty. Their belief in God’s sovereign ability to establish worshippers for himself in Bengal and his promise to do so in their epoch, which they believed to be the expected days of the Holy Spirit’s outpouring, offered the basis for this sure hope. Concerning their part in God bringing about this promised outpouring, the Serampore Trio sought to mentor their native brethren through close communal discipleship and release them to lead the indigenous Bengali church.

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<sup>168</sup>For additional evidence, one should read the journals of native preachers sent out by the missionaries. For example, William Carey, Jr., sent a batch of copied journal entries from native itinerants to his father. These journals ranged from 1812 to 1815. One example was a man named Kangalee. Following the missionaries’ established pattern, his journal indicated that he gathered a crowd of Bengalis, preached the gospel of Christ, and distributed tracts to his listeners. See “Kangalee’s Journal for May,” June, 1813, in William Carey, Jr. to his Father, 1812–1815 Manuscripts, IN/26, Angus Library Archives, Regent’s Park College, University of Oxford, Oxford.

<sup>169</sup>William Carey et al. to the Society, Serampore, March 25, 1808, Carey, Marshman, and Ward MSS.



## CHAPTER 3

### CAREY, WARD, AND ISLAM: AN ENCOUNTER IN BRITISH COLONIAL BENGAL

Numerous works have addressed the subject of Islam within India and a few authors have narrowed their focus to the era that is relevant to this dissertation.<sup>1</sup> Rather than restating these contributions, this chapter seeks to answer particular questions regarding how Carey and Ward perceived Bengali Muslims. Some authors claim that their evaluation of Indian religious practices was too narrow, relying on examples from Bengal alone.<sup>2</sup> But, this criticism is exactly the concern of this chapter: to arrive at an accurate understanding of Carey and Ward's perspective.<sup>3</sup> What type of beliefs did the

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<sup>1</sup>For two excellent introductions to Islam in India generally and Bengali Islam specifically, see Richard Eaton, *The Rise of Islam and the Bengal Frontier, 1204–1760*, Comparative Studies on Muslim Societies (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993); and Ja'far Sharif, *Islam in India, or The Qanun-i-Islam, the Customs of the Musalmans of India*, trans. G. A. Herklots (London: Oxford University Press, 1921), 1–7. For a helpful overview of Mughal decline, particularly in Bengal, see Lawrence James, *Raj: The Making and Unmaking of British India* ([London?]: The Softback Preview, 1998), 3–12, 30–44. By the time Carey arrived in Bengal, the majority of the territory was well established as Western ruled and became the epicenter for British expansion into other Indian territories.

<sup>2</sup>For instance, see Brian K. Pennington, *Was Hinduism Invented? Britons, Indians, and the Colonial Construction of Religion* (New York: Oxford Press, 2005), 79–85. On p. 79, Pennington argues that Ward's *View of the Hindoos* was guilty of “a selective highlighting of certain sensational events, his uncritical reliance on hearsay, and his generalizations about Hindu ritual on the basis of his observations of local Bengali practices.” Also, see Brian K. Pennington, “Reverend William Ward and His Legacy for Christian (Mis)perception of Hinduism,” *Hindu-Christian Studies Bulletin* 13 (2000): 5–11. Rightly, Pennington highlights an underlying problem behind Ward's evaluation: Bengalis agreed with Ward's descriptions of their practices. Although Pennington is correct in that the broader Indian people would have disagreed that Bengali practices necessarily represented all Hindus, the fact remained that Ward's work described religious beliefs and practices particular to the people he encountered on a daily basis—Bengalis.

<sup>3</sup>Accurately conducting historical and theological research regarding the Indian context is a difficult matter. As John Webster noted, Western and Indian authors carry out and present their research through two separate conversations. Rarely do the two academic communities intersect. Webster's book is an excellent contribution to bridging these two conversations within which numerous subdisciplines contribute various assessments, often without considering seriously the input of other disciplines. With such a broad field of study and published literature, he highlights the necessity of defining clearly one's intended outcomes, especially when writing about the history of Christianity within India from a Western point of view. See John C. B. Webster, *Historiography of Christianity in India* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 1–13, 64–81. Following Webster's reasoning and assumptions discussed in his

Bengali Muslims with whom they interacted exhibit according to these two men? How did the statements of their Bengali Muslim contemporaries shape the missionaries' evaluation of Islam? According to the missionaries' writings, they encountered a particular version of Islam, which led to a specific four-fold evaluation of Bengali Muslims.

### **Practical Category for Bengali Islam: Folk Islam**

Within Carey's correspondence, a particular form of Islam emerged that was held by his targeted people. The Bengali Muslims whom Carey encountered held a unique expression of folk Islam, which expressed Hindu beliefs through Islamic forms.<sup>4</sup> In fact, it was difficult to distinguish Muslims from Hindus in Bengal based on religious beliefs and practices alone.<sup>5</sup> This version of Islam was thus a mixture of Islam and

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text, this chapter offers an overview of Bengali Islam as encountered by Carey and Ward. Setting their perspective, within the larger context of Islam in India, is the goal of this chapter.

<sup>4</sup>Carey and Ward never used the term "folk Islam" to describe Muslims, but it represents faithfully their perspective. I chose to employ the term 'folk' rather than 'syncretistic' to describe the Islam confronted by Carey. While the differences between using these two terms are outside the scope of this paper, it is helpful to provide the reason for this choice at this point. According to Ireland, syncretism is the "phenomenon that occurs when diverse elements from religious traditions blend. Religions inevitably bump into each other, and when they do ideas, practices, and lore are exchanged . . . if the result is a fusion of thought in which conflicting elements are brought together and reinterpreted to form a new harmony, this is called syncretism." M. Steele Ireland, "Syncretism," in *Global Dictionary of Theology: A Resource for the Worldwide Church*, ed. William A. Dyrness, and Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 2008), 864. While Bengali Islam was undoubtedly syncretistic, this term is a bit imprecise. According to this definition, all religions are syncretistic and no religion could rightly be deemed a "pure" version of a particular faith. Folk Islam is a better description of late eighteenth century Bengali Islam. Concerning Folk Islam, Shaw writes, "Formal religions tend to be ontologically focused and highly institutionalized, have written texts, defined theologies, prescribed places of focused worship and corporate ceremonies often presided over by a structured clergy who constitute an intellectual and spiritual elite. In contrast, folk religions tend to be more existential and reflect on the religious beliefs and practices of the common people—the folk," R. D. Shaw, "Folk Religion," in *Global Dictionary of Theology*, 326. For a good summary on Bengali Islam as encountered by Carey, see George, *Faithful Witness*, 110–11.

<sup>5</sup>G. A. Herklots, "Preface of the Translator," in *Islam in India, or The Qanun-i-Islam, the customs of the Musalmans of India*, trans. G. A. Herklots (London: Oxford University Press, 1921), xiii. This work proves to be a unique text in that several books emerged during this time, including Ward's text, that described the beliefs and customs of Indians generally and persons holding to what would become the Hindu religion specifically, but it alone offered a view of Indian Muslims. Readers should be aware, however, of the author's prejudices as a Sunni Muslim against those of the Shia expression of Islam; see Herklots' remarks on p. xvii. For an example of his bias against certain Indian Muslims, whom he described as unorthodox and guilty of debauchery, see Sharif, *Islam in India*, 294. When reading Sharif's

Hinduism flowing from a textless set of beliefs that led to a nascent theological system.

### **Mixture of Hinduism and Islam**

Following the initial Mughal invasion of India, Muslims settled in various areas of the land.<sup>6</sup> Once in India, however, Islamic rulers had to adopt a policy of religious accommodation: “The policy of Akbar, known as the Great Mogul, was devoted to conquest, consolidation, fiscal and social reorganization. He practically discarded orthodox Islam, and aimed at establishing a new, eclectic religion, known as the Divine Faith, while his sympathies led him to conciliate his Hindu subjects and to repress Musalman bigotry.”<sup>7</sup> John Esposito wrote, “The Emperor Akbar (1565-1605) made the Mughal empire a reality . . . . The emperor initiated policies to foster greater political centralization and the social integration of his Muslim and Hindu subjects. Religious learning, tolerance, harmony, and syncretism were hallmarks of Akbar’s reign.”<sup>8</sup> After a few generations of Muslims living among the indigenous Indian people, the product was not a society transformed by Islam. It was, rather, the reverse influence: Indian Islam

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work, therefore, one must approach the text with this fact in mind, knowing that the author was not fair to the Shia people in his interpretations and remarks. Also, while this text is invaluable, readers should realize that Sharif was a resident of the Madras Presidency and his work highlighted the Muslims of that region. His perspective and evaluation, therefore, may not be completely accurate when considering Bengali Muslims of this time.

<sup>6</sup>For an overview of Islam coming into South Asia and becoming an ingrained part of culture in this area, see Bruce B. Lawrence, “The Eastward Journey of Muslim Kingship: Islam in South and Southeast Asia,” in *The Oxford History of Islam*, ed. John L. Esposito (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 395–404. Concerning Mughal invasion and settling in Bengal, see Eaton, *The Rise of Islam and the Bengal Frontier, 1204–1760*, 142–49. Along with the Ottoman Turkish empire, which centered in Istanbul, and the Persian Safavid empire, which centered in Isfahan, the Mughal empire—centered in Delhi—composed the peak of Muslim power to date; see John L. Esposito, *Islam: The Straight Path*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 66. Generally recognized as the most authoritative scholarly resource on the Mughal empire is Ira Lapidus, *Islamic Societies to the Nineteenth Century: A Global History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 507–37. For a helpful contrast between these three empires during the eighteenth century, see Marshall G. S. Hodgson, *The Gunpowder Empires and Modern Times*, vol. 3 of *The Venture of Islam: Conscience and History in a World Civilization* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1974), 134–61.

<sup>7</sup>Sharif, *Islam in India*, 6.

<sup>8</sup>Esposito, *Islam*, 69.

resembled indigenous “paganism.”<sup>9</sup> Sharif described the result:

In Bengal, before the recent crusade against idolatry, it was the practice of low-class Musalmans to join in the Durga Puja and other Hindu festivals. They are very careful about omens and auspicious days, and dates for weddings and other rites are fixed after consulting Hindu Pandits. Hindu deities, like Sitala who controls small-pox, and Rakshya Kali who protects her votaries from cholera, are worshipped during epidemics.<sup>10</sup>

Muslims intermixed their religious forms with the practices of their Bengali neighbors, which was the result of circumstances specific to India. Richard Eaton explained the situation particular to Islam in India:

Islam’s more significant expansion lay in the direction of India, where Muslims encountered civilizations far more alien than those they met with in the European or Judeo-Christian worlds. Their responses to that encounter, moreover, proved far more creative; and in Bengal, at least, the meeting of Islamic and indigenous cultures led to an exceptional demographic development.<sup>11</sup>

The encounter between Islam and the indigenous Indian population brought about a creative result indeed and eventually led to a heavy emphasis on reform movements such as Sufism.<sup>12</sup> This infusion of Islam into a culture not influenced by Judeo-Christian monotheism revealed a weakness in the Islamic faith, the Mughal Empire, which was completely different than the Ottoman context, faced a unique problem.<sup>13</sup> Muslims rulers had to balance the demands of Islamic beliefs with the practices and beliefs of a vast majority of subjects who were non-Muslim. Whereas Islamic expansion flourished in former Jewish and Christian lands, the result was an unexpected outcome in the Mughal

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<sup>9</sup>It is incorrect to describe the indigenous religion of India, at this point in history, as “Hinduism.” Ultimately, the Hinduism did not have a defined set of beliefs and was not considered a religion—on the same level as Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism—until the later nineteenth century. This matter is discussed later in this chapter. Various terms were used to describe Indian religion and religious practices, such as heathenism, idolatry, and paganism.

<sup>10</sup>Sharif, *Islam in India*, 8.

<sup>11</sup>Eaton, *The Rise of Islam and the Bengal Frontier, 1204–1760*, xxvi–xxvii.

<sup>12</sup>This issue is discussed later in this chapter.

<sup>13</sup>John Obert Voll, “Foundations for Renewal and Reform: Islamic Movements in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries” in *The Oxford History of Islam*, ed. John L. Esposito (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 513–14.

Empire: Islam buckled under the weight of a pagan culture. Following several centuries of this interaction between the descendants of Muslim invaders and Bengal's indigenous population, Bengali Muslims proved to be no different from Bengali Hindus in many ways. The practices and beliefs of Hindu neighbors, therefore, completely permeated the Islamic faith in Bengal. For example, Bengali Muslims did not believe in eternal punishment, but rather held to a cyclical view of reincarnation. Ward described this Bengali Muslim perspective on August 31, 1800:

At night Bro[ther] C[arey] & several of us went out as usual. He began by addressing an individual in the road, & others soon collected, to hear Sahib's talk. He told the young man that in a few more days he would die, & if certain things did not take place, he would fall into hell. The person very composedly said, if it were his fate he could not help it. All the Mussulmans are universal restitutionists. This new European error has long been taught by the devil in this country & its success completely answers his wishes. A Mussulman cares very little for hell. He will soon come out again.<sup>14</sup>

Bengali Muslims were not concerned with the Christian offer of salvation because they had no concern for eternal punishment. The effect of Hinduism on the form of Bengali Islam, encountered by the Serampore missionaries, was thus profound.

In other texts, Carey and Ward described Bengali Muslims as persons committed deeply to the idols of their culture. Carey offered such a description on January 11, 1796:

The Hindoos and Mussulmans are indeed in a very deplorable state with respect to eternal things. Though the land is full of idols, yet I do not know that the bulk of the people ever worship them with an expectation of obtaining any thing for the soul. They universally tell me that their debtas, whose images they worship, have a power to afflict their persons, to spoil their crops, and to kill their children, and will infallibly do this if they neglect to make offerings to them; so that, from what I can learn, bodily and carnal fear is the only spring of all their worship. The interests of the soul are much neglected by them...<sup>15</sup>

Elsewhere, Carey described Muslims as acknowledging one supreme God, but they “pay

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<sup>14</sup>William Ward, Journal MSS, IN/17A, Angus Library Archives, Regent's Park College, University of Oxford, Oxford (hereafter cited as Journal MSS), August 31, 1800.

<sup>15</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 1:227. Note: Carey alternated between the spellings “debta” and “devta.”



divine honours to departed saints, angels, or gods...we see the signs of a *peer*, or a *devta*...The saint of the Mahometans is called *peer*; of the Hindoos, *devta*.”<sup>16</sup> His description continued:

The [peer] is distinguished by a little pile of bricks and mortar two or three feet high, a lamp that is occasionally lighted, and little images of clay somewhat resembling horses or elephants, burnt red like our earthen-ware. These images are to give pleasure to the peer, who is the departed spirit of some devout person that has been buried near that spot, and where two roads cross each other. They bring offerings...to the peer; and having got some person to pronounce some words of the koran (who perhaps can neither read nor write) they then fall to, and eat them [the offerings] up.<sup>17</sup>

According to Carey’s evaluation, Bengali Muslims were obviously in dread of spiritual forces and particularly fearful of potential harm by spiritual beings. Sharif offered a helpful point concerning this practice: Indian Muslims “invested the Saints or Pirs with all the attributes of God. It is the Saint who can avert calamity, cure disease, procure children for the childless, bless the efforts of the hunter, or even improve the circumstances of the dead.”<sup>18</sup> Fear of spiritual forces or dreaded circumstances in life thus drove Bengali Muslims to seek the blessings and protection of their chosen Peres.

This fear led Bengali Muslims to carry out many rituals that were much like their Hindu neighbors. Honoring a request of Sutcliff to provide details of Indian mythology, Carey described the worship of the sun and noted that Muslims were not exempt from his description. He wrote, “Women appear to be the principal actors in the worship; though none are excluded, and even Mussulmans have so far Hindooized as to join in the idolatry.”<sup>19</sup> Following this letter, Carey had a similar experience later that

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<sup>16</sup>William Carey to Committee, Mudnabatty, January 6, 1795, Carey to BMS MSS; *Periodical Accounts*, 1:122, 209. Bengali Muslims offered sacrifices to canonized Muslim saints to receive blessings and protection from evil spirits. Fakiers, who were Muslim holymen, received these offerings typically and maintained the religious site. A common alternate spelling was “Pere.” As these elements were intertwined within Islamic Sufism, these issues are discussed in greater detail later in this chapter.

<sup>17</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 1:209

<sup>18</sup>Sharif, *Islam in India*, 7–8.

<sup>19</sup>William Carey to Committee, Mudnabatty, January 6, 1795, Carey to BMS MSS; *Periodical*

month: “In the afternoon Mr. Thomas preached with much Affection to a Company of Hindus, who were met to sacrifice to the Sun; this is a Species of Idolatry in which both Hindus and Mussulmen unite, and is peculiar to this part of the Country.”<sup>20</sup> His journal entry continued, in which he offered a description of the ceremony. He wrote, “Plaintains and Sweetmeats were brought by the Women; and exposed opposite to the Setting Sun; while Singing and Musick, were performed; Just before the Sun set the Women placed Pots of burning Coals on their Heads, (which were so made as not to burn them,) and walked around the offering several times which ended the Sacrifice.”<sup>21</sup> Muslims, much like their Hindu neighbors, worshipped the sun as part of their received mythology.

Other examples that offer further insight into the prevalent form of Islam within the first few years of nineteenth-century Bengal came from the perspective of Ward. Early in 1800, he accompanied Carey as he attended the unearthing of a man who was buried for one month in order to honor a canonized Muslim saint. Carey preached the gospel to the assembled crowd while Ward mentally consumed the scene. Ward’s description of the encounter is of one seething with Hindu-Muslim syncretism. He wrote, “This is a Musselman’s custom; and they say it has an allusion to the flight of their prophet. . . . Many persons in this country have built places like raised tombs, in a hole of the center of which a lamp is kept burning in the night; these are consecrated to some saint . . . . Passengers make their salem, and throw down a few cowries as they pass.”<sup>22</sup>

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*Accounts*, 1:122. For other examples, see William Carey to John Sutcliff, Mudnabatty, January 16, 1798; and *Periodical Accounts*, 1:404.

<sup>20</sup>William Carey, Journal MSS, January 18, 1795.

<sup>21</sup>William Carey, Journal MSS, January 18, 1795.

<sup>22</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 2:52; William Ward, Extracts from Ward’s Journals to Andrew Fuller MSS, IN/17, Angus Library, Regent’s Park College, University of Oxford, Oxford (hereafter cited as Extracts from Ward’s Journals MSS), February 25, 1800. Other than ancestor veneration and making peace with spirits through offerings, this account includes two other examples of folk Islamic practice. First, the Muslim crowd offered a goat sacrifice to the canonized of this location. Second, Ward comments that it “was necessary that he [the buried Muslim] should see the new moon immediately on coming forth from his confinement,” *Periodical Accounts*, 2:51–52. For the importance of the moon for Muslims during this time, see Azizur Rahman Mallick, *British Policy and the Muslims in Bengal, 1757–1856*, (Dacca: n.p.,

The worldview of Bengali Muslims was shaped more by pluralistic and superstitious society in which they lived than the Qur'an. Islamic superstition thrived in an environment of ignorance—both religious and intellectual. Two years later, Ward had the advantage of observing Bengali Muslims over a prolonged period and offered a succinct evaluation of Bengali Islam. He wrote:

This morning four more people came a journey of four days to enquire about the way of life. Three of them are Mussulmans; that is they were born amongst Mussulmans; but I believe they are to be classed among a pretty numerous body of people, Hindoos & Mussulmans, who neither worship the debtahs nor mind Mahomet. They are in a state of doubt, believing in one God, supposing it wrong to gratify the grosser vices; but mixing with all they believe many prejudices both of the Hindoos & Mussulmans. They seem also to be expecting that God will make a Revelation of his will by somebody.<sup>23</sup>

Several years later, Ward penned a memoir of Krishno Presaud, which Fuller included in the *Periodical Accounts*. In this memoir, Ward highlighted his native brother's journey out of idolatry and particularly addressed the Hindu, Muslim, and Catholic forms of idolatrous worship evident in Bengal. Ward noted that Muslims worship "their Peers," a description that Fuller included in the *Periodical Accounts*: "The Musselmans present offerings to their peers, or saints, and perform religious ceremonies to them; as the Hindoos do to their gods."<sup>24</sup> Elsewhere, the Serampore missionaries described a group of Muslims who were preparing for a Muslim feast. They wrote, "On their journey thither they met with a number of Musulmans who had been to purchase fruits, flowers and sweetmeats to offer to one of their peers, it being the Musulman muhurrum, or grand feast. With these they had much conversation on the unprofitableness and folly of their

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1961), 25.

<sup>23</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, May 27, 1802.

<sup>24</sup>William Ward, "Memoir of Krishno Presaud," in *Periodical Accounts*, 3:366. The BMS missionaries included this same letter in a later publication of their own within the Serampore *Circular Letters*; see *Circular Letters Relative to the Missions in India* 1 (July 1808): 76–80, in Serampore Circular Letters, 1807–1819, IN/26, Angus Library Archives, Regent's Park College, University of Oxford, Oxford (hereafter cited as *Circular Letters Relative to the Missions in India*). The missionaries did not give this memoir a title in the *Circular Letters*.

imagined worship, and exhorted them to look to a Saviour able to save.”<sup>25</sup>

As is evident in these texts, Bengali Muslims were not much different than the Hindus that Carey and Ward encountered. Their Muslim audience was identified with Islam by birth and caste but not by a distinct set of beliefs or practices. Community pressure and the fear of losing caste held them to the Muslim faith. Until they experienced a release from their superstitious ignorance and the fear of losing caste, the missionaries did not think that Muslims would consider seriously the religious claims put before them.

### **A Textless Religion**

This blending of Islam into the broader religion of Hinduism resulted from the fact that Bengali Islam was not a text-based religion. In many cases, Bengali Muslims of Carey and Ward’s time had not heard a verse of the Muslim holy book taught in their own language. Certain distinguished Bengalis could chant a few verses in Arabic. High esteem surrounded the rare Bengali who could read the Arabic text. Only on extremely rare occasions, however, would one encounter a Bengali Mohammedan who knew the teachings of the Qur’an or Hadiths. As a result, Bengali Muslims varied wildly on their specific beliefs as the determining standard of doctrine resided within the individual rather than an agreed-upon authority stated within a text. Ward gave further insight into these realities when he wrote,

This forenoon, after waiting the arrival of Bro[ther] Ca[rey] from Calcutta, the above people returned home. We have each of us separately & collectively talked much with them. About God, his nature; whether he was to be seen; whether he had a body; how three could be one & one three; &c. They made many inquiries. The pretty soon got an idea of the way of salvation by the righteousness & death of Xt. Their minds, however, seemed exceedingly purplexed with their preconceived

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<sup>25</sup>“Jossore. (Jusoru.)” *Circular Letters Relative to the Missions in India* 1 (March 1808): 34. This article described an encounter between two native ministers—Rama Mohuna and Manika—and Bengali Muslims in Jessore.

guessings of truth; & they could not divest themselves of many absurd notions.<sup>26</sup> According to his perspective, these Muslims—along with other Mohammedans he encountered—were espousing “their preconceived guessings of truth.” Whereas the Bible served as the center of Carey and Ward’s Particular Baptist doctrines, the Qur’an was an inaccessible yet authoritative object that Bengali Muslims used to give weight to one’s religious opinions.

Bengali Muslims who had access to the Qur’an were not much different. Although some Bengalis had a Qur’an, their inability to read the Arabic text made their Islamic beliefs and practices textless as much as one who did not have such access. Perhaps because of the uselessness of having a sacred text that one cannot read, some Muslims simply found no value in possessing a Qur’an. Therefore, they abandoned the sacred text of their Islamic faith. Ward recorded an instance in which a “Byraggee says that with him are thousands in his country who have renounced every thing to do with Hindoo & Musselman shasters.”<sup>27</sup> Although some Bengalis presumably had access to a Qur’an personally, they had not the capacity to read its language. The inability to read the Arabic Qur’an proved to be dissatisfying to Bengalis’ religious interests. This lack of interest created the great appeal for Ward’s printed material in the Bengali and

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<sup>26</sup> Ward, Journal MSS, May 29, 1802.

<sup>27</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, January 10, 1803. Concerning a description of a Byraggee, also see the missionaries’ description of Boodheesa, a Muslim Byraggee, who converted to Christianity after reading one of Ward’s printed tracts: William Carey, Joshua Marshman, and William Ward to the Society, Serampore, January 29, 1803, in *Periodical Accounts*, 2:362. Also, see William Carey et al. to the Society, Serampore, April, 16, 1803, in *Periodical Accounts*, 2:429. In this text, the missionaries described the response of Boodheesa’s family upon learning of his conversion to Christianity. They would not allow him to enter their house out of fear that his presence would ruin their caste standing. These Muslims, therefore, were tied to caste superstitions and standing in the same way as their non-Muslim neighbors. For other descriptions of Byraggees, see Ward, Journal MSS, January 6–8, 11, and 13, 1806. These five journal entries document Ward’s itinerant preaching efforts around Saugur Island and his encounters with Byraggee Muslims. Ward preached to large crowds of Byraggees and distributed “some thousands of pamphlets; almost all we had”; Ward, Journal MSS, January 11, 1806. For another summary of this preaching tour, see General Letter to the Society, Serampore, March 21, 1806, in *Periodical Accounts*, 3:225. Other Muslims came from Boodheesa’s village seeking to hear the gospel; see Joshua Marshman, Journal MSS, Bound Letters of Joshua Marshman MSS, IN/19A, Angus Library Archives, Regent’s Park College, University of Oxford, Oxford (hereafter cited as Marshman MSS), December 6, 1804.

Hindustani languages.<sup>28</sup>

### **Nascent Islamic Theology**

Without an accessible text to serve as the standard of Muslim beliefs, each individual was left to work out their Islamic beliefs within the larger Hindu culture; each individual's "preconceived guessing" was as good as another's. For the most part, the Muslims encountered by the Serampore missionaries had their own opinions. There was very little consistency from one individual to the next person. A few theological points surfaced, however, over the course of engaging in numerous conversations during the time-period examined by this dissertation.

Bengali Muslims, in general, believed in one God. Ward indicated as much in a few journal entries.<sup>29</sup> In this sense, Carey and Ward encountered a people with monotheistic beliefs as one would expect when evangelizing those of the Islamic faith. It seemed that Muslims held to one common position of monotheism. Any consistency in beliefs beyond this conviction was not evident.

Although very similar to the Hindu people, Muslims in the area did not follow their fellow Bengalis in structured religious beliefs and practices. Generally, Bengali Muslims did not exercise their faith according to expected Islamic theology or forms. Rather than finding the type of Muslims he anticipated, Ward found a group that had abandoned Islam altogether. In one journal entry, he offered a helpful summary of Bengali Islam that he and Carey encountered consistently: "Yesterday two men called upon us with whom I had a pretty long conversation.—They are from young Petumber's country. I find by them that there are in those parts, [there] is a very large body of people

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<sup>28</sup>See chap. 5 of this dissertation.

<sup>29</sup>For example, see Ward, Journal MSS, August 10, 1802.

who mind not the religion either of Hindoos or Mussulmans.”<sup>30</sup>

### **Bengali Muslim Leadership: Fakiers**

These expressions of Islam, evident throughout the Bengal Presidency, stemmed from a particular group of spiritual leaders: Fakiers.<sup>31</sup> Much like their non-Islamic counterparts, Bengali Muslims looked to these men as spiritual guides. Ward indicated as much in a journal entry in late 1803: “In the forenoon Presad & Rotton were out [preaching] at Mullickpore, & had a tolerable number of people. The only man who appeared to feel was their Musselman gooroo.”<sup>32</sup> Generally, these leaders lived in isolated dwellings in order to seek direct encounters with the one, true deity while holding a heavy sway over popular piety and thought.<sup>33</sup> Takle described Fakirism: “Fakir was that of a religious fanatic, who swallowed knives and practiced all manner of cunning begging tricks for a living . . . This form of belief is really Sufism adapted to the average illiterate Muhammadan villager, with certain accretions drawn from the teaching and practices of the Hindu yoga system.”<sup>34</sup> In one instance, a Muslim responded to Ward’s message positively and received one of his Testaments. The Muslim recipient’s choice did not win the favor of his spiritual leader however. Ward recorded, “I talked till it was dark; then gave away papers, & the application for papers & especially testaments became pretty earnest . . . we soon parted with 12 Testaments; one of which a musselman returned saying he had shewn it to his Gooroo who was angry with him for taking a

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<sup>30</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, July 14, 1802.

<sup>31</sup>Technically, the term Fakir—the missionaries consistently spelled this term “Fakier”—applied to all Muslim Sufis. The three terms Fakir, Darwish, and Sufi were used synonymously in Bengal. See J. Takle, “The Approach to Muslim Mysticism,” *Muslim World* 8 (1918): 251–52. Carey and Ward, however, used the term “Fakier” to describe Muslim leaders.

<sup>32</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, November 4, 1803.

<sup>33</sup>For a description of a Fakier’s dwelling and lifestyle, see Ward, Journal MSS, October 26, 1801.

<sup>34</sup>Takle, “The Approach to Muslim Mysticism,” 249.

Bengalee book.”<sup>35</sup> The Fakiers were Bengali Muslim teachers with a strong interest in protecting their people from the Christian religion.

Holding this level of religious prominence, Fakiers led their followers to abandon many aspects of Hindu and Islamic religious systems in Bengal and pursue political and social agendas in some cases.<sup>36</sup> Primarily, they identified themselves as Muslims within the established social construct of the caste system. From these leaders within the Muslim community ideas arose and permeated the broader Bengali culture that led Bengalis to abandon long-held customs in favor of their own social and religious constructs. Undermining both established Hindu and Islam practices, Fakiers were men with a “very great reputation, & who taught all who come to them not to mind the Bengalee debtahs or poojahs, but to worship in their minds one God, & to act with truth to all.”<sup>37</sup> Ward further described the general influence and teachings of Fakiers in his October 18, 1802, journal entry:

It seems that formerly some fakier or Fakiers wandered about, being esteemed very holy people, & declaimed against the systems of the Hindoos & Mussulmans, that there was but one God, the father of all, who alone was to be worshipped; sin was to be forsaken, & a further revelation expected. These sentiment many thousands seem to have embraced. One perhaps begins them in some part, & pretends to cure diseases, in some supernatural way.<sup>38</sup>

Fakiers were Muslim holy men, Muslim by caste, not by theology or expected practice. Although Fakiers appeared to be strongly monotheistic—as evidenced in these texts—these men were, in fact, highly superstitious in their practice. Becoming a Fakier was not determined by birth but rather a choice: “Tazoo says that Sadutsa is gone into the Sunderbunds as a Musselman Fakeer, or saint, where he will live till the tygers eat him.

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<sup>35</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, October 4, 1803.

<sup>36</sup>For instance, a group of a few thousand Fakiers led several uprisings against the EIC in northern Bengal in late 1794. See Carey, Journal MSS, October 28, 1794.

<sup>37</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, July 14, 1802.

<sup>38</sup> Ward, Journal MSS, October 18, 1802.



He repeats a charm called a munter which is supposed to have power to disarm tygers. Hence he is reputed a great saint; & people offer gifts to him; because he hath power to tame the beasts.”<sup>39</sup> Knowing the Bengali who committed himself to be a Fakier personally clothed this observation with an added sense of anguish over Fakier teaching and spiritual leadership within the Bengali Muslim community. Having forsaken an expected form of Islam, these Muslim holy men were those who created their own version of Islam and drew many Bengalis into their beliefs.

In some ways, the Fakiers’ deconstruction of Bengali religion made the missionaries’ content more viable. Carey and Ward had encounters with followers of the Fakiers that provided much hope concerning Bengalis’ openness to the gospel. Ward found that these people actually desired to know the gospel in light of their abandonment of Islam. For instance, he recorded,

This day 4 people came from Jaggerdumbatty, bringing a letter from the people of that place, enquiring why they have heard no more from us since Bro[ther] Marshman was there if we have brought the true way of life to this country . . . . We have these people now at our house, therefore, & Monoo, & Sheetaram, all from three sets of people who reject the systems of Brahmans & Mahomet; & Fool Mahomet from Ponchittaluchfool returns to-day with a letter to these people, in which we promise them assistance in erecting a house for worship & for a school. May God open their hearts to let in the Saviour & the Holy Spirit.<sup>40</sup>

Villages that followed the Fakiers’ teachings abandoned Islam and Hinduism but still considered themselves Muslims. The Fakiers’ spirituality, however, did not provide sustained satisfaction for their followers and, in some cases, for their own spiritual desires.<sup>41</sup> Bengali Muslims sought something more meaningful. Therefore, the Serampore message regarding Christ was well-received and the missionaries were requested to

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<sup>39</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, December 3, 1804.

<sup>40</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, October 25, 1802.

<sup>41</sup>For example, see “Jossore. (Jusoru.)” *Circular Letters Relative to the Missions in India* 1 (February 1808): 2. In this report, two native ministers—Krishna and Manika—went to Jessore on an itinerant preaching tour and encountered a Fakier. He “expressed much pleasure in hearing the gospel. He treated our brethren with great kindness.” In this case, as well as in other encounters, Fakiers exhibited dissatisfaction with their Islamic faith and showed interest in the Christian message.

deliver this message more fully.

During these encouraging developments, the missionaries also encountered points of Bengali Islamic theology that made their task difficult. Because of the Fakiers' teaching, Bengali Muslims did not see a need for atonement or sacrifice for sins. For example, Ward recorded, "A young Musselman is now at my elbow, learning to read. I cannot persuade him, however, that hell punishment will be eternal... Their [Universalists] principles everywhere prevail in Bengal! No one, either Musselman or Hindoo, feels his obligation, takes the blame of sin to himself, or fears being cast into hell."<sup>42</sup> The following year, he recorded a similar evaluation:

In the afternoon Creeshnoo & I went to a village of Mussulmans called Milky. After I had been talking some time a great man named Cajee Basset Mahomet, attempted to shew me why God could pardon sin without a sacrifice. I had tried to shew them that without God shewed his anger against sin either upon sinners or their substitute his holiness would be destroyed. So far as I understood, he quoted something from the Koran, in which God promised Mahomet to pardon sin for his daughter's sake.<sup>43</sup>

This individual's understanding of the pardon of sin without atonement contrasted clearly with Ward's theology. Ward tried to press upon him and the other listeners the necessity of atonement in order to uphold God's holiness in light of moral imperfection. Any type of an attempt to seek salvation from possible eternal punishment for sin was channeled through the Fakiers themselves. Ward stated, "The people from Jaggerdundakatty . . . . We have talked much with them, but they demand to see Xt. or some present Saviour . . . . Their head, a man named Seebaramdas, they call a kind of Saviour, & that [by] minding his word, or repeating his name, they shall be saved. They are very ignorant, very proud, & very obstinate, as yet."<sup>44</sup> Several days later, Ward illustrated further the unfavorable circumstances experienced by Muslims in this village who forsook the Fakier's teaching

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<sup>42</sup>William Ward to a Friend at Hull, Serampore, September 15, 1800, in *Periodical Accounts*, 2:71.

<sup>43</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, October 21, 1801.

<sup>44</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, October 31, 1802.

for the gospel. According to the villagers, the Fakier was possessed by a spirit that enabled him to cure diseases, was perceived as the village's savior, and was the source of all truth rather than any written text.<sup>45</sup> As these inquirers were returning to Jaggerdunkatty, they requested the missionaries to "write a letter to the Judge of their district about a man who they said had been beaten by a Mussulman, who was the head of the village, for distributing Mussulman papers or tracts (viz. Pearce's address to the Lascars). This man had also forbid the village barber to shave him, with an intention to destroy his cast."<sup>46</sup> When Ward and Carey found receptivity among this Muslim's followers, he was unwilling to surrender his people so easily. Ward wrote, "Buddesa...found many inclined to hear. He found that Leekmandas of Jaggadundakatttee had written to his disciples in other places warning them against the gospel, & telling them that if they minded the gospel they would have pigs faces (this is addressed to Mussulmans) & go to hell for a long while after death."<sup>47</sup> For these Bengali Muslims, their Fakier provided spiritual guidance as well as eternal security, a position of influence that the Fakier guarded vehemently. Such beliefs only confirmed the views of William Carey that Ward received upon his arrival in India.<sup>48</sup>

Bengali Muslims sought no substitutionary atonement for sins because of their firm convictions regarding fate. The caste system anchored the Bengali view of fate in a social construct that permeated all of society. Even if an individual did not hold firmly to Hinduism or Islam, he could not escape a caste system that permeated all of society. To live as a Bengali, one must operate within the expected roles of the Indian caste system. For a Bengali, life was determined and completely outside of one's ability to improve his

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<sup>45</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, November 12, 1802.

<sup>46</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, November 12, 1802. Pearce's tract is discussed in chap. 6 concerning the "Persian Pamphlet".

<sup>47</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, March 28, 1803.

<sup>48</sup>Carey viewed them as superstitious and ignorant.

lot. In most cases, an individual could not improve his station in life regardless of hard work or ability. A situation that was less than desirable came about from one's unethical decisions in a previous life anyway, so Bengalis felt little justification for seeking to change anything. Fate, anchored within the Indian caste system, was an ideology that perpetuated an assumed understanding of predetermined status and morality. Most Muslims that Carey and Ward encountered were thus unwilling to consider the option of moral and character change. Becoming a new person was outside the realm of possibility for Bengali Muslims. The Bengali caste system put forth the ideology that a person had no ability for ethical progression. Speaking of the Fakiers' followers, Ward wrote,

Many people indeed in these parts renounce all respect for the Hindoo or Mussulman systems, but they say, Who can forsake sin? Sometimes they say sin is a thing which God has created—& all is fate;—sometimes they say that sin is necessary, for that the whole scene of things is fate & illusive—& they seem to give no credit to the assertion that belief in Xt. enables a man to overcome the world.<sup>49</sup>

Bengali Muslims had no thought of changing their morals because immorality was determined, even created by the Creator. Fakiers upheld the conviction that sinning was inevitable as determined by one's fate, so there was no need for an atonement or to be concerned with changing one's moral patterns. Carey and Ward would continue to hold out the belief that men and women could experience freedom from bondage to sin and the inevitability of unredeemed ethical choices.

According to the Serampore missionaries, Bengali Muslims were monotheistic with little to offer concerning a systematic theology. Carey and Ward encountered a people that felt trapped in their choices, having a strong sense of fate. This view of fate, being anchored by the ideology of the caste system, made them largely unconcerned about sin. The examples in the above paragraphs are the results of Islamic practice being divorced from an available religious text. Ultimately, Bengali Muslims were theologically distinct from their Hindu neighbors only in minor ways.

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<sup>49</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, October 19, 1802.

## Bengali Sufism

The most consistent expression of Islam as practiced by Bengalis during Carey's and Ward's ministry in India was Sufism.<sup>50</sup> Sufism was so prevalent in Bengal that an estimated two-thirds of Muslims belonged to this movement.<sup>51</sup> Sharif offered a descriptive explanation of Bengali Sufism, "Generally speaking, the Sufis are men and women who adopt the ascetic or quietistic mode of life. The system is believed to have arisen among the Persian Musalmans in the ninth century as a reaction against the rigid monotheism and formalism of Islam."<sup>52</sup> The culmination of living within the social construct of India's caste system, superstitious beliefs, religious ignorance, and broad folk religion brought about a peculiar form of Islamic Sufism. Although not a realistic option—to live an "ascetic or quietistic" life—for the Bengali populace, Muslims in this

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<sup>50</sup>A. J. Arberry, *Sufism: An Account of the Mystics of Islam* (New York: Harper and Row, 1970); Julien Baldick, *Mystical Islam: An Introduction to Sufism* (London: I. B. Tauris, 1989); Ishwar Chandra Bhatnagar, "Mystic monasticism during the Mughal period," *Islamic Culture* 15 (1941), 79–90; Esposito, *Islam*, 124–34; F. E. Peters, *A Reader on Classical Islam* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994); Annemarie Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1975); Frithjof Schuon, *Understanding Islam*, trans. D. M. Matheson, English ed. (London: Allen & Unwin, 1963), 127–33, 167–69; and J. Spencer Trimingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998). Perhaps, the two best introductions to Islamic Sufism—particularly Bengali Sufism that existed during the days of Carey and Ward—are Eaton, *The Rise of Islam and the Bengal Frontier, 1204–1760*, 71–94; and J. Takle, "The Approach to Muslim Mysticism," *Muslim World* 8 (1918): 249–58. Takle's article offers many insightful connections between Islamic and Christian mysticism, observing important similarities and distinctions between the closely related movements.

<sup>51</sup>Takle, "The Approach to Muslim Mysticism," 251–52. According to this estimate, it is easy to see why Carey and Ward viewed Bengali Muslims as unorthodox and completely different from the British image of Islam that they held prior to coming to Bengal. Concerning Sufism within the Mughal empire, see Lawrence, "The Eastward Journey of Muslim Kingship: Islam in South and Southeast Asia," 407–18. Most Bengali Muslims began to identify with Sufism because of the mixture of Hinduism and Islam discussed earlier in this chapter. Much like Christians of the early monastic movement, Bengali Muslims sought renewal and reform of Islam that they believed had succumbed to cultural pressures of their particular context; see Voll, "Foundations for Renewal and Reform: Islamic Movements in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," 513–14, 516, 538. The Bengali Sufi movement was part of the larger Sufi community, which began and flourished within the Persian Islamic community; see Esposito, *Islam*, 68.

<sup>52</sup>Sharif, *Islam in India*, 283. Some scholars estimate that there are more than 2,000 definitions of 'Sufism;' see Küçük Hülya, "Sufism: The Mysticism Developed by Muslims," *Understanding Sikhism, The Research Journal* 9, no. 2 (2007): 31. Takle described Sufi leaders as having "entered into the experience of pure contemplative quietude"; see Takle, "The Approach to Muslim Mysticism," 249. Sharif's definition, however, proved to contain the key elements that are common in many definitions: ascetic, mystical encounter with Allah, and rejection of rigid doctrine or orthodoxy.

Presidency followed the leadership of Fakiers and sought their blessings as the ones who had such a privilege. Although remaining within the social construct of the caste system, Fakiers forsook traditional Hindu and Islamic religious systems and created their own religious expressions. They became the religious authority for their followers, claiming to have power to heal illnesses and direct revelations from God.<sup>53</sup> Ultimately, Fakiers led the Bengali people to honor—and sometimes actually worship—revered Bengali Muslims, known as Peers, at the site of their burial or at another designated location. Trimingham gave a definition of the word Peer: “Elder, used for the Sufi director in Iranian and Indian spheres.”<sup>54</sup> At these sites, Muslims brought offerings so that the Peer would hear their prayers, hoping to receive a blessing, protection from evil spirits, or other such requests.<sup>55</sup> Rather than honoring deceased Muslim leaders, however, Bengali Muslims exalted these men to a place of worship and intercessory prayer on their behalf before Allah. In some cases, the Peer could embody Allah and become the human form of the Divine Image.<sup>56</sup> Hence, when meditating, Fakiers taught their pupils to direct their thoughts to the Peer’s shape in order to form a mental image of the person.<sup>57</sup> Doing so secured interaction with the Muslim saint and directly connected them to Allah according to Fakier teaching. Such was Bengali Sufism encountered by Carey and Ward, but one

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<sup>53</sup>Ward, *Journal MSS*, October 18, 1802.

<sup>54</sup>Trimingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam*, 309.

<sup>55</sup>Sharif, *Islam in India*, 283–87. For descriptions of Peer worship, see “Jossore. (Jusoru.)” *Circular Letters Relative to the Missions in India* 1 (March 1808): 34; and “Bengal Mission: Serampore and Calcutta.” *Circular Letters Relative to the Missions in India* 5 (February 1812): 22. In this second reference, Jonathan Carey and several native brethren went to a house consecrated to a Muslim saint and had a favorable hearing among their native audience until three Brahmins stirred up the crowd. The Brahmins, worshipping along with the Bengali Muslims, warned the people that Christian ministers had lost caste and were trying to take away their caste standing as well. Generally, Bengalis viewed foreigners as “equivalent to pariahs, the lowest of the low”; see Duncan B. Forrester, *Caste and Christianity: Attitudes and Policy on Caste of Anglo-Saxon Protestant Missions in India*, London Studies on South Asia (London: Curzon Press Humanities Press, 1980), 23.

<sup>56</sup>Take, “The Approach to Muslim Mysticism,” 253.

<sup>57</sup>Sharif, *Islam in India*, 293.

must ask how they described their Bengali Muslim contemporaries.

### Carey and Ward's Evaluation of Bengali Islam

The journals and letters of early BMS missionaries provide an invaluable perspective concerning Muslims in Bengal. In what shape did late eighteenth century Islam emerge after hardening in the mold of East Indian culture? How did Carey and Ward characterize the followers of Muhammad? How faithful were these people to the tenets of their faith? Ultimately, readers will note, according to Carey's letters and journal, that he appeared to have been shocked by the folk elements of Sufi Islam that were so prevalent in Bengal. Bengali Islam was much different than the notions Carey had gained from writings available in England. He, along with his BMS contemporaries, came to an evolved understanding of "Mussulmans" compared to that of the established British view of Muslims.<sup>58</sup> As his perspective developed, Carey established a four-fold

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<sup>58</sup>Concerning the British view of Islam, two works are particularly helpful for this topic: Linda Colley, *Captives: Britain, Empire and the World, 1600–1850* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2002), 99–134; and Norman Daniel, *Islam and the West: The Making of an Image* (Edinburgh: The University Press, 1958). Although not quite as accurate as Colley and Daniel, James Addison also produced a helpful section concerning the history of Western interaction with Islam: James Thayer Addison, *The Christian Approach to the Moslem: A Historical Study* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1942), 11–78. Daniel's work offers a vastly comprehensive view of Islam and the West. According to Colley, the popular British understanding of Islam was shaped by centuries of conflict with Muslims from North Africa and by several key slave narratives. By the late nineteenth century, the British believed Islam to stand for "tyranny, brutality, poverty and loss of freedom, the reverse and minatory image of Britain's own balanced constitution, commercial prosperity, and individual liberty"; Colley, *Captives*, 101. Convincingly, Colley argues that a typical British understanding of Islam in Mughal India would have been completely inaccurate; see Colley, *Captives*, 103. There is evidence that Carey had a limited understanding of Islam. Certainly, he understood the difference between the two main branches of Islam—Sunni and Shia—as indicated in his *Enquiry*; see William Carey, *An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians, to use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens* (Leicester: Ann Ireland, 1792), 64–65. On these two pages, readers will note that Carey's understanding of specific divisions within Islam were uninformed generalizations. For example, he referred to Persian Muslims as those "who are of the sect of Hali, the most inveterate enemies to the Turks." Clearly, he knew generally that Persian Muslims were different from Ottoman Muslims. This misspelling appears to have been a mistake as he spelled the name correctly on page 46 when listing the number of Muslims in Persia. Ultimately, he differentiated simply between Turkish and Persian Muslims as the two main sects. These observations show that he had a somewhat informed understanding of Islam before leaving England through his readings of various sources. Concerning Carey's research that led up to such observations in the *Enquiry*, see Timothy George, "William Carey (1761–1834)," in *The British Particular Baptists, 1638–1910*, ed. Michael A. G. Haykin (Springfield, MO: Particular Baptist Press, 2000), 2:153.

evaluation of Bengali Muslims, which became a set of descriptors that Ward would also adopt: Bengali Muslims lived life within the broader social structure of India's caste system, displayed deep superstitions, were woefully ignorant generally and specifically concerning religion, and held to a text-less mixture of Hinduism and Islam that led to a nascent theology expressed by all "Hindoos."<sup>59</sup>

### **Bengali Islam within the Indian Caste System**

The initial factor one must note concerning Carey's evaluation of Bengali Islam is how he viewed Bengali Muslims in relation to the Indian caste system.<sup>60</sup> A common misconception is to exclusively associate the Indian caste system with the Hindu religion. This understanding of caste in late eighteenth-century India, however, limits a complex integration of social, religious, and political hierarchy to an overly-simplified

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<sup>59</sup>Before leaving England, Ward had the benefit of two available resources that enabled him to have a more developed understanding of Islam as compared to Carey. First, Ward had access to approximately six years of Carey's writings that contained a large amount of material related to Bengali Muslims. Second, Ward had access to George Sale's (1697–1736) essay concerning Islam and his translation of the Quran and brought a copy of this work with him to India: George Sale, *The Koran, Commonly called The Alcoran of Mohammed* (London: C. Ackers for J. Wilcox, 1734). Sale provided a work that is considered the first attempt to understand Islam without a polemical slant to his writing. His text proved to avoid the dismissive tone that came to be typical of his contemporaries' works on the Muslim faith. As a member of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK), he sought to produce this work to provide an accurate understanding of Islam for persons interested in ministering to Muslims, so that such persons could have an accurate and informed perspective of Islam. Because he avoided the polemical tone typical of his day, some of his contemporaries questioned his purposes in producing these volumes although they deeply respected his contribution to the British understanding of Islam. His other works—such as his Arabic New Testament, which was printed by the SPCK in 1726—received equally high accolades. His work's significance was that he corrected several Western misconceptions of Muhammad and Islam that had built up through poor translations of the Arabic and a generally antagonistic approach to Islam. The value of Sale's text becomes especially clear when reading Daniel, *Islam and the West*, as he showed Sale's corrective contribution in numerous passages. There is no indication that Carey read Sale's work before leaving for India. If he had done so, he would have had a much different understanding of Islam. Concerning the value of Sale's text and its reception historically, see Daniel, *Islam and the West*, 299–300.

<sup>60</sup>Some scholars incorrectly take the BMS missionaries' perspective concerning Indian caste constructs to be imperialism. Forrester, however, corrects this misperception; see Forrester, *Caste and Christianity*, 27–28. Their attitude toward caste was an ethical issue rather than an expression of cultural superiority and Western imperialism. For more detail on this discussion concerning the missionaries and imperialism, see chap. 6 of this dissertation.



definition. As discussed above, one should not believe that Islam, as encountered by Carey and Ward, was a doctrinally-determined religion which affected the surrounding culture. The opposite direction of influence was the case. Caste, as encountered by Carey and his early contemporaries, proved to be much more than a principle of Hinduism. Historical inquiry shows that Bengali Muslims also honored caste expectations.<sup>61</sup> What was Bengali caste according to Carey? How did Islam adapt to the practice of caste? To understand Carey's and Ward's ministry to Muslims accurately, one must address such questions surrounding the Indian caste system.<sup>62</sup> According to Carey and Ward, Bengali Muslims operated within the Indian caste system on several levels.

**A social construct.** The missionaries' first observation concerning eighteenth-century Bengali Muslims within the Indian caste system regarded its function as a system of social—rather than religious—distinctions.<sup>63</sup> According to his understanding, Carey

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<sup>61</sup>Chatterjee noted one instance in which Carey encountered Muslims living by caste standards and called it “a very strange and interesting fact about these poor Mohamedans.” The incident that Chatterjee referenced was the time when Carey's son Peter died and four Muslims risked their caste standing to help Carey bury him. This encounter was “very strange” for Chatterjee indeed as he offered no evaluation of the event. Apparently, it was completely outside of his thesis and assumptions and he had no categories through which he could evaluate this instance. See Sunil Kumar Chatterjee, “Serampore Missionaries and Christian Muslim Interaction in Bengal (1793–1834),” *The Bulletin of Christian Institutes of Islamic Studies* 3 (1980): 121. This situation surrounding Peter's death and this issue with Bengali Muslims and caste is discussed in greater detail below. For an additional perspective concerning Bengali Islam and Indian caste, see Eaton, *The Rise of Islam and the Bengal Frontier, 1204–1760*, 116–19, 120, and 123–25.

<sup>62</sup>The discussion of correctly identifying the Indian caste system is one in which numerous perspectives and opinions abound. For a helpful entry point into understanding this issue, see Forrester, *Caste and Christianity*, 1–22. Also, he helps place early BMS perspectives of Indian caste within the larger evangelical perspective; see Forrester, *Caste and Christianity*, 23–47.

<sup>63</sup>Their understanding was an accurate evaluation of Bengali Muslims and caste. See Sharif, *Islam in India*, 9. According to Sharif, Indian Muslims did not allow for caste distinctions within their Muslim community: all Muslims belonged to the Muslim caste despite economic or ethnic considerations. He is careful to point out that in Bengal, however, the Muslim community recognized caste distinctions based on other factors such as Arab or other foreign descent and indigenous Indian converts, who were considered ‘common folk.’ Also, see Louis Dumont, *Homo Hierarchicus: The Caste System and Its Implications*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Chicago: The University of Chicago, 1980), 201–16, particularly 205–8; and Eaton, *The Rise of Islam and the Bengal Frontier, 1204–1760*, 117. Incorrectly, Forrester argues that Bengali Muslims did not accept caste distinctions and held to their “Great Tradition” rather than succumbing to this

did not see the caste system as having religious implications as much as providing a distinction between social groups.<sup>64</sup> He arrived at this conclusion after noticing certain social distinctions and sought to discover the origins of these peculiar arrangements. He wrote,

I cannot learn from whence the word cast came . . . . It does not appear to me to have any thing in it of a religious nature, or to be ever used as such, but merely as a distinction of the four tribes, which has been in after times extended to a distinction of employments and trades. It extends no farther than to eating and drinking, intermeddling with each other's employments, and intermarrying one among another . . . . The loss of cast is indeed attended with very painful consequences; no one will eat, drink, or smoke with such a man; no one will marry his children; his wife, children, friends, and relations disown him.<sup>65</sup>

Although no one knew the origin of Indian caste, one thing was for certain—it permeated all of life and no one dared to violate its established rules of interaction. Within this social structure, Carey and Ward understood that Bengali Muslims feared losing their caste standings as much as Hindus. For example, Carey recorded in his journal that Muslims would not allow someone from the shoemaker caste to enter one's home for fear of losing social standing.<sup>66</sup> Regarding Bengali Muslims' concern with their social standing, as guaranteed by their caste standing, Carey recorded, "To lose cast is attended with a dissolution of every relation and connexion in life."<sup>67</sup> Ward recorded an encounter that confirmed Carey's understanding when a Bengali Muslim approached the missionaries with an unusual proposal. He wrote, "To-night a young Musselman came

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social system; see Forrester, *Caste and Christianity*, 12–13.

<sup>64</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 1:234–35. Also, see *Periodical Accounts*, 1:361, where Andrew Fuller wrote, "Mr. Carey, considering the cast as rather a civil than a religious distinction, had entertained some doubts whether the natives should be desired to lose it, in order to their joining a christian community."

<sup>65</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 1:234–35. Forrester points out that Protestants expressed a variety of opinions concerning caste among Indians; see Forrester, *Caste and Christianity*, 6. He notes that some Protestants—on one extreme—believed caste was a purely "civil" institution with no religious implications while others believed it to be wholly intertwined with Indian religion. Carey and his BMS contemporaries leaned toward the first opinion.

<sup>66</sup>William Carey, Journal MSS, IN/13, Angus Library, Regent's Park College, University of Oxford, Oxford, (hereafter cited as Journal MSS), July 5, 1794.

<sup>67</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 1:137–38.

from Burdwan to give or sell his cast. His name is Boxoo.”<sup>68</sup> This Muslim viewed himself as part of the Muslim caste and was willing to sell his social status to the missionaries. Though mistaken about the missionaries’ desires, this encounter exhibited the Bengali Muslims’ self-understood place in Indian society—they were a particular caste according to established social distinctions. When Bengali Muslims violated caste expectations, disgrace and social exile as well as financial instability were assured. Muslims were a particularly social class within the larger Indian society.

**A difficult bridge.** A second observation by Carey and Ward regarding Bengali Islam and the caste system was that this social structure proved to be a ravine with no obvious bridge for an easy crossing.<sup>69</sup> For Carey, this system of social distinctions undermined his ultimate purpose for living in India. He penned, “The cast is the great obstacle to improvement and knowledge; for whatsoever employment the fathers followed, the same is followed by the children from generation to generation, not can they exchange it for any other.”<sup>70</sup> As this chapter discusses below, ignorant superstition was one of their major critiques of Bengali Islam. Addressing this element of his targeted culture proved to be a first step of effective evangelism according to Carey’s perspective. In a letter explaining the missionaries’ lack of evangelistic success, Carey addressed caste as their first and greatest hindrance. He asserted, “First. The Cast. This is a custom which I have often mentioned before, and have observed it to be an almost insuperable bar to the profession of Christianity.”<sup>71</sup> Earlier in his ministry, Carey wrote,

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<sup>68</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, July 18, 1804.

<sup>69</sup>Generally, evangelicals held this perspective concerning the hindrance of caste to their evangelistic purposes; see Forrester, *Caste and Christianity*, 5, 23. Also, see Carey’s statement quoted in Samuel Pearce Carey, *William Carey* (New York: George H. Doran Co., 1923), 192.

<sup>70</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 1:137.

<sup>71</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 1:481.

“Many difficulties arise from the superstitions and cast of the natives; the latter is one of the most cursed engines that ever the devil invented to enslave the souls of men.”<sup>72</sup> Lest one think that Carey penned these words concerning Hindus, it is of note that he was speaking of Muslims in this instance. One can see how he viewed caste, which fueled abiding ignorance and superstition according to Carey, as “the great obstacle” to his larger goals.

Ward offered a similar view to that of his fellow laborer. He believed that “cast is a great milstone round the necks of these people through which they are sinking into hell.”<sup>73</sup> His journal entry for the following day unpacked this perspective more fully: “Oh! how delightful would this work be if it were not for the infernal cast. Humanly speaking multitudes might well have been baptized in this journey had it not been that these people must become martyrs before they have made two steps in the Xn. pilgrimage.”<sup>74</sup> Caste bound Bengalis to an impenetrable way of life according to Ward. Although his listeners understood the gospel and the infinite value of Christ, they would not break caste. From Ward’s view, they needed to become “martyrs” to their caste system before they could journey into Christianity.

When preaching the gospel, the missionaries asserted, therefore, that Bengalis needed to forsake caste.<sup>75</sup> They believed this exhortation was the first requirement for a person to become a sincere Christian. Fuller reinforced their opinion when he wrote,

Two things have forcibly struck me in reading your Letters. 1. That this strong

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<sup>72</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 1:126–27. Also, see John Clark Marshman, *The Story of Carey, Marshman & Ward*, (London: J. Heaton & Son, 1864), 70–71. Referring to the difficulty faced by the BMS missionaries in convincing Indians to forsake caste in order to embrace Christianity, Marshman remarked correctly, “But while the missionaries were anxious to avoid all unnecessary interference with the national habits and customs of those who embraced Christianity, they resolved to make no concession to the demands of caste, which they considered the great bane of native society.”

<sup>73</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, November 7, 1803.

<sup>74</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, November 8, 1803.

<sup>75</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, November 28, 1802.

barrier of Satan, the Cast, shall not only be made to give way to the gospel, but prove of singular advantage to Christ's cause in India. It will be a test of sincerity... 2. That with this test you may safely admit them to baptism, without waiting for further proofs . . . . I think we in England place too much dependence on our good opinion of each others piety. A profession of Xt not contradicted by words or actions sh[oul]d be our ground proceeding.<sup>76</sup>

According to BMS leaders, a willingness to throw off one's caste became the cultural test for a sincere faith. This perspective was not without warrant. Luckfool, for example, was a village from which inquirers came seeking to hear more about Christianity on several occasions. The inquirers were Muslims, who expressed their desire to embrace Christ openly, despised the caste system, and reported that their fellow villagers were ready to reject this social system.<sup>77</sup> They exhibited a willingness embrace Christ, but the question remained as to whether or not they were ready to reject their caste standing.

Approximately one year later, Ward visited the village while on a preaching tour, but he encountered a people still held tightly by their fear of losing caste. He recorded,

This afternoon I got to . . . . In the way I gave away some papers & talked. I do not find a disposition to receive the Gospel amongst these people. The talk friendly & call us Brother, but they do not like Baptism, because in this case their cast would infallibly go. They say they cannot see what good baptism does any body . . . pride & quarrelsomeness seems to be present much, and they cannot submit heartily to the self-denying commands of Xt. I talked to them as faithfully as I could, & warned them against deceit & delay.<sup>78</sup>

Another encounter with Bengali Muslims illustrated this same fear: "The fear of cast seems the great obstacle in the way of these [Bengali Muslims]; but we know that the Lord both can and will bring his over this difficulty."<sup>79</sup> These Bengali Muslims valued their caste status more than the gospel and the command of Christ to receive baptism. For Carey and Ward, a Bengali's willingness to forsake caste was the first and ultimate

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<sup>76</sup>Andrew Fuller to William Ward, "The Letters of Andrew Fuller," transcribed by Joyce A. Booth, gathered by Ernest A. Payne, and scanned to Disc by Nigel Wheeler (Angus Library, Regent's Park College, University of Oxford), August 1, 1801.

<sup>77</sup>William Carey et al. to the Society, Serampore, October 31, 1803, in *Periodical Accounts*, 2:451–52. Also, see Ward, Journal MSS, October 14, 1806.

<sup>78</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, November 9, 1804.

<sup>79</sup>"Jossore. (Jusoru.)," *Circular Letters Relative to the Missions in India* 1 (March 1808): 34.

barrier to embracing the Christian faith. A willingness to forsake caste and embrace Christian unity became one of the strongest testimonies concerning the Christian faith for on looking Bengalis: “There was a considerable crowd of natives in the verandah to see the celebration of the L[ord’s] S[upper], or rather to see a Hindoo and a Musselman partake of bread & wine w[ith] Europeans.”<sup>80</sup> Bengalis knew that an act such as the Lord’s Supper violated completely their received social structures and expectations. Caste was a barrier that the missionaries had to take into account when trying to root the gospel among their Bengali audience.

Although tremendously difficult, overcoming this obstacle was not hopeless according to Carey and Ward. Signs of hope arose on occasions such as one incident in which a Bengali came from Jessore after reading one of Ward’s tracts. He informed the missionaries that the Hindus and Muslims of his village sent him for further instruction concerning Christianity after the villagers of all castes decided to reject their religious beliefs and break caste distinctions by eating together.<sup>81</sup> Early in 1803, Ward recorded an instance in which an inquirer sought out more information about Christianity after losing caste and being excluded from his village.<sup>82</sup> It seemed that losing caste created a willingness within this man to consider the missionaries’ religion. Hope existed albeit nascent in light of Bengali Muslims’ commitment to abiding by the caste system of their surrounding culture.

**Caste applied to all.** For Carey and Ward, a third observation when considering Bengali Islam and caste was the fact that the principles of Indian caste applied equally to Muslims and Hindus. Carey wrote such in his journal: “Tho the

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<sup>80</sup> Marshman, Journal MSS, Marshman MSS, August 5, 1804.

<sup>81</sup> Ward, Journal MSS, August 29, 1804.

<sup>82</sup> Ward, Journal MSS, February 18, 1803.

Mussulmen have no Caste, yet they imperceptibly adopted the Hindu's Notions about a Caste, and look upon themselves as a distinct one, in consequence of this they will neither eat nor drink with any but Mussulmen."<sup>83</sup> On January 29, 1795, he made a similar statement, "It is well known that Mahometans have no cast; but they imagine they have, and the loss of it is to them as serious a thing as to Hindoos."<sup>84</sup> Discussion of caste as an obstacle to knowledge in a letter written two months later, Carey penned, "On this account, very few can read or write, that being the peculiar employment of the Brahmans . . . and so great is the influence of example, that the Musselmans are as attentive to their imaginary cast, as the Hindoos are to theirs."<sup>85</sup> He illustrated this vehement adherence to caste when discussing the death of his son Peter. Bengali Muslims were unwilling to bury the child due to fear that they would lose their caste standing.<sup>86</sup> In such instances, Bengali Muslims feared losing their social standing that was secured by their place within the Indian caste system. In light of such realities, Galen Johnson wrote, "In essence, the Muslims of Bengal considered themselves a separate caste."<sup>87</sup> Although Bengali Muslims should not have operated by the caste system ideologically, they did so practically.<sup>88</sup>

Resulting from such close ties between Bengali Islam and caste, Muslims in

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<sup>83</sup>Carey, Journal MSS, October 13, 1794.

<sup>84</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 1:126. Also, see 1:136–39.

<sup>85</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 1:137–38.

<sup>86</sup>Carey, Journal MSS, September 1 to October 11, 1794. Bengali Muslims would not touch a dead body if the deceased were a non-Muslim for fear of losing their caste standing. Also, see 1:143–44 for another entry displaying Carey's evaluation of this element of Bengali Islam. Also, see 1:289–91 for John Thomas' view. Thomas confirms Carey's evaluation on this matter. The question that Carey does not address directly concerns how losing caste standing for a Muslim would affect the person's standing with non-Muslims. Apparently, the person would lose standing with fellow Muslims, which would seem to be more along the lines of Muslim discipline rather than a practice resembling Hindu beliefs.

<sup>87</sup>Galen Johnson, "William Carey's Muslim Encounters in India," *Baptist History and Heritage* 39, no. 2 (2004): 104–5. Johnson built off of Chatterjee, "Serampore Missionaries," 121.

<sup>88</sup>Dumont argues that the Indian caste system is "above all a system of ideas and values, a formal, comprehensible, rational system"; see Dumont, *Homo Hierarchicus*, 35. Although Dumont describes the Indian caste system as a religious ideology, which may be true currently, but it was not the case during the time of Carey and Ward; at least, it had not the same religious implications at that point.

the area believed themselves to be a superior social class to other Bengalis and Europeans—a fourth observation of Bengali Muslims and the caste system according to Carey and Ward. Bengali Muslims believed that their customs were more righteous and exceedingly pure compared to those of non-Muslims. Ward recorded one example of this perceived superiority in late 1804:

I got a place to sleep at the Deroga's, a Musselman who is a kind of police officer. With this man & another, in the presence of others, I had a good deal of talk. Amongst other questions, he asked me whether I washed my backside after doing my business? It seems our using paper is a great offence to Musselmans . . . . The other man denied that we had the true book called the angel. He says that this book is among them, & that Emam took away all the faults & made a perfect edition of it. So assured are they of their being in the right, that they utterly despise both Xns. & idolators. I see by Park's travels that this is the very soul of Musselmanism in Africa.<sup>89</sup>

The Bengali Muslims encountered by Carey and Ward had this sense of superiority—a superiority that caused them to despise non-Muslims. In a few cases, Bengalis became Muslims for social and financial reasons after the BMS missionaries excluded them from the Serampore church for moral failings. Becoming a Muslim offered such individuals a superior social status, which allowed them to interact with the larger Indian society in appropriate ways. Ward recorded:

Ramnul, who has been excluded for adultery has been circumcised & is become a Mussulman, as is also a boy who came amongst us from Calcutta. This is the first instance of any of our excluded [members] becoming Musulmans. Unwillingness to come under Xt's yoke, and having no resource in the world after having lost cast publicly, they have become Mussulmans to get a cast & a morsel to eat. We offered Ramnul work that would have been sufficient to keep him alive till such time as he might give proofs of repentance, but he was too proud to accept it. The boy stole some oil from our house.<sup>90</sup>

Faced with the realities of meeting physical needs, a few of the church's members made poor choices when the missionaries disciplined them and decided to become Muslims for

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<sup>89</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, November 8, 1804.

<sup>90</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, October 9, 1806. Ramnul returned to Serampore on December 1, 1806, requesting to be reinstated. Ward recorded, "The truth is, he finds nobody to feed him or give him work among his new friends," see Ward, Journal MSS, December 1, 1806.



these reasons. Ramnul was not alone in this decision as other excluded members of the church considered this path as well.<sup>91</sup> It is noteworthy that these individuals were former Hindus: “I hear that Ramkantū, a former bramhun & Bhyrub, excluded native converts, are become Musulmans.”<sup>92</sup> Former Brahmans, after losing caste by converting to Christianity, chose to become Muslims to gain a more respectable caste standing than they would have had by identifying themselves as Hindus again. According to Bengali Muslims, their caste superseded all others.

As is evident, Carey and Ward believed that Bengali Islam operated within expected caste requirements. To function within Bengali society, one had to belong to an accepted caste; Bengali Islam provided this needed social standing. The Muslims encountered by early BMS missionaries, therefore, offered no glaring contradiction to their Hindu neighbors in this regard. Bengali Muslims certainly had their particular caste distinctions such as a refusal to eat pork or the claim to follow the teaching of Muhammad. They were not, however, an overtly distinct group of people. The Islamic faith had succumbed to social pressure in the East Indian context. Bengali caste thus proved to be an over-arching structure of hierarchy for Muslims and Hindus alike.

**Possibly positive influence.** Although Carey and Ward expressed their frustration with Bengal’s caste system in many of their writings, this social construct was not necessarily negative in all cases as Stephen Neill stated:

The majority of missions, whatever their professed theology or back ground, have in practice found it necessary to recognize in some degree the existence of caste and to

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<sup>91</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, September 16, 1806. In this entry, Ward discussed three converts whom they excluded. These three individuals were considering converting to Islam for this same reason. One of the individuals was Boxoo, who came to the missionaries originally trying to sell his Muslim caste rights to the missionaries for money; see chap. 3, n. 6 above. Eventually, he converted to Christianity, but the missionaries excluded him for a reason that is not apparent to me.

<sup>92</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, June 29, 1807. Bhyrub returned to Serampore in early 1809 and sought to be restored to the Christian faith. See Ward, Journal MSS, January 4, 1809.

adapt themselves to its penetrating reality. The extreme form of adaptation is based on the assumption that caste distinctions are social in character and have no religious significance; they can therefore be tolerated within the Christian church, though some of the asperities connected with them should be modified by Christian charity.<sup>93</sup>

Offering verification of Neill's observation, Carey and Ward came to use the word in a positive nature, even expressing their desire to see all Bengalis unite into a universal Christian caste. He envisioned the possibility of another social class, united by Christ, operating within Bengali society.<sup>94</sup> As a social construct, with no religious significance, caste meant that Christians could use it with certain modifications.<sup>95</sup> This possibility was one of positive influence in the missionaries' view as it would offer a clear social distinction, much like that of Bengali Muslims in relation to Bengali non-Muslims.

### **Bengali Muslims and Superstition**

A second element of Carey's evaluation of Bengali Muslims concerns their superstitious practices of life. For instance, he wrote: "The Natives are very superstitious and the Country full of Idolatry notwithstanding which I have a Congregation of two or three Hundred Hindoos and Mussulmans who attend upon the preaching of the Gospel."<sup>96</sup> Additionally, he stated, "Many of the Mahometans have acknowledged their

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<sup>93</sup>Stephen Neill, *A History of Christianity in India, 1707–1858* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 404.

<sup>94</sup>William Carey et al. to the Society, Serampore, June 25, 1809, William Carey, Joshua Marshman, William Ward, and Others to the Baptist Missionary Committee, 1800–1827 MSS, IN/21, Angus Library Archives, Regent's Park College, University of Oxford, Oxford (hereafter cited as Carey, Marshman, and Ward MSS).

<sup>95</sup>See Neill, *A History of Christianity in India*, 403–7. In this section, Neill provides a helpful discussion on the social consequences of the Christian gospel, particularly focusing on this issue of Christian castes.

<sup>96</sup>William Carey to his father, Mudnabatty, October 5, 1795, William Carey Collection—Letters to his Father, Brother, & Sisters MSS, FPC 19, Angus Library Archives, Regent's Park College, University of Oxford, Oxford (hereafter cited as William Carey Collection MSS). Sharif's text supported Carey's evaluation of Indian Muslim superstitions. See the following entries from Sharif, *Islam in India*, 218–73: concerning Muslims and magic, see 218–46; concerning Muslims' use of amulets and charms, see 247–63; and concerning Muslims and magical methods, see 264–73.

superstitions; and, I believe, some of the Hindoos are ashamed of theirs.”<sup>97</sup> On one particular occasion during his first few months in India, he wrote, “Superstition is here triumphant in every place . . . . They have appeared to be convinced of the many contradictions which abound in their own religious writings.”<sup>98</sup> Soon after writing this description, Carey sent his father a picture of superstitious ceremonies conducted by local Muslims,

The superstitions of the Natives both Hindoos and Musselmans are too many to be communicated . . . yesterday and the day before the Mussulmans were bewailing for two days and two nights the slaughter of Mahomets Family to honor [them] them brought their whole procession before our door; upwards of a thousand people came with six or seven representing the burial of Mahomets Family, some had drums, some pipes, some antelope horns, and some swords, some sang mournful ditties, others played mournful tunes, some beat their beasts . . . . So goes their processions. I have desirable a thing is the spread of the gospel among them.<sup>99</sup>

Such forms of worship were incantations put before dead Muslim saints to seek a blessing, protection, or some other request. Typically, the crowd ventured to the holy site of a Muslim Pere, which a Muslim Fakier maintained, and offered various offerings in this act of worship. Sharif described the elements of this ritual and offered his assessment: “These ceremonies practised by Faqirs are not in accordance with the Shar‘[ia], or law, the word of God, or the traditional sayings of the Prophet—on whom be the Peace!—Like many other irregular customs they have become established in Hindostan.”<sup>100</sup> Elsewhere, he stated, “You will perceive by the Journal, the superstitions

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<sup>97</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 1:137.

<sup>98</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 1:70.

<sup>99</sup>William Carey to his father, Mudnabatty, August 8, 1794, William Carey Collection MSS. This letter expanded his account of this encounter and the Muslim ceremony contained in his journal. Although Carey did not mention the sacrifice to the Pere in the letter to his father, he did so in his journal; see William Carey, *Journal MSS*, August 5.6.7, 1794. This type of procession was common among Bengali Muslims at this time. For another description of this type of religious processional, see Ward, *Extracts from Ward’s Journals MSS*, February 25, 1800.

<sup>100</sup>Sharif, *Islam in India*, 286. This type of procession was common among Bengali Muslims at this time. For another description of this type of religious processional, see Ward, *Extracts from Ward’s Journals MSS*, February 25, 1800. In his writings, Ward used an alternate spelling in some places: “peer” rather than “pere.” According to Sharif, “All Faqirs originated from four spiritual guides (*Char Pir*), and

we have to encounter, and I doubt not [you] will sympathyze with, and pray for us; we have need of your Prayers; and Advice in every respect, and trust you are not without a share in ours.”<sup>101</sup> A few months later, he described Bengali Muslim superstitions in a letter to his father:

Their ignorance and superstitions are beyond what any one can form any idea of—Yesterday was the last day of their year when a number of people swung from hooks in their backs; I went and tried to dissuade them from the abominable practice but in vain, and I fear the attempt only prolonged their fortune, for they were ambitious of shewing what they could endure—The horrid noise of drums and other shocking music made it impossible for me to be heard—and I came away full of disappointment and grief—I am amazed to see with what fortitude they bear these tortures. I stood close to the man which the hooks were put in his flesh...and I talked to him I suppose a quarter of an hour—but tho he could tell me no reason why he did this; he gloried in it, and I went away; on my way home I met another with the hooks in his back which he [bore] in a boasting manner to shew them to me. May God put an end to these [practices] by his gospel.<sup>102</sup>

Muslims and Hindus alike were rife with superstition, which led to an urgency deeply felt by Carey when conveying these instances to his supporters in England. He needed to inform them of such experiences and ask for wisdom to know how he should overcome this obstacle in Bengal.

Because of this perceived superstition, Carey described his Bengali neighbors as people deeply bound to unfounded myths throughout his letters.<sup>103</sup> For instance, he wrote, “The Hindoos and Mussulmans are indeed in a very deplorable state with respect to eternal things. For tho the Land is full of Idols . . . . They universally tell me that the Debtas (or demi Gods) whose Images they worship have a power to afflict them; to spoil

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there are fourteen households (*Chaudah Khanwada*)”; see Sharif, *Islam in India*, 287. See Sharif, *Islam in India*, 288–93 for a description of the genealogical and spiritual heritage of the fourteen Faqir households at that point in India.

<sup>101</sup>William Carey to Committee, Mudnabatty, August 13, 1795, William Carey to the Baptist Missionary Society Committee, 1794–1824 MSS, IN/13, Angus Library Archives, Regent’s Park College, University of Oxford, Oxford (hereafter cited as Carey to BMS MSS).

<sup>102</sup>William Carey to his father, Mudnabatty, April 10, 1796, William Carey Collection MSS.

<sup>103</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 1:90. Carey asserted that caste was a superstition that no European could conceive and more tenaciously regard than life. In this case, Carey depicts caste as an implication of the root issue: superstition. This evaluation illustrates the tenacity with which Bengalis held to caste, thus explaining why he saw it as one of the greatest existing hindrances to evangelism in his missionary context.

their crops of corn, and kill their children . . . . Bodily and Carnal fear is the only spring of all their worship.”<sup>104</sup> On another occasion, Carey offered a similar description: “I went to a village inhabited wholly by professed mussulmans, but who intermix some pagan notions with mahometan, and discoursed with them upon the evil and universality of sin, and the holiness of God . . . then [they] promised to cast off their practices of lying, stealing, worshiping the sun, offering to departed souls, &c.”<sup>105</sup> Elsewhere, Carey provided a lengthy account concerning this aspect of Bengali Islam:

They are certainly a very perfidious and deceitful people, bound in the chains of innumerable superstitions . . . . They are very much addicted to astrological conceits, and have a firm faith in conjuring to prevent calamities. Their kalendar is full of lucky and unlucky days . . . . Their idols are innumerable; but they are confessedly the patrons of some art, or the like; or are considered as local, and these are worshipped on their proper days. Their theology, however, is much more refined. They acknowledge only one God . . . the Musselmans use ALLA.<sup>106</sup>

The Muslims who heard Carey’s words held to many forms of Indian mythology and proved to be no different than their Hindu counterparts. Carey’s task must have seemed daunting to overcome a view of reality so incompatible with his own.

### **Bengali Muslims and Ignorance**

Closely related to superstition, and probably serving a mutually-fortifying exchange, was a third evaluation of Bengali Islam expressed in Carey’s letters. Bengali Muslims were highly ignorant according to Carey and other BMS representatives. John Ryland had actually suggested that general knowledge may first prevail and prepare the way for losing caste and becoming a Christian.<sup>107</sup> As cited above, Indians were trapped in

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<sup>104</sup>William Carey to Committee, Malda, January 12, 1796, Carey to BMS MSS.

<sup>105</sup>William Carey to Committee, Mudnabatty, January 6, 1795, Carey to BMS MSS. Also, see *Periodical Accounts*, 1:121–22.

<sup>106</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 1:213.

<sup>107</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 1:361. Carey found himself perplexed by the general lack of knowledge among his Bengali audience. He found that they could not even understand his Bengali Moonshi in many evangelistic encounters. For example, see William Carey to Committee, Mudnabatty, August 13, 1795, Carey to BMS MSS. For a copy of this letter that is faithful to the original manuscript,

a caste system that perpetuated many evils, ignorance being one such product.<sup>108</sup>

Correspondence between Carey and the BMS board referenced a generic ignorance among Bengalis as well as religious ignorance among the area's Muslims. Carey described the people of Mudnabattay, the village in which he lived from 1794 until his move to Serampore in 1800, as illiterate. After living in Mudnabattay for three years, he stated, "[The people] who being very poor, are proportionably ignorant; yet, ignorant as they are, I find many of them able to explain my meaning when I speak to those who never heard the word before."<sup>109</sup> This comment provides invaluable clarity to Carey's view. He did not perceive the indigenous population to be illiterate in the sense of being unsophisticated; they were rather untaught. His audience had not heard the gospel. He proposed to remedy the situation through faithful gospel preaching. He wrote, "I think perhaps God is employing me as a pioneer to clear the way for some more useful person. If so, my labours will not be altogether useless: and this encourages me to go on talking, preaching, and translating."<sup>110</sup>

This evaluation was not limited Carey alone. Bengali Muslims received specific critique in the reports that arrived from Bengal, which expressed a similar perspective from other BMS ministers. William Ward sent an extract from his journal to Andrew Fuller recounting Carey's preaching to Muslims on a Sunday. After one such sermon, "A Musselman followed brother Carey, and talked of the Koran. He repeated some little; but when asked the meaning, he said, 'Nay, Sahib, who can understand Arabic?'"<sup>111</sup> The following Sunday, Ward spoke of a similar encounter: "In the morning,

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see *Periodical Accounts*, 1:202ff. Note: Carey's reference to this city alternates between the spellings "Mudnabattay" and "Mudnabatty."

<sup>108</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 1:137–38.

<sup>109</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 1:371–72.

<sup>110</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 1:372.

<sup>111</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 2:49–50.

we saw a man sitting before a small mosque, with the koran before him, and he reading it most lustily. Brother C. asked him the meaning, ‘The meaning, Sahib, is another thing: I cannot tell that.’”<sup>112</sup> Ward—like Carey—saw Bengali Muslims as ignorant. Unable to read their own holy book or answer basic questions, Bengali Muslims made it difficult for the Serampore brethren to conclude otherwise.

The *Periodical Accounts* depict a reality in which Carey encountered Muslims who were highly superstitious with little education. This view perhaps explains how Ryland’s earlier suggestion blossomed within the evolving Serampore strategy to include formal education and cultural appreciation.<sup>113</sup> Potts correctly asserted, “When one reads of how tenaciously the Baptists held on to and extended their educational plans it becomes clear that at least those at Serampore were interested in education for its own sake, regardless of the number of conversions achieved or not achieved.”<sup>114</sup> Undergirding Muslim practices in Bengal, the components of superstition and ignorance within Bengali culture were difficult trappings for the advancement of Christianity among the people.

### **Bengali Muslims Were “Hindoos” Too**

At first glance, one may be lead to believe wrongly that the term “Hindu” referred only to a people following the Hindu religion. This understanding, however, is not based on accurate historical record. According to deeper inquiry, this term could

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<sup>112</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 2:50.

<sup>113</sup>This emphasis included Indian works as well as biblical instruction. See *Periodical Accounts*, 1:124–25 and Ward. While outside the parameters of this paper, the Serampore educational emphasis is a well documented discussion. Also see George, *Faithful Witness*, 143–48; Michael Andrew Laird, *Missionaries and Education in Bengal, 1793–1837* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972); E. Daniel Potts, *British Baptist Missionaries in India, 1793–1837: The History of Serampore and Its Missions* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 114–36; Smith, “Mythology and Missiology,” 458–60; and William Ward, *A View of the History, Literature, and Mythology of the Hindoos; Including a Minute Description of Their Manners and Customs, and Translations From Their Principal Works* (London: Kingsbury, Parbury and Allen, 1822), 1:lxix–lx. Smith also confirms this view when discussing Ward’s proposed pantheon. See Smith, “Mythology and Missiology,” 457.

<sup>114</sup>Potts, *British Baptist Missionaries in India*, 114.

apply to persons adhering to religious practices currently associated with Hinduism. But, the term “Hindu” could be used more broadly as well, including Bengali Muslims.

The reason that the term “Hindu” applied to Bengali Muslims in certain instances is because Hinduism was not a formal religion at this point. As a world religion—on par with Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism—Hinduism did not emerge until the 1830s. According to Brian Pennington, “In precolonial periods there had been an ad hoc character to the manner in which Hindus chose to describe themselves. When the occasion demanded it, Hindus could portray themselves as a homogenous people, especially vis-à-vis their Muslim “other,” or locate alterity in their own midst.”<sup>115</sup>

Penelope Carson has also espoused this view: “The development of Hinduism as we know it today took place over many centuries and under many different influences. Official documents and correspondence also use the term ‘Hindoo’ as a generic reference to the Indian people, most of whom were believed to be followers of ‘Hindooism.’ The term ‘Hindoo’ was also used to refer to Indians generally.”<sup>116</sup> During Carey’s and Ward’s missionary careers, therefore, “Hindu” could refer to a Bengali Muslim or a Bengali Christian as much as an adherent to the religious practices of the contemporary Hindu religion. Hinduism, therefore, did not exist and various practices modern readers consider part of the Hindu religion applied to Bengali Muslims and non-Muslims alike.

Pennington asserted that modern Hinduism formed in “the shadows and under the auspices of the emerging colonial state, Hindus and non-Hindus alike etched the

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<sup>115</sup>Pennington, *Was Hinduism Invented?*, 3. Pennington argues that Hinduism, as a codified religious thought, solidified after 1832 as Hindus were forced to respond to British colonial evaluations with which Hindu religious leaders disagreed; see Pennington, *Was Hinduism Invented?*, 3–7. One should note that he criticized Ward for having a “simplistic image of a systematic Hindu piety”; see Pennington, *Was Hinduism Invented?*, 93. This criticism seems true but unjustified at the same time. As he states, Hinduism was far from being a codified systematic religion at this point. Bengali Muslims and Hindus were distinct by their social standing through the caste system more so than by their religious beliefs.

<sup>116</sup>Penelope Carson, *The East India Company and Religion, 1698–1858* (Woodbridge, UK: Boydell Press, 2012), ix. For another scholar supporting this view, see Potts, *British Baptist Missionaries in India*, 225.



countours of the modern world religion we now routinely call ‘Hinduism’ and its attendant identities.”<sup>117</sup> He proceeded to argue that 1789 to 1832 were “decisive for the development of modern Hinduism, conceived of as a world religion comparable in scope and character to other major faiths . . . and imagined today as the defining cultural heritage of the modern nation-state India.”<sup>118</sup> Pennington acknowledged that this concept is widely accepted: “One point I am making is familiar enough to historians of the period and theorists of religion: colonial encounter certainly created the circumstances under which *Hinduism*, in terms of a world religion, comparable to other ‘great traditions such as Christianity, Buddhism, and Islam, emerged not only as an idea, a composite portrait of various, sometimes contradictory traditions, but also as an incipient reality.”<sup>119</sup> To be a Bengali Muslim during the time of Carey and Ward was to belong to a specific social class more than a distinct religion. A Bengali Muslim, therefore, was a Muslim by caste standing, but also a “Hindoo” based on the fact that he lived in Bengal.

Therefore, Carey and Ward encountered men, women, and children whom they designated as Bengali, Muslim, and Hindoo interchangeably. Without recognizing this point, one will have a truncated understanding of the ministry of Carey and Ward to Bengali Muslims. Carey and Ward used the word “Hindoo” in a somewhat nebulous manner in their writings, applying the term to Bengalis of all sorts. For example, Ward used the term to refer to Bengali converts who were members of the Serampore church in

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<sup>117</sup>Pennington, *Was Hinduism Invented?*, 3–4.

<sup>118</sup>Pennington, *Was Hinduism Invented?*, 4.

<sup>119</sup>Pennington, *Was Hinduism Invented?*, 5. Pennington acknowledges the arguments of various scholars, upon which he built his thesis. For a list of these influences, see Pennington, *Was Hinduism Invented?*, 6. Specifically, Pennington agrees with Brian K. Smith in arguing that secular academics, who are forced to make theological pronouncements about theological traditions, have deconstructed Hinduism falsely. According to Smith, such scholars sought to answer false narratives created by modern Hindu nationalists who claimed that Hinduism, as a world religion, has had a codified body of thought long before the post-1832 demarcation. See Brian K. Smith, “Re-envisioning Hinduism and Evaluating the Hindutva Movement,” *Religion* 26 (1996): 119–28; and Brian K. Smith, “Who Does, Can, and Should Speak for Hinduism?,” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 69, no. 4 (December 2000): 741–49.

certain instances.<sup>120</sup> Certainly, he did not use this term to describe women in the Serampore congregation who practiced the Hindu religion, but rather to refer to Indian women ethnically. Bengali Muslims and Bengali non-Muslims alike received this designation by Carey and Ward in general.

This point of clarification should not, however, lead readers to believe that the missionaries restricted the term to an ethnic use in all instances. In numerous texts, they described the religious practices of certain Bengalis as distinct from Muslims by designating them to be “Hindoos.”<sup>121</sup> For example, Ward recorded, “I spoke with some feeling, & used all the persuasions I could to bring them to Xt. The inefficacy of their own ways, whether as Musselmans or Hindoos.”<sup>122</sup> In this journal entry, Ward used the term “Hindoo” to refer to the religious customs of Bengali non-Muslims. On another occasion, Ward wrote, “Here is a large & ancient temple with a stone pulpit, said to have been first a Hindoo & afterwards converted into a Mussleman place.”<sup>123</sup> In 1806, Ward wrote a journal entry which provides another example: “I preached at home in English & Bengalee; or rather, in the Bengalee, I called up several of the native brethren, & asked them before the congregation respecting their reasons for becoming Xns.; the reasons of their hopes in Xt. and their judgment respecting the safety of final trust in Hindooism & Musselmanism.”<sup>124</sup> Bengalis understood a difference between Muslims and non-Muslims, giving a distinct social designation to non-Muslims that contained religious designation in some cases: “Hindoo.” Ward understood this distinction as relayed by his

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<sup>120</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, May 12, 1804. In this entry, for example, he wrote, “Our Hindoo sisters are very much offended about the suspension of Unna & Rupody.”

<sup>121</sup>For example, see William Carey to Committee, Malda, January 12, 1796, Carey to BMS MSS.

<sup>122</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, October 21, 1803.

<sup>123</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, November 27, 1803.

<sup>124</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, October 26, 1806.

Bengali neighbors.

Within their writings, the missionaries used the word “Hindoo” to refer to Bengalis in a religious sense in other places. Without recognizing the broad possible uses of this term by the missionaries, one could believe incorrectly that Carey and Ward were talking about people of the Hindu religion when they were using the word “Hindoo” to discuss Bengali Muslims.<sup>125</sup> They used the term “Hindoo,” therefore, in a broader sense than contemporary readers; it was an ethnic designation in many cases. Ultimately, it is best to recognize a distinction that existed in the missionaries’ perspective: there were Bengali Muslims and Bengali non-Muslims. In their context, major differences of groups within Bengali culture were determined through behavior and habits kept.<sup>126</sup> Therefore, Bengali Muslims and Hindus were distinct from persons labeled Portuguese, European, or some other term used to designate a person as non-Indian. Each one of these groups had certain habits that distinguished them from one another—habits that had less to do with religious beliefs than cultural patterns.<sup>127</sup> Therefore, Bengalis puzzled other Bengalis

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<sup>125</sup>George, *Faithful Witness*, 74. George did not recognize this distinction. Coupled with his decision to follow Samuel Pearce Carey’s understanding of Carey—as discussed in chap. 2 above—when he built his narrative surrounding Carey’s movement into vocational mission work, George misunderstood Carey’s ministry to Bengali Muslims by not catching these distinct possibilities of use by Carey and Ward.

<sup>126</sup>Durba Ghosh, *Sex and the Family in Colonial India: The Making of Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 184. Ghosh expounded upon the distinctions of peoples in Bengal based on primary source literature from the EIC and other sources, providing a helpful understanding of terms such as English, Portuguese, Feringees, Christian, Musselman, Hindu, and other words used during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The term “Portuguese” was used during the early eighteenth century in colonial India to refer to Indian women kept by English men as concubines, especially if these women conformed to Christian customs. Feringees were a group that natives considered foreign culturally. Natives used the term in a derogatory way when speaking of other Indians who appeared to embrace Western customs and forsake their own culture; see *Oxford Dictionaries*, s.v. “Feringhee,” [http://oxforddictionaries.com/us/definition/american\\_english/feringhee](http://oxforddictionaries.com/us/definition/american_english/feringhee) (accessed June 26, 2013). Through these various distinctions, Indians sought to distinguish themselves from “others.” Because Indian non-Muslims were not Hindus in a formally religious sense at this point, they used such terms to describe people who were not Indian culturally. Ultimately, the various terms used to define various groups of people were “very loose” and “were by no means uniform, monolithic, or coherent” during the time period examined by this dissertation; see Ghosh, *Sex and the Family in Colonial India*, 15. These loosely held designations began to solidify in the 1840s as the EIC matured into the British Raj; see Thomas R. Metcalf, *Ideologies of the Raj* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

<sup>127</sup>For a helpful understanding of such distinctions in the Bengali context, see Roxann

when one became a Christian without adopting Western customs and dress.<sup>128</sup> This religion was a Western faith in the mind of many Bengalis. Using such distinctions, “Hindoos” were not Muslims in all cases, but Muslims could be Hindus in the missionaries’ writings.

### Conclusion

Bengali Muslims lived out Indian caste expectations according to Carey’s perspective. Abiding within the grip of caste expectations, Bengali Muslims were held within such a system by intense superstitions and religious ignorance, all of which coalesced into a peculiar form of folk religion expressed through Islamic Sufism. The Serampore missionaries were never in doubt concerning the solution to the folk Bengali superstition and ignorance. Muslims in the Serampore area needed the gospel of Jesus Christ ultimately. Carey and Ward never forsook the Particular Baptist doctrines concerning the fallen condition of humanity and the necessity of Christ’s atoning work. Reflecting on a promising evangelistic situation in a Bengali Muslim village, Ward stated, “It seems many of these people, on hearing of the Gospel, were pleased with it, & being loosened from idolatry & the cast in some measure, were disposed to enquire after it.”<sup>129</sup> Such encounters gave the missionaries hope that certain Bengali Muslims would forsake their superstitions and progress out of their abounding ignorance in the near future. Before this progression would occur, however, the constraints of caste needed to be broken. Operating with this understanding, as established during Carey’s early

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Wheeler, *The Complexion of Race: Categories of Difference in Eighteenth-century British Culture* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000).

<sup>128</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, November 14, 1808. In this entry, the missionaries bought a house in Calcutta so that Krishnoo could live there and preach full time. A Bengali constable was confused because he dressed like a Bengali but claimed to be a Christian. The constable accused Krishnoo of being a Feringee and trying to deceive Bengalis into losing caste by not dressing like a Westerner. Krishnoo was jailed and brought before the English magistrate. Carey and Ward interceded on Krishnoo’s behalf by clarifying his dress in relation to his Christian faith, thus securing his freedom.

<sup>129</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, August 10, 1802.

ministry, the Serampore missionaries moved forward with specific endeavors they hoped would have a lasting effect. These efforts would begin with Carey and come to full bloom through Ward.

Bengali Muslims clearly upheld convoluted religious beliefs, assigning Islamic terminology to their practices. Through years of repetitive encounters such as the ones described throughout this dissertation, the evidence clearly indicates that eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Islam was a religion of superstition, ignorance, and folk expression. Carey's early perspective is thus confirmed—"How much of the world is still in pagan darkness! How many countries deluded by Mahomet! What opposition have the powers of hell made to the truth of God!"<sup>130</sup> These early missionaries certainly faced tremendous evangelistic difficulties forged by such muddled religion. Ultimately, Carey and Ward's evaluation of Bengali Islam—as well as their understanding of Bengali Hinduism—shaped the British perception of the "Hindoo" people to an unrivaled level.<sup>131</sup> Understanding these foundational elements of Indian Islam in Bengal thus enables one to address Carey's particular ministry to Muslims, to which this paper now turns.

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<sup>130</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 1:115.

<sup>131</sup>Pennington, *Was Hinduism Invented?*, 93. Pennington adds the influence of Claudius Buchanan to Ward's impact, which is a justified evaluation as these men were close friends and worked together as much as possible.

## CHAPTER 4

### WILLIAM CAREY'S MINISTRY TO BENGALI MUSLIMS

When considering Carey's mission to Muslims, one must ask how he distinguished Muslims from Hindus. As discussed in the previous chapter, he viewed "Musselmans" as closely related to Hindus in many cultural practices and religious superstitions. At this point, therefore, it is necessary to provide some insight into Carey's early ministry to Muslims. Did he actively cultivate evangelistic opportunities among Bengali Muslims? Additionally, Bengali Muslims operated within their larger culture's understanding of fate as discussed in chapter 3. Most Muslims that Carey and Ward encountered were unwilling to consider the option of moral and character change. Because of this belief in fate, the Serampore missionaries found a difficult task before them. Fate, anchored within the Indian caste system, was an ideology that perpetuated an assumed understanding of predetermined status and morality. Because Bengalis were unconcerned with their morality, their failures were inevitable. Could the missionaries find a way to dialogue with their listeners to bring about spiritual and moral change? How could they press upon their listeners to consider the substitutionary atonement of Jesus Christ if he had no ability to be different? Bengalis had no ability to change and, therefore, no consideration or impetus to do so. To answer such questions, one may interpret Carey's ministry to Muslims through the principles established formally in the *SFA*. In light of these standards, the following section will explore Carey's sense of ministerial calling, mutual requests between Carey and Bengali Muslims for religious dialogue, and his message to Bengali Muslims during such exchanges.

## Carey's Perceived Responsibility to Muslims

As previously mentioned, common misperceptions surround the specific interaction of Carey with Muslims. For example, one author penned, “The few Protestant missionaries who worked in southern India during the eighteenth century had no relations with Islam; and Carey and his associates at Serampore early in the next century were primarily concerned with the conversion of Hindus.”<sup>1</sup> This confusion stems from a misunderstanding of his self-perceived ministerial responsibility. He wrote statements that certainly helped establish this perspective if one extracts certain statements from his writings without accounting for the larger body of material. The larger weight of his writings, however, points to a broader evangelistic desire. Muslims, Hindus, Portuguese Catholics, secular Europeans, and others were all potential recipients of Carey’s gospel message.<sup>2</sup> Carey’s advice to his son Felix illustrates this evangelistic commitment: “Preach the never-failing word of the cross. Do not be above sitting down to the patient instruction even of one solitary native . . . . Cultivate the utmost friendship and cordiality [with the natives], as your equals, and never let European pride or superiority be felt by the natives in the mission house at Rangoon.”<sup>3</sup> Carey himself developed a pattern of preaching the gospel in surrounding villages to all who would gather for a sermon. He provided a glimpse of his practice: “Though we have not the happiness to see souls

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<sup>1</sup>James Thayer Addison, *The Christian Approach to the Moslem: A Historical Study* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1942), 210. Interestingly, asserts that Henry Martyn was the first Protestant focused on evangelizing Muslims. Before settling in Iran, Martyn lived with the Serampore missionaries, where he learned Persian and their evangelistic approach to Muslims, and continued writing to them over the coming years to ask for advice and give updates concerning his own efforts. According to the interactions between these missionaries, Martyn based his New Testament on the Serampore version of the Persian Bible.

<sup>2</sup>For example, see *Periodical Accounts*, 1:66.

<sup>3</sup>“Rangoon,” *Circular Letters Relative to the Missions in India* 1 (December 1807): 9, in Serampore Circular Letters, 1807–1819 Manuscripts, IN/26, Angus Library Archives, Regent’s Park College, University of Oxford, Oxford (hereafter cited as *Circular Letters Relative to the Missions in India*). Timothy George wrongly cites pp. 9 and 10 for this quote from Carey. The entire quote, minus the text that he deletes using an ellipsis, came from the first full paragraph on p. 9. See Timothy George, *Faithful Witness: The Life and Mission of William Carey* (Birmingham, AL: New Hope, 1991), 112. For his citation of this Carey quote, see George, *Faithful Witness*, 188n49.

converted to Christ as we could wish, yet the Lord is much enlarging our sphere of action. We now preach once a month at Dinagepour, and twice a month at Malda, to both Europeans and Bengallees.”<sup>4</sup> He thus held broad evangelistic interests as opportunities to share the gospel arose.

Within this larger desire for widely spreading the Christian message, Carey also held to a preferred audience. When answering questions about Carey and Muslims, opinions vary tremendously. Such views range from the assumption that he primarily focused on Hindus to the view that he believed Muslims to be outside of his mandate. Succumbing to the later misinterpretation, authors such as Galen Johnson assert that Carey “did not consider work among Muslims to be the reason for his going to India.”<sup>5</sup> To support his view he quotes Carey, who said, “I am appointed to go to Bengal, in the East Indies, a missionary to the Hindoos.”<sup>6</sup> Most works within current scholarship on Carey are not as assertive as Johnson on this point. Academics such as Johnson largely ignore questions concerning Carey’s own understanding of his evangelistic responsibility to Muslims.

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<sup>4</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 1:437. Carey was inconsistent in his spelling of terms that he used frequently. One such example was his use of “Bengallee” or “Bengallee.” The other primary example that affects this paper concerns Muslims. Carey interchangeably used the following terms with no apparent reasoning for the different spellings: Mahometans, Mahomedan, Mussulmen, Mussulmans, and Moor.

<sup>5</sup>Galen Johnson, “William Carey’s Muslim Encounters in India,” *Baptist History and Heritage* 39, no. 2 (2004): 101.

<sup>6</sup>Johnson, “William Carey’s Muslim Encounters in India,” 101. The quote comes from Eustace Carey, *Memoir of William Carey: Late Missionary to Bengal, Professor of Oriental Languages in the College of Fort William, Calcutta* (Hartford, CT: Robins & Smith, 1844), 69. Johnson’s interpretation of this solitary statement displays poor evaluation: “Carey’s sincerity in accepting this commission is beyond question, but his commission was to minister to Hindus, not their Muslim neighbors and governors”; Johnson, “William Carey’s Muslim Encounters in India,” 101. In evaluations such as Johnson’s, it is important to note the lack of primary source material utilized for the argument that Carey did not minister to Muslims. For example, Johnson uses some material from Carey’s *Memoir*, but his article leans heavily on interpretations provided by standard secondary sources such as Samuel Pearce Carey and F. Deaville Walker. Without giving adequate attention to primary source material, it is no wonder that such misrepresentation continues. Carey certainly viewed Hindus as prime candidates for his efforts, but this reality does not explain the overwhelming amount of material pointing to Muslims as receiving equal attention within his ministry.



The majority opinion concerning Carey and Muslims falls into another category. The prevailing assumption of most scholars is to accept Carey's received story without question. The traditional biographical tale includes his Hindu ministry with very little reference to Islam. For example, Timothy George recycled this inherited assumption. Building upon the same letter from Carey to his father used by Johnson, George did not mention Muslims when discussing Carey's sense of missionary preparation.<sup>7</sup> Adding to this established view, Chatterjee argued that Carey "knew very little about the Muslims of India."<sup>8</sup> Therefore, according to Chatterjee, he did not perceive his ministry to include a responsibility toward Muslims, a people that he did not know existed at that point. Chatterjee's article took the position that Carey's interactions with Muslims was something of an evolution and accidental encounter. According to him, "Carey could not, due to circumstances, avoid Muslim mass in the course of his visits to villages."<sup>9</sup> Chatterjee's assertion—that Carey did not know that Muslims existed in India and include them as part of his ministry—missed Carey's own account of people holding to the Islamic faith.<sup>10</sup> With such writings defining Carey scholarship, Carey's ministry to Muslims remains unaddressed.

Working through Carey's letters enables one to grasp a neglected aspect of his

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<sup>7</sup>George, *Faithful Witness*, 74. For George's account of Carey's developing sense of missionary purpose and initial views concerning his missionary responsibilities, see 57–78. As with Johnson, George also uses Samuel Pearce Carey to build his narrative surrounding Carey's movement into vocational mission work. Also, note that I use the words "preparation" and "responsibility" for the sense of purpose that many contemporary missiologists refer to as "calling." This choice of terminology seems to be a more accurate depiction of the perspective of Carey and the BMS.

<sup>8</sup>Sunil Kumar Chatterjee, "Serampore Missionaries and Christian Muslim Interaction in Bengal (1793–1834)," *The Bulletin of Christian Institutes of Islamic Studies*, 3, (1980): 117.

<sup>9</sup>Chatterjee, "Serampore Missionaries," 120.

<sup>10</sup>William Carey, *An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians, to use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens* (Leicester: Ann Ireland, 1792), 47. Carey listed a population of 50,000,000 in India beyond the Ganges, which included Mahometans and Pagans. Also, he listed a population of 100,000,000 in Indostan, which included Mahometans and Pagans. Also, Carey wrote, "Fourthly, a very great proportion of Asia and Africa, with some parts of Europe, are Mahometans" (Carey, *Enquiry*, 64). As mentioned earlier, he was well aware of Muslims living in the area prior to his departure to India.

missionary experience and avoid the aforementioned historical fallacies. Perhaps a better way to process Carey's evangelistic perspective is to recognize a two-fold concentration depicted in his correspondence. At the core of his ministry existed a selective evangelistic partiality. While in India, Carey held tightly to his focus on Hindus and Muslims. Carey's perspective is evident through several avenues of historical investigation. First, his famous *Enquiry* shows his awareness of Muslims living in India before arriving in India.<sup>11</sup> Therefore, it is unlikely that Muslims would have been an unintended recipient of the gospel through his preaching. Second, his perspective surfaced through forthright statements concerning his missional pursuits. Recounting the request of numerous Portuguese Roman Catholics to hear the gospel and leave the Church, he wrote, "our great design is to preach to the Hindoos and Moors."<sup>12</sup> In a letter written on February 15, 1794, he displayed a similar aim: "Here is certainly a large field for usefulness; much larger than you can conceive, both among the Hindoos and the Mussulmen: They are very numerous, very inquisitive, and very attentive to the gospel."<sup>13</sup> Finally, historical inquiry displays the strongest evidence that Muslims were not an accidental aspect of his ministry. Carey would not so easily forget his purpose for being in India, which included both Hindus and Muslims. His letters to members of the BMS as well as other family and friends point to reality of his Muslim ministry in the paragraphs below.

### **Carey Initiating Dialogue**

In order to build an expanding understanding of Carey's Muslim ministry, a helpful progression is to examine his active attempts to initiate evangelistic opportunities. Carey actively evangelized Muslims while he looked to the promise that God would

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<sup>11</sup>Carey, *Enquiry*, 47, 64.

<sup>12</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 1:66.

<sup>13</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 1:73.

honor the preaching of the gospel to his Muslim neighbors. Such ministerial pursuits are evident when considering his view of Bengali Islam, his message to Bengali Muslims, and his vigorous proselytizing of Bengali Muslims.

How often did Carey have the opportunity to preach to Muslims? His early journal entries and letters to supporters in England indicate a recurrent ministry among Bengal's followers of Islam. Within the massive amount of letters that Carey sent to his BMS supporters, a large portion of his correspondence discussed his active ministry to Muslims. Gathering attentive audiences was no occasional occurrence and served as an encouragement to Carey: "The Moors, who are Mahometans, are more rigid and fierce than the Hindoos; but a congregation of an hundred or more may be collected almost any where, who will hear one part of the Koran compared and set at variance with another, without the resentment which might be expected in such a case."<sup>14</sup> Elsewhere, Carey recorded a broader statement that included Muslims. He wrote, "For the last three sabbaths my soul has been much comforted in seeing so large a congregation... I therefore now rejoice in seeing a regular congregation, composed of from two to six hundred people, of all descriptions, Musselmans, Brahmans, and other classes of Hindoos, which I look upon as a favorable token from God."<sup>15</sup>

Ministering to Muslims was also an intentional effort for Carey. As initial contacts with new villages produced further inquiries, Carey included these locations in his repeated evangelistic circuit. After preaching in a village comprised mainly of Muslims, Carey recorded, "I hope God may follow up this work, and I having promised them, intend to renew my visit pretty often."<sup>16</sup> Elsewhere, he wrote, "Though we have not

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<sup>14</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 1:72.

<sup>15</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 1:198.

<sup>16</sup>William Carey to Committee, Mudnabatty, January 6, 1795, William Carey to the Baptist Missionary Society Committee, 1794–1824 Manuscripts, IN/13, Angus Library Archives, Regent's Park College, University of Oxford, Oxford (hereafter cited as Carey to BMS MSS).

the happiness to see souls converted to Christ as we could wish, yet the Lord is much enlarging our sphere of action. We now preach once a month at Dinagepour, and twice a month at Malda, to both Europeans and Bengallees. We have also congregations at Mudnabatty, and at Moypauldiggy.”<sup>17</sup> Not only does this quote further confirm his recurrent effort, but it also indicates intentionality to his ministry. He preached on a circuit in certain Muslim villages, generally visiting the most promising sites at least once per month.

Lest one incorrectly conclude that this circuit included only a small number of destinations, another point should be noticed. While he certainly concentrated where he detected initial results, he also included a broader scattering of his message. After three years of labor, he could proclaim: “I am going out to all the villages in my circuit, which are about two hundred . . . . Although I have not written in the most encouraging manner respecting my own labors . . . . The work to which God has set his hand will infallibly prosper.”<sup>18</sup> In light of these accounts, one will not falsely believe that Carey spoke to Muslims only as opportunities arose. He was keenly aware of villages whose inhabitants were open to hearing the Christian message.

This perceived calling to minister to Muslims brought about a sincerity and vigor in Carey’s evangelistic attempts in light of his hearers’ eternal state. Ward described Carey’s concern: “Our Lord’s day evening congregation of servants is composed of Hindoos, Mussulmans, & Hindoo Portuguese. Brother C[arey] was very earnest & affectionate this evening, & addressed each class according to the delusions in which they were brought up, with earnest tears.”<sup>19</sup> Carey wanted nothing other than

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<sup>17</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 1:436–37.

<sup>18</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 1:327–28. For the original manuscript, see William Carey to Committee, Malda, January 16, 1796, Carey to BMS MSS. Fuller edited Carey’s text to exclude many unnecessary details in the letter.

<sup>19</sup>William Ward, Journal MSS, IN/17A, Angus Library, Regent’s Park College, University of Oxford, Oxford (hereafter cited as Journal MSS), August 31, 1800. One should not interpret this comment

Bengalis to hear the gospel and thus addressed his audiences with great earnestness, sometimes feeling the depth of their approaching peril to a point of great emotion.

Carey was intentional with his method of preaching, proclaiming a message that was direct, yet inoffensive for the majority of his hearers.<sup>20</sup> In a letter to the BMS Committee, he offered a lengthy account of an interaction he had with a large crowd and summed up the entry by stating, “This is the method of preaching that I use among them; nothing of this kind appears to give them offence.”<sup>21</sup> Within another letter, he provided another description his typical evangelistic strategy:

First [the] Moonshee reads a Chapter in Bengalee, then we sing; afterwards I pray, and preach to them in that Language; Partly from Local Circumstances, and partly from paucity of Words, my Preaching is very different to what it was in England; but the guilt and depravity of Mankind; and the Redemption from Christ, with the freeness of God’s Mercy; are the themes I most insist upon—I often Exhort them in the Words of the Apostle 2 Cor. VI. 17, which I thus express in their Language—forth come and separate be. and unclean thing touch not and I accept will you and you shall be my sons and daughters thus says the almighty God.<sup>22</sup>

Following another such occasion, Carey recorded a lengthy description of his message and method of delivery. The response of his Muslim audience showed the absence of unnecessary antagonism within this exchange: “I appealed to them whether any of their Idols could give Rain (a blessing much wanted now) or whether they could do them any

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to indicate offensive language used by Carey. His interactions with Muslims and Hindus were confrontational at times and his audience became offended in certain encounters, but Carey sought to engage on matters of religious truth without being disrespectful as discussed elsewhere.

<sup>20</sup>Concerning Carey’s and Ward’s interaction with Bengalis concerning their idolatry and religious beliefs, see Brian K. Pennington, *Was Hinduism Invented? Britons, Indians, and the Colonial Construction of Religion* (New York: Oxford Press, 2005), 72–77. According to Pennington, Carey and Ward “reflected a worldview conditioned, as all things religious, by complex social, economic, political, and personal factors”; Pennington, *Was Hinduism Invented?*, 76. Therefore, the view that they were guilty of an unnecessarily polemical tone and decidedly bigoted ideology is false. Far from exhibiting an antagonistic rhetoric, Carey and Ward interacted with their Bengali contemporaries according to a compelled obedience to Christ’s commission and a love that was a central part of an evangelical’s piety.

<sup>21</sup>William Carey to Committee, Malda, January 11, 1796, Carey to BMS MSS.

<sup>22</sup>William Carey to Committee, Mudnabatty, August 13, 1795, Carey to BMS MSS. For a published version of this quote that is fairly close to the original manuscript, see *Periodical Accounts*, 1:202–203. Although Carey described how he conducted worship on Sundays in this passage, he used this pattern when engaging with crowds throughout the week. The only aspect of this description that he left out in some instances was singing.

service at all; when an old Mussulman answered aloud ‘No they have no power at all’ and in this he included the Mussulman’s (Peers) or spirits of their Saints, as well as the Heathen Idols.”<sup>23</sup> Obviously, these Muslims received his words favorably—a response earned by Carey’s tone and respect toward his listeners. This journal entry proceeded to show that he was deferential, even commending certain teachings within the Qur’an.<sup>24</sup> His convictions, however, would not allow him to forget the exclusive claims of Christianity. He critiqued the Qur’an and Muhammad openly without antagonistically criticizing the Muslim faith. For example, Carey wrote, “The Moors, who are Mahometans, are more rigid and fierce than the Hindoos; but a congregation of an hundred or more may be collected almost any where, who will hear one part of the Koran compared and set at variance with another, without the resentment which might be expected in such a case.”<sup>25</sup> On another occasion, he compared the veracity of the Bible and the Qur’an based on ethics taught in the two books. Then, he “enquired which was most like the nature of God” if the Bible commanded one to love his foes whereas Mohammed advocated for the extermination for an enemy.<sup>26</sup>

Typically, Carey and his contemporaries would go to Muslim gatherings and begin conversations by asking questions.<sup>27</sup> The conversations would progress naturally to

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<sup>23</sup>William Carey, Journal MSS, IN/13, Angus Library, Regent’s Park College, University of Oxford, Oxford, (hereafter cited as Journal MSS), May 9, 1795.

<sup>24</sup>William Carey, Journal MSS, May 9, 1795. While outside the parameters of this paper, it is worth noting that Carey softened his perspective toward many of his early evaluations. Carey and his contemporaries were not unreasonable polemicists as evidenced by their deep respect and propagation of Indian culture. For this discussion, see J. T. K. Hedlund and R. E. Daniel, eds. *Carey’s Obligation and India’s Renaissance* (Serampore: Council of Serampore College, 1993); and Smith, “Mythology and Missiology,” 456–58.

<sup>25</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 1:72.

<sup>26</sup>William Carey to Committee, Mudnabatty, January 6, 1795, Carey to BMS MSS. Also, see *Periodical Accounts*, 1:122. These Muslim villagers had a three-fold positive response: they acknowledged their preference to Bible, they promised to cast off their unethical behavior and idolatry, and a leader in the village condemned their former practices while the others listened agreeably.

<sup>27</sup>A helpful resource to understand this evangelistic precedent that Carey established, see

dialogue concerning Islam and Christianity, inevitably leading to a full gospel presentation. This presentation would take the form of a sermon or question and answer. Thomas and Carey developed this pattern early in their ministry and continued to utilize the approach over the coming years. Invariably, a critique of Muhammad and the Qur'an would take place before Thomas and Carey expounded the Christian message. One should note that Bengalis did not find such critiques to be offensive. Carey wrote, "This is the method of preaching that I use among them: nothing of this kind appears to give them offence."<sup>28</sup> Carey's method became common practice among the Serampore missionaries when engaging Bengali Muslims, thus laying a foundational methodology for Ward's preaching ministry as discussed in the next chapter. Muslims needed the healing message of Christ's atoning work for Bengali iniquity and Carey brought the salve. Therefore, one cannot conclude that Carey avoided Muslims because he feared potential reprisal.<sup>29</sup> He actively sought to share his Christian beliefs with his Muslim neighbors.

A good indication as to whether or not Carey's method was offensive to his Muslim audience was their willingness to interact with him. Did Muslims reciprocate his desire for religious dialogue? Historical records indicate that Bengali Muslims received him quite favorably. For instance, he recorded an evangelistic attempt that brought about promises from his listeners to cast away their superstitions and embrace the Scriptures: "On the Lord's Days I have preached to the Natives in the surrounding Villages, and I hope not without some good effect. The Mussulmen of one Village having appeared

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William Carey and Terry G. Carter, *The Journal and Selected Letters of William Carey* (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2000), 129–91. Particularly, see p. 129, where Carter described Carey's strategy highlighted in the examples given in this section.

<sup>28</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 1:230. This quote comes from a larger account of his evangelistic approach: 1:228–31. This account provides his basic thoughts on preaching the Christian faith to Indians. For a larger sampling of his methodology, see *Periodical Accounts*, 1:72, 354–57, and 467–72.

<sup>29</sup>For examples of incorrect assessments that Carey avoided Muslims, see Chatterjee, "Serampore Missionaries," 120; and Johnson, "William Carey's Muslim Encounters in India," 101.

much struck with the Word, & promised to cast off their Superstition; Past Lord's Day they continued in the same resolution and were joined in it by several others who had not hear the Word before."<sup>30</sup> When Carey initiated opportunities for ministry, Bengali Muslims were willing to join in such encounters. Another way to gauge their interest concerned their own attempts to initiate inquiries regarding the Christian message. Did Bengali Muslims seek out Carey or were they only passive participants?

### **Muslims Initiating Dialogue**

A good indicator of Carey's effectiveness was his reception among Bengali Muslims. Historical records show that large numbers of Bengali Muslims actively sought an audience with Carey. Some inquirers seriously considered his message while others either ignored or only mildly listened to his words.<sup>31</sup> On February 22, 1795, Carey had such an experience. He had the pleasure of receiving "a considerable number of natives coming for instruction, with whom I endeavoured to discourse about divine things."<sup>32</sup> On one occasion, twenty-six Bengalis that came to his house requesting "instruction in the ways of the Lord."<sup>33</sup>

Although the interest of some inquirers faded with time, a few did not so easily return to their former religious convictions. In response to Carey's efforts, some hearers received his message favorably, sought an audience with him to ask further questions,

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<sup>30</sup>Carey, Journal MSS, January 1 to 15, 1795.

<sup>31</sup>For representative examples of Bengali responses to Carey, see the following passages: Muslims rejecting Carey's message, *Periodical Accounts*, 2:51; Muslims considering his words, *Periodical Accounts*, 1:162–63; Muslims inquiring about Christianity without prompting, *Periodical Accounts*, 1:146–49 and 1:194.

<sup>32</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 1:193–94. Carey does not indicate that he followed his normal pattern of critiquing the Qur'an, which leads to an initial question concerning this party's religious affiliation. Later in the letter, however, Carey clearly indicates that they were Muslims: "They were collected from the villages where I had preached before and from some where I have not been. Most of them were men of influence, being mundulls, or heads of villages." Elsewhere, Carey defined "mundul" as the head of a Muslim village, *Periodical Accounts*, 1:127.

<sup>33</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 1:146.



and extended an invitation to him to preach his message in their villages. For example, he wrote, “I preach to and pray with the natives every day, both with Hindoos and Mussulmans—and have frequent invitations to preach in many parts of the surrounding neighbourhood.”<sup>34</sup> Among his Bengali neighbors, Carey found a genuine interest in the gospel.

Such inquiries did not stop with a few marginal Muslims. Not surprisingly, curiosity swelled to large numbers as Bengalis discussed Carey’s message together. Therefore, he often found himself encircled by several hundred Muslims who wanted to hear more. Describing one such instance, he wrote, “In the morning the congregation was about 500 . . . . In the evening had about 400, and was enabled to speak to them of the necessity of a sinner’s union with Christ. They appeared serious, and departed shouting as in the morning, which is a way which the Musselmans use to invoke the Divine Being.”<sup>35</sup> Growing interest continued to swell in number that reached well into the thousands. John Thomas relayed one opportunity in which a “number of very creditable Mahomedans paid brother Carey a visit lately, on purpose to hear the gospel. Another messenger came to him from a village, in the neighborhood of which are several thousands, desirous of hearing the gospel.”<sup>36</sup>

Bengali Muslims continued to seek an audience with Carey over the coming years. For instance, Ward recorded, “In the evening Sandas brought a Mussulman, who professes to long be interested in the Gospel. Bro[the]r C[arey] preached on the Day of Judgment in Bengalee.”<sup>37</sup> Several years later, Carey recorded, “A good number of

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<sup>34</sup>William Carey to his father, Mudnabatty, April 10, 1796, William Carey Collection—Letters to his Father, Brother, & Sisters MSS, FPC 19, Angus Library Archives, Regent’s Park College, University of Oxford, Oxford (hereafter cited as William Carey Collection MSS).

<sup>35</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 1:196–97.

<sup>36</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 1:297.

<sup>37</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, April 18, 1802.

persons come, frequently from great distances to hear the word, or to enquire about this new way, they must be supported while here. This week five Mussulmans came from an hundred miles distant.”<sup>38</sup> Muslims sought out Carey to hear the gospel and distance proved to be no deterrent for such inquiries.<sup>39</sup>

These instances clarify many questions concerning Carey’s interaction with Muslims. Historical accounts thus offer a picture of Muslims who actively sought the spiritual insights of Carey during his Bengali ministry—a picture that is much different from the one currently accepted in BMS historiography. In the midst of innumerable discouragements, the apparent efficacy of God’s grace among the Bengali Muslims provided a sustaining measure of hope for Carey during the early missionary efforts, a source of encouraging experiences that continued over the coming decades. These inquiries were evidence that their principle of assured hope, as expressed in the SFA, was more than wishful thinking. The ideal of expecting great things from God and attempting great things for God seemed to be unfolding as Bengalis heard Carey and sought him out for further dialogue. With an established appreciation for Carey’s active ministry to Muslims, this dissertation will now address his actual message extended to this sought out people.

### **Carey’s Message to Bengali Muslims**

As noted above, Bengali Muslims were superstitious, displayed ignorance, and held to folk Islam. Additionally, Bengalis were trapped in a superstitious caste system.<sup>40</sup> Understanding Carey’s perspective of Bengali Islam sets the foundation for a clear

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<sup>38</sup>William Carey to his Sisters, Calcutta, February 25, 1807, William Carey Collection MSS.

<sup>39</sup>For another example, see William Carey to his Brother, Calcutta, August 18, 1802, William Carey Collection MSS. In this letter, Carey described “a number of Mussulmans who live about three days journey from hence” who “are coming from distant parts of the country to hear the Word.”

<sup>40</sup>For a succinct description of the missionaries’ view of Bengali superstition, see William Carey et al. to the Society, September 24, 1804, in *Periodical Accounts*, 3:21.

discussion on his actual message to those bound by “Mahomet’s” delusion. Within a society bound by such trappings, he continued to press forward in his work by countering the caste, superstition, ignorance, and unbelief of his target audience. To accomplish this end, his message was one of hope, which addressed serious inadequacies of the Muslim faith and offered atonement for their moral inability, of which they were deeply aware.

For Carey, the appointed means for Bengali conversions included addressing these issues as well as several natural obstacles that hindered him in conveying the particular message that would bring about God’s fulfillment of his promises. To tackle these natural obstacles, he pursued language and cultural acquisition in order to effectively share the gospel and translate the Bible into Bengali.<sup>41</sup> He knew that missionaries needed to speak Bengali to communicate the gospel effectively and felt that they were “much hindered in our principle work, on account of the corrupt language spoken here; this is not unconquerable . . . . I can say nothing of success, for often, I have not been able to obtain the attention of the people.”<sup>42</sup> Also, he believed that fulfilling his desire of language acquisition would lay the groundwork for an ever-solidifying plan for printing key works and providing sound education, both of which would address the cultural obstacles of superstition and ignorance. These efforts, in turn, would further aid his concern of addressing Bengali moral problems through spreading the Christian faith.

In light of these language and cultural concerns, one must ask what was the message that Bengali Muslims received from Carey. While Carey’s systematic theology is not easily apparent in his writings, one can arrive at general summaries of his thought through a few measures. The difficulty in trying to summarize accurately his doctrinal

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<sup>41</sup>This is an example of Carey’s thought concerning a principle that would be formalized in the *SFA*, Article II.

<sup>42</sup>William Carey to Committee, Mudnabatty, January 6, 1795, Carey to BMS MSS. Also, see *Periodical Accounts*, 1:121. Fuller added to Carey’s text to make it clear that he could not gain the people’s attention because of his inadequate language skills: “. . . through the want of a more perfect acquaintance with the language.”

content put before Bengali Muslims lies in the fact that he rarely commented on his subject matter. Terry Carter made this observation as well: “Systematic statements of Carey’s personal theology rarely surface in his letters.”<sup>43</sup> Generally, his letters and journal entries state that he preached to his various Bengali audiences and offer scattered insights regarding his content. This absence of doctrinal summaries in Carey’s writings thus explains—at least partially—why previous missiologists devoted so little attention to Carey’s creed.

Yet, researchers can find elements of Carey’s message if one understands his doctrinal framework when approaching these primary source documents. Before turning to his journals and letters, therefore, one should read the doctrinal statements in the church covenants that he wrote for his congregations at Moulton and Leicester.<sup>44</sup>

Ultimately, Carey held to a Trinitarian-centered message that included the redemption of fallen mankind:

That we receive the Bible as the Word of God, and the only Rule of Faith, and Practice, in which we find the following Doctrines taught, namely, that in the Deity are three equal Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, Who sustain distinct offices in the economy of Human Salvation, We believe that all Things were fully known to God from the foundation of the world, that he from Eternity chose his People in Christ to Salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and the belief of the Truth; that all rational Creatures are under indispensable Obligation to obey the Law of God, which is Holy, just and good but that all Men have broken it and are liable to eternal Punishment; that in the fullness of Time God sent his Son to redeem his People whose Blood was sufficient Atonement for sin, and by the imputation of whose righteousness we are accounted righteous before God, and accepted with him; and that being Justified by Faith we have Peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. We further believe that Men are totally depraved, and that the carnal Mind is enmity against God, and that we are convicted, and converted only by the sovereign operations of the Holy Spirit upon our Hearts, being made willing in the Day of his Power, and that the life of Grace is maintained by the same Divine Spirit, who is the Finisher as well as the Author of our faith, that those who are received thus shall persevere in the way of Holiness, and at last obtain everlasting Happiness

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<sup>43</sup>Carey and Carter, *The Journal and Selected Letters of William Carey*, 264.

<sup>44</sup>Additionally, one should remember that Carey and his Particular Baptist mission society—the BMS—held to the SLCF. As readers can see, these doctrinal points were well within that documents parameters of belief.

through the mercy of God.<sup>45</sup>

Notice the central place that Carey gave to the Triune God in this statement. Even portions addressing mankind are implications of God's acts. This article highlighted several areas that were expected doctrinally of Particular Baptists at this time: the Bible was their epistemological foundation; the Trinity's distinct roles in the economy of human salvation are clear; God chose his elect before laying the earth's foundations; although creation owes ultimate obligation to obey God's holy Law, mankind broke it and deserves eternal punishment; Christ secured and offered righteousness to fallen mankind through his atonement; and that conversion, sanctification, and perseverance of fallen sinners is the work of the Holy Spirit. From these church covenants, readers find, therefore, doctrines that he expressed within the parameters of expected Particular Baptist belief and those beliefs that he undoubtedly weaved throughout his messages to Bengali Muslims. Now that readers have a good handle on his doctrinal content, one can look into his journals and letters and detect these elements.

During his messages to Bengalis, Carey did not necessarily expound upon all of the doctrines highlighted in the previous paragraph. Primarily, his content focused on the fallen nature of mankind, the atonement of Christ, and the doctrinal implications of these beliefs.<sup>46</sup> In addition to trying to convince his listeners of these doctrinal points, Carey called them to repent of their sinfulness and idolatry in order to worship the one, true God. A few letters offered insight to his typical content delivered to his Bengali

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<sup>45</sup>The Leicester Church Covenant (1790), "Article I," in John Appleby, *I Can Plod': William Carey and the Early Years of the First Baptist Missionary Society* (London: Grace Publications Trust, 2007), 285–88. Although the church used slightly different phrases, The Moulton Church Covenant (1786) conveyed five similar statements that they considered to be "the important and fundamental truths of revelation."

<sup>46</sup>Carey's message to Muslims evolved greatly following Ward's arrival. Ward brought with him an important evangelistic pamphlet that became the heart of Carey's and Ward's message to Muslims. Although discussed in greater detail in chap. 6, it is important to note here that Pearce's *Letter To The Lascars* provided the missionaries' primary means of communicating the gospel to Muslims following Ward's arrival. See Ward's account of using Pearce's tract here: Ward, Journal MSS, October 15, 1801.

audience. In one such instance, he wrote:

One Lord's Day twenty six persons came to my house for instruction in the things of God. [and after I had told them that Hell was the place for Sinners], one of them said; I suppose Sir we shall be used there, as we should in Dinajpur Jails. I said no, in prison only the Body can be affected, but in Hell the Soul; a person may escape from Prison, but not from Hell; and death puts an end to imprisonment, but in Hell they shall never die; There God's Wrath will be poured upon them for ever, and they must dwell in endless Fire. I have also constantly inquired whether any of their Books can tell how God can be just and the justifier of a Sinner. And this leads me to speak to them of the appointment of Christ to be the Saviour of Sinners, of the substitution of him in the Sinners stead; the necessity of Faith in him and of Holiness of Life. So some have enquired what is sin and What is holiness? In answer to this I have endeavored to enumerate some of those Evils to which they are most addicted, and then to prove that the Heart is the Fountain of all. I have tried to convince them that all their Worship, and Offerings make no part of Holiness, but are on the Contrary very great Sins.<sup>47</sup>

A few years later, Carey sent a letter to John Ryland, Jr., in which he gave an account of a similar encounter: "On this he manifested a strong desire to be gone, but the people laughed at him, and called on him to answer. I then put this question. You are a Sinner, I, and all present are Sinners, how shall we get our sins pardoned, and blotted out? . . . This small disputation had collected a considerable number of people, to whom I then turned and preached Christ as the only Saviour."<sup>48</sup> Readers may object that these letters give an account of his evangelistic content to his Bengali listeners broadly rather than Muslims exclusively. But, one must remember that Carey viewed Bengali Islam as a particular caste within the larger society, with closely related religious practices to their countrymen, rather than a distinct religion. The only point in which his message would have deviated from this general content concerned specific points of application such as criticizing the Qur'an rather than a generic reference to his listeners' "shasters" or other such particular topics. Furthermore, even in various accounts in which he addressed Bengali "non-Muslims," such as a Brahmin in certain instances, it is unlikely that the

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<sup>47</sup>William Carey to Committee, Mudnabati, March 18, 1795, Carey to BMS MSS.

<sup>48</sup>William Carey to John Ryland, August 17, 1800, in Carey and Carter, *The Journal and Selected Letters of William Carey*, 147.

audience would not have contained at least one Muslim. Whether Muslim or “heathen,” Carey framed all of his interactions with Bengalis according to the doctrinal content received from his Particular Baptist heritage.

Generally, it was rare that Carey noted the content shared with Muslims specifically because he believed they needed to hear the same doctrines that he preached to Bengalis of non-Muslim castes, as derived from Scripture, to experience the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit.<sup>49</sup> In a few instances, however, he offered insights to the particular application of the above doctrinal content that he stressed when focusing particularly on Muslim individuals within his audience. In his journal entry for January 19, 1794, he recorded that he attended an offering to a consecrated Muslim saint, after which, he reflected, “the Gospel & the Koran, insensibly became the subject of Conversation; They alleged the Divine Original of the Koran; we enquired, have you ever seen or read it—The universal answer was, no . . . . The Question now was then, how can you Obey it? and wherefore are you Muhammadans? To this they could not reply . . . . Therefore, if the Gospel be true Mohammed must be accursed, and the Koran of no authority.”<sup>50</sup> The conversation then turned to “the way of life by Jesus Christ” before ending because of nightfall.<sup>51</sup> Carey’s letters contain many similar encounters in which the missionaries would begin by critiquing the Qur’an and Muhammad. Such was the case when Carey wrote,

I also took occasion to observe, that both in the shasters and koran there were many good observations and rules, such as ought to be regarded; but that one thing they

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<sup>49</sup>This sentence refers to Carey’s view that Islam was rightly considered a social standing within the caste system of Bengali society rather than a distinct religious group from their non-Muslim countrymen.

<sup>50</sup>William Carey, Journal MSS, January 19, 1794; *Periodical Accounts*, 1:162–63.

<sup>51</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 1:162–63. It is important to note that Carey, Fountain, and Thomas were not unnecessarily antagonistic. They respectfully entered such encounters and sought to avoid offending Muslims if possible. Thomas wrote, “Heard brother Carey with much pleasure, and many tears . . . Of what importance is it to us as missionaries, to give no offence in any thing . . . nor to the Hindoos, nor Musselmans,” *Periodical Accounts*, 2:162.

could not inform us of, viz. how God can forgive sin consistently with his justice, and save sinners in a way in which justice and mercy could harmonize . . . . I observed that their writings contained much good instruction, mixed with deadly poison . . . . I afterwards spoke of the suitableness and glory of the Gospel, which proposed an infinitely great sacrifice for infinite guilt, and a free salvation for poor and perishing sinners.<sup>52</sup>

While the missionaries sincerely believed that the Qur'an upheld good morals to a certain degree, they were under no illusion that Muslims would satisfy the God's required justice for human fallibility. A critique of Muhammad and the Qur'an before proceeding to the Christian message thus appeared to be standard procedure for BMS missionaries in evangelizing Muslims.

Carey was not satisfied with simply critiquing Islam and holding forth the Christian faith as a mere religious substitute. He knew the Bengali tendency might be to trade one form of syncretism that used Islamic terms for the same beliefs encased within Christian phrases. The two religions worshipped two different deities—a point that Carey did not want Bengali Muslims to miss. Therefore, he portrayed Christianity as a theological system of beliefs in direct contrast with that of Bengali Islam. In such cases, he dwelled upon the necessity of atonement for moral inability. He wrote, “I have generally aimed at convincing them that they are sinners, and that God is strictly just, and will not allow of iniquity; and have enquired, if this be so, what will become of you? They universally allow that the good will go to heaven, and the wicked to hell; but their ideas are so confused, that they have no settled notion of either.”<sup>53</sup> Another occurrence came about when Carey went to a village “inhabited wholly by professed mussulmans, but who intermix some pagan notions with the mahometan, and discoursed with them upon the evil and universality of sin, together with the holiness of God...how they could possibly escape the wrath to come? . . . They had never heard these things before, and

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<sup>52</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 1:198–99. For a similar encounter, see *Periodical Accounts*, 1:190–91.

<sup>53</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 1:146. It is particularly helpful to read Carey's larger entry on this occasion, which provides a succinct rendering of his message to Bengalis. See 1:146–49 for the entire letter.



that their Padre (teacher) had only told them what were the duties of mahomedanism.”<sup>54</sup> Twenty-one days later, he stated that he has “very frequent opportunities of serious discourse with them upon the dangers that idolaters are in and the absolute necessity of obtaining pardon for that and every other sin through the blood of Christ.”<sup>55</sup> Carey focused on the sinfulness of man, the righteousness of God, the certainty of the righteous going to heaven and the wicked to hell, and the way of salvation by Jesus.<sup>56</sup> This was their message, but what was the result?

### **Evangelistic Success among Muslims**

While explosive growth of the church in Bengal would not occur during Carey’s early years, enduring trials and tireless evangelistic efforts were not put forth without reward. Although his early letters repetitively expressed a lack of warmth in the Hindu response to his message, he found a greater receptivity among his Muslim listeners. For Carey, Thomas, and Fountain, their first abiding encouragement in evangelism came from Muslims who sought out their message. In fact, Carey made the remark that the “natives who appear under concern here, are all Mussulmans.”<sup>57</sup> One should compare this account with the BMS record of this letter to Fuller. The BMS account reads, “There are some Mussulmen here who appear under concern about their souls.”<sup>58</sup> Compared to the statement in his *Memoir*, the BMS version of the comment appears detached and mild. The difference between all serious inquirers being Muslims, to the exclusion of Hindus, and the BMS account seems highly significant. Concerning

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<sup>54</sup>William Carey to Committee, Serampore, July, 28, 1802, Carey to BMS MSS. Also, see *Periodical Accounts*, 1:121.

<sup>55</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 1:124.

<sup>56</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 1:124. Of these listeners, some were Hindus and some were Muslims. Carey does not give the specific numerical division between the two faiths comprising this group.

<sup>57</sup>Carey, *Memoir of William Carey*, 181.

<sup>58</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 1:318.

sincerity, the picture depicted by his *Memoir* of Muslim exclusivity further contradicts the generally accepted view of Carey's ministry in India. He neither inadvertently found greater receptivity among Hindus, nor intentionally ignored opportunities among Muslims. In direct contrast, his correspondence supplied another picture concerning proselytizing Muslims. After making the previous comment, his letter went on to discuss four Muslims who were seriously considering the gospel. Concerning these men, Carey stated that they had "more reason for encouragement the first Lord's-day, than we had seen in the three years we had been in India."<sup>59</sup> These inquirers were "all laborers, and Mussulmen."<sup>60</sup> In this letter, Carey provides the names of these four Muslims: Yardee, Door-Gottea, and Sookmun. Only thirty days later, Carey committed to a more substantial judgement concerning these four individuals. He wrote, "But we have, within a few months past, had the greatest encouragement by far that we have ever met with in our pleasing work, in the conversion (I trust) of four Mussulmen, who are all poor laboring men, but whose minds appear to be effectually imprest with the importance of eternal things."<sup>61</sup> Less than two weeks after this entry, he provided a specific reference that cites their conversion as occurring in August 1796.<sup>62</sup> Therefore, one may conclude with a guarded measure of confidence that Carey's first converts were Muslims, not Hindus.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>59</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 1:319.

<sup>60</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 1:319.

<sup>61</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 343.

<sup>62</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 346.

<sup>63</sup>One may ask about earlier accounts concerning four Hindus who were supposedly converted under John Thomas' first efforts before the arrival of Carey. Carey addresses these three individuals, concluding that they were not yet believers. The conversion of these four Muslims thus contradicts the accepted view that his first convert was a Hindu. For an example of this accepted view, see M. A. Sherring and Edward Storrow, *The History of Protestant Missions in India from Their Commencement in 1706 to 1881*, new ed. (London: The Religious Tract Society, 1884), 63. The first convert to receive baptism was Krishna Pal in December 1800.

Upon the arrival of his Trio counterparts, Carey and Ward engaged Bengali Muslims with increasing success over the next five years. Many Bengali Muslims eventually rejected superstition's grip in favor of the Christian faith.<sup>64</sup> As their missionary endeavors continued, the BMS missionaries also saw progress as Muslims rejected caste as an unnecessarily binding aspect of their culture. Carey and Ward watched as their ministry to Muslims blossomed in Jessore during this time.<sup>65</sup>

At this point, it is helpful to apply Carey and Ward's accommodating theology of missions to this situation. The story of these four converts does not provide a tidy account of Muslims converting, receiving baptism, and uniting with a congregation of Christians. The record indicates that Carey believed they were true Christians nonetheless. Carey was aware of potential realities faced by these men such as the loss of caste, social and economic ostracism, and the practicality of living at such a distance from him. Based on these realities and his theology of missions which allowed for flexibility on certain matters, Carey never doubted their sincere belief apparently. It could be very well that these individuals received baptism at a later date in an indigenous congregation without Carey's knowledge. Or, it could be possible also that these men never followed their beliefs to the point of receiving baptism and uniting with a Bengali congregation. These possibilities remain unknown. The obvious fact, however, is that Carey counted these four Muslims as true converts and his journals and letters available today offer no contradict this conclusion. Modern readers have to be willing to allow this situation to remain as Carey left it: an unresolved question of Muslims converting within

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<sup>64</sup>For a good evaluation of Carey's reflections on these early years of difficult ministry and his perspective on his accomplishments, see George, *Faithful Witness*, 116.

<sup>65</sup>F. A. Cox and James Peggs, *History of the Baptist Missionary Society, From 1792 to 1842: To Which is Added a Sketch of the General Baptist Mission, in Two Volumes* (London: T. Ward & Co., and G. & J. Dyer, 1842), 1:80–82, 85–86; Marshman, *The Story of Carey, Marshman & Ward*, 68–69. Muslims from the Jessore region began requesting missionaries to come to their villages and preach the gospel in August 1801.

untidy realities, which called for flexibility within one's theology of missions.

While Carey considered these individuals to be truly converted, the first Muslim convert to receive baptism was a man named Peeroo. According to Peeroo, two events happened closely together: he lost caste standing and heard the gospel from his neighbor named Syam Doss.<sup>66</sup> For Peeroo, forsaking Bengali Islam meant embracing a completely new social structure. Between losing caste because of his marriage and coming under the banner of Christianity, he was a man without a place in Indian society—no better than a Dalit. His social and spiritual void would be filled shortly however. Ward recorded, "He said he had first heard the word at the mouth of Samdas, who was his neighbour; that from that time he became concerned about his soul more than ever he was before; that he now wished to put his trust in Xt. whom he knew could alone save. He professed his desire to forsake all sin, & to be given up to Jesus Xt. as his disciple."<sup>67</sup> Ward seemed pleased with this testimony and Peeroo's desire for coming into the Christian faith. Carey agreed with Ward's assessment and baptized Peeroo.

In addition to Peeroo, the Serampore missionaries were pleased to add another Muslim convert to their fold named John.<sup>68</sup> His circumstances were highly unusual. He was Bengali Muslim by birth, but he lost caste by making a voyage to England. His family disowned him and he faced social and religious ostracism. Obviously, this situation must have been excruciating for John. It proved to be, however, the exact situation that Carey and Ward believed was necessary for a Bengali Muslim to convert.

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<sup>66</sup>The missionaries summarized their thoughts of Syam Doss and Peeroo in a letter to the BMS. According to their description, Syam Doss was formerly "a Hindoo of the writer cast, but who had lost cast by cohabitating with a Portuguese woman. He is universally allowed to be an honest man, and has hitherto walked worthily"; William Carey, Joshua Marshman, and William Ward to the Society, Serampore, July 16, 1802, in *Periodical Accounts*, 2:292. Peeroo lost caste for marrying a Portuguese woman. In this letter, he was listed as one of thirteen Bengalis who had received baptism at this point.

<sup>67</sup> Ward, Journal MSS, June 28, 1802. Also, see Fuller's inclusion of this testimony in *Periodical Accounts*, 2:282–83.

<sup>68</sup>For the following account, see Ward, Journal MSS, July 3, 1803.

He lost caste, which afforded him the freedom to explore another religious system. According to Ward, “This man has received impressions under Bro[ther] Carey at Calcutta.”<sup>69</sup> Although an unusual situation, John came to Christianity through Carey’s ministry and convinced the missionaries of his genuine faith. They affirmed him and set him apart for baptism; a service which Carey performed later that day. Carey thus began seeing the fruits of his ministry to Bengali Muslims.

The Serampore Mission thus added their first Muslim converts to receive baptism on these dates. What an encouragement these times were for the missionaries as they added several persons to their fellowship. One should not believe, however, that John and Peeroo were the first Muslims converted by this former cobbler and the radical printer from Derby. Keeping in mind the previous paragraphs, Peeroo was the first Muslim to follow the implications of his conversion to the point of receiving baptism. This expression of faith does not, however, disqualify the genuineness Carey’s previous Muslim converts.

These early signs of evangelistic results among Bengali Muslims were superseded by more substantial and lasting conversions in the years to come. Following 1805 when Carey and Ward applied the eighth principle of the *SFA* with increasing consistency over the coming years. As Bengali believers assumed primary responsibility for ministering to their fellow countrymen, the number of Bengali Muslims who embraced the gospel increased exponentially. This spiritual harvest occurred through the conversion of individual inquirers in such cases as Ward recorded in this journal entry: “Yesterday evening we consulted about the enquirers. Three of them appear likely for baptism... Another is a Musselman who is employed in the Printing Office, & who understands Persian & Hindoostanee pretty well. He writes the Persian, Magaree &

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<sup>69</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, July 3, 1803.

Arabic, but especially the Persian very well. His name is Hadatullah.”<sup>70</sup> A few weeks later, the Bengali Christian community accepted Hadatullah as a true convert and he received baptism:

Three persons joined the church last Thursday. They expressed their desire when I was down last at Calcutta, & Bro[ther] Carey called the resident members together at Calcutta last Thursday & they gave a very satisfactory account before the church, or rather that branch of the church. On Friday evening we consulted about the candidates & received satisfactory accounts of four enquirers, viz. Ramzeabun, Puncanund, Ramkoomeer, & Hadatulla, a Musselman . . . . I baptized [them] before breakfast . . . . The Musselman convert was formerly a Hindoo of the Voishyu cast, & is likely to be useful.<sup>71</sup>

Hadatullah and other Bengali Muslims converted to the Christian faith and became leaders within the BMS efforts in the area. Converted Muslims from outside Bengal began to gather with the Serampore church as well, some of whom exhibited considerable talents and thus potential for leadership within their faith community according to the missionaries.<sup>72</sup> Additionally, Bengali Christians found great receptivity, especially in Jessore, in certain villages through mass conversion.

If any questions remained concerning the validity of the BMS operation, these conversions gave them substantial grounds to request continued support for ministry in

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<sup>70</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, June 28, 1806. Again, Hadatullah was the Muslim convert at the center of the “Persian Pamphlet” discussed in chap. 6.

<sup>71</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, July 6, 1806.

<sup>72</sup>For example, see Ward, Journal MSS, May 23, 1807. In this entry, a converted Arab named Sabat heard about the Serampore church from Dr. Kerr—an Anglican chaplain appointed by the EIC—in Madras. Dr. Kerr sent Sabat to Serampore so that they missionaries could disciple him. He spoke Arabic, Persian, Hindoostanee, and English. Ward believed he could be useful for their ministry, probably referring to his potential to assist in Scripture translation. Kerr proved to be a strong advocate for the BMS missionaries. He encouraged the inclinations of Lord W. Bentinck (1774–1839), the Governor of Madras Presidency, to support the BMS missionaries financially as well as fund their efforts to plant churches in Madras. See Ward, Journal MSS, June 2, 1807. Ward reminded Fuller that he should not print this material. Fuller printed Carey’s version of Sabat’s conversion, which did not include the material that Ward feared could be harmful potentially; see William Carey to John Sutcliff, Serampore, June 2, 1807, in *Periodical Accounts*, 3:350–51. Concerning Sabat, also see Joshua Marshman to John Ryland, Serampore, November 17, 1807, Bound Letters of Joshua Marshman MSS, IN/19A, Angus Library Archives, Regent’s Park College, University of Oxford, Oxford (hereafter cited as Marshman MSS).

Bengal as well as to open new fields of service. The first-generation missionaries experienced various encouraging developments during the work among Bengali Muslims.<sup>73</sup> Surely, these reports would silence any lingering hyper-Calvinist criticisms.

### **Conclusion**

Such preaching was common practice for Carey and his associates. Clearly, the message that the Bengali Muslims heard centered on the necessity of atonement offered through Christ alone. This message was one full of hope, citing deficiencies within Bengali Islam while holding out the satisfaction of God’s justice provided by Christ. Armed with this message, Carey disseminated his beliefs broadly throughout nearby villages, but he wanted assistance. To accomplish his desired level of evangelism, he needed a method for spreading this message throughout Bengal at a rate that was humanly impossible. He envisioned, ultimately, the help of a printer and his “paper missionaries”—the topic of discussion for chapter 5.

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<sup>73</sup>I use the term “first-generation” to refer to the numerous missionaries who worked alongside Carey, Carey being the central figure of the Serampore mission. For an informative listing of these British missionaries to India at this time, see Stuart Piggin, et al., *Making Evangelical Missionaries 1789–1858: The Social Background, Motives and Training of the British Protestant Missionaries to India*, vol. 2 of *Evangelicals & Society from 1750* (Abingdon, England: Sutton Courtenay Press, 1984), 254–56.

## CHAPTER 5

### WILLIAM WARD'S MINISTRY TO BENGALI MUSLIMS

#### **Ward's Primary Contribution: The Derby Printer**

Within his twenty-four years of faithful ministry, Ward had a specific understanding of his role in the BMS: he was first and foremost a printer. His primary contribution to the Serampore Mission flowed out of this understood responsibility and had the effect of expanding exponentially the missionaries' capabilities through Ward's "paper missionaries."

#### **Ward's Understood Contribution**

While Ward boarded the *Criterion* with a specific commission from the BMS, his understanding of this role would evolve over the course of his ministry. This printer from Derby would expand his role from leaving Britain as a printer for Carey alone, to embrace Fuller's use of him as the BMS image-bearer, to pursue his own interests in writing and editing various works.

**Only a printer.** Initially, Ward understood that his assignment was to print Carey's translations. Barely aboard the *Criterion*, he opened his journal by stating his calling: "Blessed be God . . . that I am now on board a vessel, which will, I trust, carry me to India, to print the New Testament. 'Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should [print] amongst the Millions in India, the unsearchable riches of Xt.'"<sup>1</sup> Settled in Sermapore only a few months, the missionaries

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<sup>1</sup>William Ward, Journal MSS, IN/17A, Angus Library, Regent's Park College, University of  
149



received an offer of free property from Danish Governor, Olave Bie (1733–1805), they could carry out their intended ministry. Ward recorded however: “Finding the ground offered by the Governor too small, we have bought a house of the Governor’s nephew for 6000 rupees. It contains a spacious veranda & hall, & two rooms at each end, all one story high. Before it, are two other rooms & on one side a store room which will make a printing office.”<sup>2</sup> This journal entry highlights the point that Ward did not understand his print ministry to be a side project or a secondary effort, but rather a matter so vital that the Sernapore missionaries were prepared to refuse the Governor’s kind offer if there was not enough space for Ward’s print ministry. While the missionaries were grateful for the Governor’s gesture, their needs included space to conduct Ward’s primary ministry. Therefore, they found a larger property that would provide the space needed—particularly for Ward—to carry out their responsibilities. For Ward, the property that they labeled the ‘Mission house’ proved to be what he wanted: “This day we began to move to our house, which we call the Mission house . . . . We have a very capital printing-office.”<sup>3</sup> Ward recorded the effect of these early considerations concerning his printing needs in 1802. He wrote, “Scarcely a day passes, but one or other comes to get a New Testament, or some pamphlets.”<sup>4</sup> A letter written by Ward during the following year indicated that he continued to see this role as his primary contribution. After stating several trials he had recently endured, he recorded, “Yet this is the great thing; we are printing the Word of Jehovah, that Word which is not to return void, but is to answer the purpose for which it is sent, that is, to be the power of God to salvation of those who

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Oxford, Oxford (hereafter cited as Journal MSS), May 26, 1799. Concerning the Society’s anticipation of Ward’s contribution, see *Periodical Accounts*, 1:527.

<sup>2</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, January 18, 1800.

<sup>3</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, February 20, 1800.

<sup>4</sup>Ward to unnamed recipient, January 16, 1802, quoted in *Periodical Accounts*, 1:107.

believe, and the sanctifying Word to all Christ's true disciples."<sup>5</sup> This contribution would not fade with the passing years as Joshua Marshman would note in his funeral sermon for Ward.<sup>6</sup> Certainly, the effectiveness of his print ministry in Bengal far exceeded Ward's initial hopes, including ministerial possibilities and financial capacity.<sup>7</sup> Assisting in translating and personally printing the Scriptures in one new language per year of missionary service had to pass the wildest expectations of this radical Derby printer.<sup>8</sup> Thus one observes Ward's initial understanding of his ministry: he was a printer primarily.

**BMS image-bearer.** Over time, however, Ward came to the understanding that his ministry included far more than simply printing Carey's Scriptures. He began to see himself as the primary source of information for Fuller's missions advocacy to BMS supporters. Fuller used Ward's journals and personal letters as foundational material for the *Periodical Accounts*. The Kettering editor then built upon this base with material penned by the other BMS missionaries. Ward received consistent reminders from Fuller

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<sup>5</sup>Ward to unnamed recipient, June 20, 1803, quoted in Samuel Stennett, *Memoirs of the Life of the Rev. William Ward* (London: J. Haddon: 1825), 128–29.

<sup>6</sup>Stennett, *Memoirs of William Ward*, 231.

<sup>7</sup>For example, Ward's press became a highly profitable aspect of the Serampore Mission; see William Carey to his father, Calcutta, July 11, 1805, William Carey Collection—Letters to his Father, Brother, & Sisters MSS, FPC 19, Angus Library Archives, Regent's Park College, University of Oxford, Oxford (hereafter cited as William Carey Collection MSS). Carey stated, "Our printing office is very large and we have published several works which have paid us pretty well." The missionaries used the press to print and distribute religious material, but they fulfilled print orders from government officials within the British and Danish territories as well. Two years later, Carey reported to his brother that the press produced 1/3 of the Mission's financial needs; see William Carey to his Brother, Calcutta, March 3, 1807, William Carey Collection MSS.

<sup>8</sup>For an account of the missionaries' advancement in translating the Bible into Asian languages, see William Carey, Joshua Marshman, and William Ward to the Society, Serampore, September 1809, William Carey, Joshua Marshman, William Ward, and Others to the Baptist Missionary Committee, 1800–1827 MSS, IN/21, Angus Library Archives, Regent's Park College, University of Oxford, Oxford (hereafter cited as Carey, Marshman, and Ward MSS). This twenty-five paragraph letter was fourteen pages long and gave a specific update on their progress in each language in which they were working at that point.

concerning the vital importance of his correspondence. For example, Fuller wrote on August 1, 1801, “I beseech you do not shorten your Journal. Your talent is to journalize. I understand more of the Mission from those daily statements of things as they occur, than by any other means.”<sup>9</sup> In another, Fuller cherished the receipt of Ward’s Journal so much that he stayed awake until 2 a.m. reading with delight until he finished the entire correspondence. He indicated thus when writing to Ward:

How welcome are your letters, and especially your Journals. The last wh[ich] arrived with papers took me 6 hours to read; but tho’ I began it at 8 in the evening, I left it not till I had done . . . And the blessing of the Lord wh[ich] has attended you in the printing—in circulating your papers—and in conversing with the youth rejoices my heart.<sup>10</sup>

Years later, Fuller continued to speak similar words of affirmation to Ward concerning the value of his correspondence.<sup>11</sup> Fuller thus enabled Ward to expand his perceived role to include content other than printing the Scriptures alone.

**Author.** These warm remarks from Fuller to Ward would not inspire the latter to continue this contribution as he stopped journaling in 1811 and greatly reduced his personal correspondence with supporters in England from 1806 onwards. He began focusing his energy on what he thought to be more productive efforts. He began a monthly newspaper called the *Circular Letters* in December 1807. He came to realize

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<sup>9</sup>Fuller to Ward, August 1, 1801. These examples are but a few of the numerous times Fuller expresses the value he placed on Ward’s journals and letters. For other examples, see Fuller to Ward, May 23, 1801; August 2, 1801; August 10, 1801; December 31, 1803; February 6, 1809; May 13, 1810; and October 7, 1811. Also see Fuller to Marshman, November 19, 1801.

<sup>10</sup>Fuller to Ward, November 26, 1802.

<sup>11</sup>See the preceding footnotes, which list several letters from the close of the first decade within the nineteenth century. Perhaps, the value that Western Christians placed on Ward’s publications was most evident following the Serampore fire of March 11, 1812 and the unbelievable Western response. See Fuller to Ward, November 17, 1812. Also, Ward’s journal was valuable because Carey was hesitant to have his personal letters printed in the *Periodical Accounts*. Carey was mortified to see his letters in print in which he expressed hopes that came to nothing. He was thus embarrassed that Fuller printed this material. Fuller reminded him though that they could not raise money for the BMS without doing so. See Fuller to Carey, December 15, 1805.

that he could relay news to the Mission's Western supporters at a faster rate, with less effort, and at a lower cost through the *Circular Letters* than his hand-written Journal and personal letters. Also, he could have complete control of the message and image portrayed to his Western readers, which was a growing problem for Ward as will be discussed below.

Dropping his personal journal was not without challenges. How could he abandon completely such a valuable tool for ministry?<sup>12</sup> But, by early 1811, he completely forsook journaling to focus on his work as an author and pastor in Bengal. As time wore on, Ward's adjusted print ministry—especially his *A View of the History, Literature, and Mythology of the Hindoos* and his *Farewell Letters*—furthered an existing level of respect among his Western readers.<sup>13</sup> His influence as an image-bearer for BMS missions, however, looked much different with these decisions. Ward's *Circular Letters* proved to be a poor substitute for his former arrangement with Fuller. At the same as the original generation of BMS leadership passed on several core ministerial responsibilities to indigenous leaders, Ward made the decision to invest more deeply in Bengal while also reducing his print influence in the West. One can see a shift in Ward's ministry as pastoral responsibilities in Bengal grew and his primary attention became dedicated to

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<sup>12</sup>Writing to Fuller in 1811, he stated, "The printing of the Circular Letters leaves little for a Journal; but I have thought it might answer some end to continue it"; Ward to Fuller, January 23, 1811, quoted in E. Daniel Potts, "William Ward's Missionary Journal," *The Baptist Quarterly* 25, no. 3 (1973): 111–14. See this section of Potts' article concerning Ward's reduction in journaling. Readers should note that Ward was the editor of the *Circular Letters* although this fact is not stated explicitly on the publication's title page. Evidence supporting this observation is that all of the letters included in the *Circular Letters* from various missionaries and native preachers are addressed to Ward. The authors of these letters wrote the letters to be included in the *Circular Letters*. Thus, they wrote the material to Ward as the editor to be printed to offer news concerning their ministry. Also, note the tremendous timing of this decision. Ward sent his four-volume original journal to Fuller only a few months before the Serampore fire of March 1812. For the historian, this decision was absolutely critical because one can compare Ward's original journal with the edited version that Fuller printed in the *Periodical Accounts*.

<sup>13</sup>Ward's publications were numerous throughout his missionary career and much work is needed to catalogue his writings accurately, a task which remains incomplete at this point.

developing leaders among Bengali Christians.<sup>14</sup> After he altered his print relationship with Fuller, Ward's primary point of significance in the Western context evolved to become that of a highly-regarded missiological role model with a reduced level of personal interaction.<sup>15</sup>

### **Ward's "Paper Missionaries": Printed Scriptures and Pamphlets—Their Impact**

Ward understood that his primary contribution to the Serampore Mission—the very reason he came to Bengal—was to print the Scriptures first and foremost.<sup>16</sup> This contribution also implied that he would print other material that supported this effort. Daniel Potts summarized this print ministry of Ward: “To aid their evangelical labours missionaries widely circulated Bibles, either in part or complete, and tracts. They realized of course that many would be destroyed or sold as waste-paper by the recipients but hoped, among other things, that each would somehow act as a missionary—that people by reading them would be converted to Christianity.”<sup>17</sup> Potts correctly argued that the Serampore missionaries believed printed tracts would extend their cause to places they

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<sup>14</sup>See below. This section details Ward's progression from a missionary alone to a role that included pastoral responsibilities in the Serampore—and eventually the Calcutta—church.

<sup>15</sup>As the designated recipient of Ward's letters and journal, Fuller's understanding of the Serampore Mission was likely influenced by Ward's perspective and interpretation more than any other member of the Serampore Trio. According to Fuller, he was the designated recipient of Ward's journal and letters, while Ryland received Marshman's correspondence and Brunsdon sent his material to Sutcliff. See Andrew Fuller to William Ward, “The Letters of Andrew Fuller,” transcribed by Joyce A. Booth, gathered by Ernest A. Payne, and scanned to Disc by Nigel Wheeler (Angus Library, Regent's Park College, University of Oxford), August 1, 1801.

<sup>16</sup>The discussion concerning the Serampore Trio's efforts to translate and print the Scriptures in various languages is well documented. For example, see E. Daniel Potts, *British Baptist Missionaries in India, 1793–1837: The History of Serampore and Its Missions* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 79–90. The concern of the present dissertation is to concentrate on Ward's ministry as a printer, especially his printed evangelistic material.

<sup>17</sup>Potts, *British Baptist Missionaries in India*, 90. For Potts' perspective on the Trio's tracts and pamphlets, see pp. 90–91. The missionaries substantiated Potts' evaluation in their own summary concerning the role of Ward's print ministry enabling them to send out “paper missionaries” throughout India; see William Carey, Joshua Marshman, and William Ward to the Society, Serampore, January 1805, in *Periodical Accounts*, 3:26.

were not able to visit personally because of certain limitations. The missionaries believed that these materials would serve as printed missionaries in a way. Potts' summary, however, does not capture adequately the depth of the impact made by the tracts and pamphlets that Ward printed. Potts' summary equated value with direct conversions. It is true that they hoped for conversions linked directly to the materials that Ward printed, but the importance they placed on these items did not hinge on this criterion alone.

Otherwise, why did they continue to produce the materials throughout their tenure in Bengal? Granted, the shorter pamphlets and tracts were not expensive, but the Bible they distributed were not cheap. Certainly, they would not have continued the print ministry if they saw no value beyond direct conversions when these desired conversions were not evident. Even printing cheap pamphlets for thirty years would be bad stewardship if Potts' evaluation were adequate. The missionaries believed that the tracts and pamphlets were highly significant as the material below indicate—with or without direct conversions. From the missionaries' perspective, these materials served much more than a hope that they would bring about an occasional convert. Much like their personal contribution, the missionaries did not see a lack of conversions as an indication that the "paper missionaries" were inadequate.

In the early months of Ward's ministry, the missionaries were not quite sure if his work would make the desired impact. A journal entry revealed Ward's hopeful yet uncertain expectation. He wrote, "The natives, we believe, read our things: but what are the effects we cannot tell. We distribute near 50 every Lord's day, of one thing or other."<sup>18</sup> Increased confidence would develop over the following weeks as Bengalis began returning to hear more about Christianity or receive more material.

Any doubt concerning the impact of Ward's print ministry would not continue for very long as the increasingly positive reception of his materials validated his efforts.

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<sup>18</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, August 3, 1800.

Ward recorded that large numbers of Bengalis—especially, the Brahmins of Serampore—took notice of his pamphlets’ religious impact.<sup>19</sup> Bengalis were not naive to the possible implications of expanded efforts by the Serampore missionaries. Ward thus began to exhibit his potential in Bengal. During a preaching tour along the Hoogly River, Ward and Creeshnoo preached to a large crowd of Muslims on October 19 and 20, 1801, one of whom called upon the missionaries in Serampore on January 23, 1802. Ward recorded, “During our journey a man from Belleah (see my Journal of Oct. 19 & 20) had arrived to enquire about the Gospel. He had seen one of our tracts, having read it he was come for more knowledge.”<sup>20</sup> A few weeks later, Ward recorded that a man named Petumber—not to be confused with the converted and employed Petumber—and Kasee Naut came from Belleah for more material. Ward stated, “The other man, whose name is Kasee Naut, he says is talking to the people about Belleah respecting the gospel; Petumbor jun. says, the people thereabouts are all about to come & join themselves to us.”<sup>21</sup> According to this account, the Serampore missionaries had much justification for excitement as Ward’s preaching and printed material cultivated an expanding desire for the gospel among the people of Belleah. These Bengalis were seeking out the gospel message and appeared to be on the verge of converting as a group. On another occasion, Ward recorded, “We had two men from Jess[ore], a journey of three or four days, to hear & get the scriptures, to-day. This is another fruit of our first journey out, when Creeshnoo & I went with Mr Short. We had much talk with them during the day. They staid & heard preaching at night, & afterwards went to Creeshnoo’s & talked wt. Petumbor, &c. almost

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<sup>19</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, June 22, 1800.

<sup>20</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, January 23, 1802.

<sup>21</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, February 16, 1802. Also, see a more detailed account of Petumber’s response to Ward’s tract, his journey to Serampore, and his conversion in the missionaries’ report to the BMS Committee: ‘William Carey, Joshua Marshman, and William Ward to the Society,’ Serampore, April 13, 1802, in *Periodical Accounts*, 2:236.

all night.”<sup>22</sup> Several months later, the missionaries experienced the full effect of Ward’s tracts. A group from a Muslim village received Ward’s “Persian Pamphlet” and appeared ready to forsake Islam in favor of Christianity.<sup>23</sup>

Certainty about Ward’s effectiveness continued to grow over the coming months. The missionaries’ spring report to the BMS brimmed with enthusiasm that men and women journeyed from many miles to hear a further explanation of the gospel after reading Ward’s pamphlets.<sup>24</sup> The impact of Ward’s printed materials was beyond question by the fall of 1803. While on an itinerant excursion, Ward recorded that knowledge of the gospel preceded him in Bengali villages, a reality that he indirectly attributed to his pamphlets.<sup>25</sup> Ward’s favorable reception in Ogradeep offered another point of validation for his print ministry. Distributing tracts to an Ogradeep villager eighteen months earlier established a foundational understanding of the gospel in this area before a BMS representative visited the territory personally. Men continued to come

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<sup>22</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, January 31, 1802. This event is highly significant. Jessore, which was a Muslim village, became a major preaching station for the missionaries and one of the first churches established in the area and led by indigenous believers. Muslims from Jessore first came to Serampore to request a missionary to come and preach among them in August 1801.

<sup>23</sup>To follow the development of the relationship between the Serampore missionaries and the people of this village—Jaggerdundakatty—see the journal entries for these dates in 1802: October 25, October 31, and November 12.

<sup>24</sup>“Extracts of a Letter From the Missionaries to the Society,” Serampore, April 13, 1802, in *Periodical Accounts*, 2:235–36. The missionaries cited Ward’s ministry as stirring “a spirit of enquiry . . . to a degree unknown at any former period”; see p. 236 of this reference. Also, see William Carey, Joshua Marshman, and William Ward to the Society, Serampore, July 16, 1802, in *Periodical Accounts*, 2:290. In this entry, the missionaries reported that they had distributed over 500 New Testaments and “an unknown number of small tracts purely on the way of salvation, and against the Hindoo and Mussulman errors.”

<sup>25</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, September 30, 1803. In this journal entry, Ward wrote, “The news of Jesus Christ & of the church at Serampore seems to have gone much further than I expected. It appears to be known in most villages [but] to a few.” This remark is significant in light of Ward’s overall perspective that he was preaching in villages where BMS missionaries had not preached before this trip; see his entry for September 29, 1803. These inquirers knew of Ward’s product and sought out their own copies of testaments and pamphlets, which was a direct result of his work. This particular entry—September 30, 1803—was a summary of his encounter in Ogradeep, a village from which a resident heard Ward preach in nearby Gayakalee and took some of his materials eighteen months earlier on January 20, 1802. While Ward did not indicate in either journal entry whether the Ogradeep villager was a Muslim or not, he indicated that Muslims were present at this initial encounter on January 20, 1802 and the following day.



from Jessore over the coming years and three Muslims received baptism and took the Lord's Supper two and a half years after this initial encounter.<sup>26</sup> The following year, the Serampore missionaries saw the full effect of Ward's "paper missionaries." In a lengthy journal entry that offered an account of the reception of eight persons into the Serampore church by conversion, Ward focused on the particular story that illustrated the strength of his print ministry. He recorded,

He related that Kreeshnoo & I had gone into his village where we had left papers & a testament. That I had declared, in leaving the testament, that it was for all the village, & that he who could read best, should keep it & read it in the hearing of those who wished it. In consequence he had got this testament. The reading of these books had changed his ideas, made him leave off idolatry, & put his trust in Xt. This change had taken place from the time of his reading these books four years ago. He answered the other usual questions to satisfaction & was received; then his wife.<sup>27</sup>

This man received a testament from Ward four years earlier and put his faith in Christ by reading it. Such encounters with inquirers from Jessore, Ogradeep, and other Bengali

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<sup>26</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, August 5, 1804. Men came from Jessore again in early 1804 requesting more information about Christianity after reading one of Ward's tracts; see Ward, Journal MSS, April 26, 1804. They returned on July 10, 1804, to dialogue about the gospel. On July 31, 1804, they returned and stayed in Serampore until receiving baptism and the Lord's Supper on August 5, 1804. Eventually, Ward concluded that Jessore had proven to be the most fruitful location of their many missionary efforts; see Ward, Journal MSS, December 20, 1806. Several of the Serampore Trio's core disciples became the leaders of the Jessore church, particularly three native believers named Ponchoo, Carapeit, and Aratoon. They brought a consistent stream of inquirers to Serampore for further instruction. For example, see Ward, Journal MSS, May 5, 1809. In this entry, Ponchoo brought five Muslim inquirers with him from Jessore to Serampore. Carapeit proved to be an effective evangelist in Jessore and baptized twenty-five natives by the summer of 1810; see Ward, Journal MSS, August 19, 1810. Concerning Carapeit's evangelistic effectiveness among Jessore's Muslim population, also see "Jossore. (Jusohura)," *Circular Letters Relative to the Missions in India 2* (April, 1809): 16, in Serampore Circular Letters, 1807–1819, IN/26, Angus Library Archives, Regent's Park College, University of Oxford, Oxford (hereafter cited as *Circular Letters Relative to the Missions in India*). Aratoon was an effective evangelist as well and brought thirty native converts to Serampore to receive baptism in late 1810; see Ward, Journal MSS, November 25, 1810. For other examples of Aratoon's ministry to Muslims, see "Jossore. (Jusohura)," *Circular Letters Relative to the Missions in India 2* (July 1809): 31–32; and "Jossore. (Jusohura)," *Circular Letters Relative to the Missions in India 2* (September 1809): 41. Also, see "Serampore. (Shreerampoora)," *Circular Letters Relative to the Missions in India 2* (May 1809): 22. In this entry, Ward described a Jessore Muslim, named Kureem, who came to Serampore and lived with the missionaries for several weeks to inquire about the gospel. Ward baptized Kureem two months after this entry; see "Serampore. (Shreerampoora)," *Circular Letters Relative to the Missions in India 2* (July 1809): 32. Eventually, the missionaries declared that Jessore was the most fruitful preaching station established by their twenty-year effort in Bengal; see William Carey et al. to the Society, Serampore, January 1811, Carey, Marshman, and Ward MSS.

<sup>27</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, November 2, 1805. This man's name was Kreeshnoo, but one should not confuse this man with Ward's co-laborer as this particular entry in Ward's journal made clear.

villages confirmed Ward's preaching and printing ministries as Bengali Muslims sought out more knowledge concerning his message.<sup>28</sup>

Following the course of these developments, readers can see the justified value that the BMS placed on Ward's abilities. He was a printer primarily, whose gifts at this particular trade caused the Christian message to spread and take root at a much quicker rate than the missionaries could have imagined otherwise.

### **Ward's "Paper Missionaries": The How of Distribution**

The question arises as to how the missionaries went about distributing Ward's material. As the following paragraphs will indicate, they applied a deliberate approach to distributing their "paper missionaries" during unsolicited and solicited opportunities.

**Unsolicited distribution.** Throughout Ward's journal, he recorded instances in which he and his fellow missionaries would offer unsolicited material to those with whom they interacted. Their normal process of preaching and distributing tracts is evident in several of Ward's journal entries. For example, he recorded,

This morning we arrived at Oclaburgee. We went into the bazar, & got the largest Bengalee congregation I have seen, to whom I talked with some freedom. We gave away an uncommon quantity of papers & a testament. People from all the villages round were at the market, who took papers with them, and we gave papers & testaments to be taken to Mundel Ghaut, to Mooragacha, & to Bellyadampoor.<sup>29</sup>

Elsewhere, Ward observed Carey's use of his printed material. Carey "administered the Lord's supper, & preached in the evening in Bengalee. While Bro[ther] C[arey] was addressing Bhoirob on his introduction into a Xn. church, several of Bhoirob's friends

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<sup>28</sup>See Ward, Journal MSS, February 15, 1802 for an example of Ward's pamphlets stirring interest in Brahmans who sought out further information at a later date. For other examples, see his journal entries for August 13, 1802 and August 18, 1805. These two representative examples show that Bengali responses to his pamphlets continued over the course of Ward's ministry. Bengali interest in the missionaries' content did not wane with the passing of time, but rather increased.

<sup>29</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, January 19, 1802.

happened to be standing at the window, & heard it. They took a testament & pamphlets.”<sup>30</sup> Carey thus distributed pamphlets and testaments to undergird his preaching ministry. Their desire concerning tract or pamphlet distribution seemed to be to give these documents to anyone who would receive them at a rate that was simply staggering. Approximately three years into his ministry, Ward recorded, “I told them we had already distributed 22,000 pamphlets or small tracts amongst the people.”<sup>31</sup> As is evident, Ward and the other missionaries distributed his material widely.

Ward and the other BMS missionaries did not, however, distribute their printed New Testaments indiscriminately. The cost was too high to give away their New Testaments—and eventually, their complete Bible—without certain considerations. From a perspective of production cost, Ward’s print ministry proved to be relatively inexpensive.<sup>32</sup> Ward indicated as much on July 27, 1800: “A man came last week from near Nuddea for a book of Matthew which we have printed separately . . . including a number of prophecies & a very brief history of Xnity. Thus, for a pound or two we are able to distribute 500 sacred books of Xt’s life, &c. which we hope our Saviour will deign to bless.”<sup>33</sup> According to a letter from Ward to Fuller, the cost of a Bengali New Testament was approximately 76 to 152 times higher than that of a pamphlet.<sup>34</sup> Also, the

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<sup>30</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, July 10, 1803.

<sup>31</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, October 18, 1802.

<sup>32</sup>For a detailed account of production cost, see the seventy-one page memoir printed by the Serampore mission in 1808: *Memoir Relative to the Translation of the Scriptures, into Certain of the Oriental Languages*, Serampore: Printed at the Mission Press, 1808, in Serampore Circular Letters, 1807–1819, IN/26, Angus Library Archives, Regent’s Park College, University of Oxford, Oxford.

<sup>33</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, July 27, 1800. Concerning the low costs of production and the potential profits of selling the material, see his entry on March 26, 1802.

<sup>34</sup>William Ward to Andrew Fuller, April 2, 1801 (IN/16, Angus Library Archives, Regent’s Park College, Univeristy of Oxford, Oxford). According to Ward, the cost of printing 2,000 Bengali New Testaments was 612 British £ whereas he could print 500 pamphlets for 1 to 2 £. To print 2,000 pamphletes, therefore, would cost approximately 4 to 8 £, thus equaling the price comparison of the New Testaments at 76 to 152 times the price of an equal number of pamphlets.

missionaries were aware that Bengalis were less likely to read a large text than a smaller offering.<sup>35</sup> Therefore, they made a distinction when distributing their larger item as opposed to the smaller pamphlets.

Due to these cost considerations, they only gave the New Testaments to individuals who exhibited sincere desire to understand Christianity, whereas they were quick to distribute the pamphlets without any apparent qualification. For example, Ward recorded, “In the evening we arrived at Bajgunge, where we each delivered the word & distributed a testament & many tracts. People came to the boat for more pamphlets till 10 o’clock at night.”<sup>36</sup> As is evident in this journal entry, Ward distributed many pamphlets but only one testament. Elsewhere, he also indicated this standard of thoughtful distribution when he wrote, “We have given but a few Testaments away yet. It is difficult to find people whose minds are in a state to read it.”<sup>37</sup> They felt the need to withhold the full New Testament until a person showed genuine interest in their message. There was no particularly allotted amount of time for a person to receive a New Testament, but rather an indication of spiritual sincerity and genuine interest. In fact, Ward recorded several instances in which they gave one to an inquirer following a short dialogue or sermon.<sup>38</sup> Ward penned, “I went & found a young Mussulman sitting in the porch of his house. He was polite, & in answer I told him my errand; read to him part of Bro[ther] Pearce’s Address, & gave him one.”<sup>39</sup> A few days later, he wrote, “After breakfast Creeshnoo & I went into the Bazar, & soon got a large & attentive congregation, many Mussulmans & a few brahmans. The people seemed anxious to get papers. We gave away

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<sup>35</sup>William Carey et al. to the Society, Serampore, June 27, 1804, in *Periodical Accounts*, 3:18.

<sup>36</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, January 18, 1802.

<sup>37</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, August 14, 1801.

<sup>38</sup>For example, see Ward, Journal MSS, February 15, 1802.

<sup>39</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, October 15, 1801. Ward’s reference to Pearce’s “Address” concerned Pearce’s *Letter to the Lascars*. This pamphlet is discussed in chap. 6 concerning the “Persian Pamphlet”.

many, & several came to the river side running into the water to get more.”<sup>40</sup> Several months later, Ward recorded,

This morning a man from Gayakalee came to the boat for a testament or other books. I was much pleased with his talk. The word he had heard seemed to have gone into his mind rather better than I fear it does in common . . . . He came & sat on the boat, & heard more, & we gave him a testament. He asked for a Mussulman paper, in addition to the rest . . . . We then crossed the river to Metakoondoo & went into the haut. Many were assembled from neighbouring villages to whom Creeshnoo & I explained & Creeshnoo was almost pulled in pieces in giving away papers. The Mussulmans in these parts seemed more anxious for books.<sup>41</sup>

In this instance, the Muslims in Garakalle, Metakoondoo, and other villages in the area were anxious to receive Ward’s tracts and scriptures to the point of almost physically injuring Ward and his helpers. In such instances, Ward and other BMS personnel happily gave away pamphlets indiscriminately.

In other cases—particularly, before distributing a full testament—they wanted to see a higher level of interest before distributing certain material. For example, Ward gave one away following a discussion that occurred over several hours while the missionaries were staying in a particular location. He recorded, “Last night & this morning we had a native with us who gave us much pleasure. He was very anxious to get a testament, & seemed to be concerned to find the true way.”<sup>42</sup> In addition to Ward’s hearers requesting material following a dialogue or sermon, Bengalis appeared unannounced on numerous occasions, thus exhibiting an above average attempt to secure the missionaries’ product. Ward described one such instance in his journal: “The news was now circulated thro’ the town, & during the whole of our breakfast time people flocked to him [Creeshnoo] for books. One man begged hard for Creeshnoo’s testament . . . . I was quite pleased to see the people eagerly come for books.”<sup>43</sup> Elsewhere, he

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<sup>40</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, October 20, 1801.

<sup>41</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, January 21, 1802.

<sup>42</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, January 22, 1802.

<sup>43</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, October 13, 1801.

described another example of a man from the writer caste travelling forty miles to hear the missionaries preach and receive printed copies of the scriptures.<sup>44</sup> On certain occasions, he distributed a New Testament to individuals with whom the missionaries had an ongoing relationship.<sup>45</sup> Ultimately, there does not appear to be a standard concerning how long they waited before giving a New Testament away beyond their vaguely-defined desire of sincerity within the recipient. Their initial reluctance appeared to originate in a hopeful yet uncertain expectation concerning the potential impact of Ward's print ministry, the elevated cost of printing a full New Testament as opposed to the relatively low cost of smaller pamphlets, and the reality that they could impact more people on a broader level through pamphlet and tract distribution. The result was an approximate monthly distribution rate of forty New Testaments compared to several thousand—beyond their ability to count accurately—tracts per year.<sup>46</sup>

Generally, therefore, the Carey and Ward travelled into surrounding villages to preach the gospel and distribute tracts as described in these passages. They established and exhibited a particular evangelistic method—preaching and distributing printed material—to the degree that their native brethren followed suit when on their own

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<sup>44</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, April 11, 1802.

<sup>45</sup>For example, see Ward, Journal MSS, April 30, 1802. In this journal entry, Ward discussed the return of three individuals with whom the Serampore missionaries had an ongoing evangelistic relationship. In this entry, he traced his previous journal entries in which he discussed these relationships. These individuals had received his material, sought out further information, received additional material, and continued to return for more dialogue concerning the scriptures and Christianity. These three Bengalis entered the missionaries' catechetical school a week later. See Ward, Journal MSS, May 7, 1802. The missionaries had started this school recently "to send to this school all who come for a few day on enquiry." In these sessions, the missionaries took Bengalis through Isaac Watts' catechism on the New Testament with Scripture proofs.

<sup>46</sup>William Carey et al. to the Society, Serampore, August 1803, in *Periodical Accounts*, 2:443–44. For an overview of their eventual rate of tract and Scripture distribution, see "Gratuitous Distribution of the Holy Scriptures, &c. during June and July, 1812.," *Circular Letters Relative to the Missions in India* 5 (September 1812): 132–33; "Gratuitous Distribution of the Holy Scriptures, &c. &c. during August and September.," *Circular Letters Relative to the Missions in India* 5 (September 1812): 175–76; and "Gratuitous Distribution of Scriptures and Scripture Tracts, From the Brethren's Printing Office, During the months of October, November, and December.," *Circular Letters Relative to the Missions in India* 5 (December 1812): 244–45.

preaching tours.<sup>47</sup> Such was the Serampore Mission's way of spreading the gospel in Bengal.

**Solicited distribution.** While Ward proved to be diligent in distributing his material, he did not have to force Bengalis to take his paper missionaries, which confirmed their effectiveness further. Increasingly, entries in Ward's journal reveal a strong desire among his hearers to receive his pamphlets and scriptures. For example, Ward recorded:

The people seemed surprised . . . to see us at night—such words from an Englishman, &c., at night to, who seemed anxious to give away certain papers: all this surprised them. After a little hesitation one man took one; after more took, then more came running up. We talked a little: I heard one man say he never saw such a Sahib before. After distributing about 50 papers by Ram Bose against the Brahmans, we returned.<sup>48</sup>

In many cases, Ward gave material to Bengalis according to their unsolicited inquiry.<sup>49</sup>

One instance in particular revealed a growing spirit among the Bengalis concerning Ward's material; his work was sought out highly. Ward wrote:

We gave away several copies of Matthew. One Brahman came to return his, having been told that he would be called upon for the money. Bro[ther] C[arey] removed his fears. We saw one or two in the hands of natives as we went out preaching this evening as they walked along the streets. There was quite a contention who should have one after preaching. One Brahman complained lustily that Bro[ther] C[arey] had given one to a Sooder. One man followed us all the way home for one. The people say, the Brahmans have declared it a great sin to take our papers, & yet they themselves take them.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>47</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, January 15, 1805. For another example, see his entry for June 25, 1805.

<sup>48</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, October 12, 1801. For other examples, see Ward, Journal, September 15, 1801 and October 13, 1801.

<sup>49</sup>For two examples, see Ward's journal entries for September 15, 1801 and June 17, 1802.

<sup>50</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, August 24, 1800. One should note that Brahmans appear to have been some of the Bengalis most interested in Ward's material. For example, see his journal entry for February 15, 1802. Also, see April 11, 1802, which gave an account of the effects of Ward's material on a Brahman. Ward and Creeshnoo had given him a tract on January 20, 1802 and he came to Serampore to hear more about Christianity and receive a copy of the Scriptures. For another example of a Brahman soliciting a testament from Ward and conducting a lengthy inquiry about Christianity, see Ward, Journal MSS, May 30, 1802. Concerning Ward's mention of a "Sooder," this term was not a common word within his writings and

Often, Ward and his co-laborers would distribute his material until their supplies were exhausted when conducting such preaching tours. For example, Ward wrote, “A great man invited us to his house; where I gave a testament & other books. For two hours, I suppose, the people crowded round the boat to get books, & when we went away some followed us a mile. A great many went away without being supplied.”<sup>51</sup> In other entries, Ward indicated that individuals made an unsolicited request for material after hearing his pamphlets read by another recipient.<sup>52</sup> In certain situations, the crowd became violent when Ward’s supplies ran low, even injuring one another and stealing Ward’s material from each other.<sup>53</sup> These instances thus show the fact that they had an increasingly encouraging reception among their Bengali audience with the passing days.

In certain instances, the Bengalis’ intensity when seeking his material seemed to overwhelm him. He wrote,

This morning Creeshnoo & I went out into the bazar. We soon had a large congregation, to whom I spoke with more than usual liberty; & they heard attentively. Creeshnoo followed; and we began to give away books; but such was their eagerness to get books that I was pressed exceedingly by them; had they been crowns, they could scarcely have been more eager. At length I was obliged to retire to the boat. They pressed upon me here, all round the boat, on other boats adjoining till I found it impossible to supply all that [they] wanted, or indeed much more than half . . . . I have reflected with pleasure since that this was the very spot where Brother Carey set his foot on shore, & from whence he looked out for a place to begin the work of God.<sup>54</sup>

Clearly, Bengalis saw Ward’s material as valuable. Bengalis sought to receive his material with such vigor that it became dangerous for Ward and his co-laborers. Such experiences were not abnormal for Ward. He accounted for a similar incident

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no resource lists this term as a particular caste in Bengal at this time. This situation could have been one in which Ward misheard the Brahmin’s term or the Brahmin could have been using a slang term to speak of this individual. In either case, the Brahmin spoke of the recipient of Ward’s material in a derogatory manner.

<sup>51</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, January 20, 1802.

<sup>52</sup>For example, see Ward, Journal MSS, May 29, 1802.

<sup>53</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, November 28, 1802.

<sup>54</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, October 24, 1801.



approximately two years later:

This morning very early people came for books, & by the time I was dressed a large company were waiting on the bank. I went out & talked for some time, when they heard very well. I then began to give away testaments & papers, but the crowd pressed so much for about two hours that our situation became rather unpleasant. In this time we gave away 17 testaments & many tracts. Very many went away much disappointed thro' not getting books, & we were obliged to barricade our boat to keep them out. In spite of all two or three got on the boat, & two persons came in a boat. After such efforts we could not send them away empty . . . 27 testaments & one old testament were therefore given for this place & neighbourhood.<sup>55</sup>

A few weeks later, he recorded a similar experience: "This afternoon we went out into one of the bazars & got a very large congregation; the press was so great that tho' Presad & I both tried to talk we could not get to be hear, to any satisfaction. We therefore gave away some papers & came away; tho' the last of the papers they snatch'd out of Presad's hand."<sup>56</sup> In several occurrences of distributing his material, he would run out of supplies as in these cases. During such encounters, the aggressive nature of Bengalis wanting to receive his material was highly unpleasant.

It seems that the growing number and sincerity of requests for Ward's material further grounded the missionaries' initially hopeful yet uncertain expectation concerning his potential impact. By the eighth month of 1803, the missionaries concluded that Ward's printing ministry was the centerpiece of their efforts according to Carey: "Its after removal to Serampore was the necessary step to the use of our printing press; to the free use of which, as a mean, more is to be attributed than to all other means put together."<sup>57</sup> Through his efforts, Ward set a precedent for other missionaries to emulate in preaching to gathered crowds and reinforcing one's message through printed tracts and testaments.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>55</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, October 5, 1803.

<sup>56</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, October 24, 1803.

<sup>57</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 2:441-42.

<sup>58</sup>Ward began meeting with other evangelicals in Bengal who wanted to follow his established pattern. Together, this group devised a plan "for distributing the Scriptures & tracts among the natives of Calcutta"; see Ward, Journal MSS, April 1 and May 6, 1811.

As this precedent took root, “paper missionaries” spread the gospel faster and further than BMS representatives and native preachers could go themselves. Often, native Bengalis first encountered the missionaries’ message before they arrived through Ward’s Serampore pamphlets.<sup>59</sup>

### **Ward’s Secondary Contribution: A Minister in Bengal**

Certainly, Ward fulfilled his primary responsibility as a printer beyond initial expectations. His time in Bengal, however, also included an expanded ministerial role. He proved to be highly interested in conducting a vibrant ministry in person rather than doing so from behind the walls of his print office alone. Therefore, Ward sought out opportunities to fulfill the ministries of an evangelist of Bengalis personally and a trusted pastor among the Serampore and Calcutta brethren.

### **Evangelizing Bengali Muslims Personally**

Ward’s attempts to evangelize Bengali Muslims were not limited to distributing his “paper missionaries.” Ward found great receptivity among his Bengali audience as he sought to share the good news of Jesus Christ personally through verbal proclamation.

**Ward initiating evangelism.** When reading Ward’s journal, it is apparent that he was diligent in initiating evangelistic conversations and attempting to preach to assembled Bengalis. His settings were not always the most desirable—preaching in a cow-house in one instance—but he conducted his ministry faithfully nonetheless.

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<sup>59</sup>For example, see “Bro. Krishna’s Journal,” *Circular Letters Relative to the Missions in India* 1 (December 1807): 6. In this entry, Krishna described the encounter between himself, William Carey, Jr., three other Bengali itinerants and two Muslims in Jessore. Krishna began the conversation by asking the Muslims if they had “obtained any papers,” to which one of the listeners replied that they had received some from Serampore. Krishna continued by asking, “What are they about, do you know? Have you read them?” Clearly, the “paper missionaries” were accomplishing their intended purpose. Also, this incident showed that the preachers assumed that the “paper missionaries” would accomplish this goal.

Generally, he travelled to villages along the Hoogley River and shared his message with a gathered crowd or lone individuals, followed by tract distribution.<sup>60</sup> In Ward's ministry and writings, it became evident that he differed with Carey on the relationship between preaching and distributing their "paper missionaries." Carey laid a heavier emphasis on distributing printed material whereas Ward sought to supplement and enhance his spoken ministry with evangelistic material. When Carey and Claudius Buchanan devised and enacted a plan to translate the Bible into all of India's languages as well as Chinese, Ward expressed his disagreement concerning the wisdom of this effort. He recorded:

The publishing [of] the Scriptures . . . before Missionaries are planted in these countries, though I am far from thinking that all the good which Mr Brown, Mr Buchanan, Bre[thre]n Carey and Marshman, expect can be hoped for, may be attended with many good effects... I think, however, that a person is in a great measure disqualified for becoming a translator into a new language unless he know the force & bendings both of that from which he translates & that into which he translates. Perhaps it is enough to justify the work that the substance of the divine will would be made known in such a translation. I know that these translations will be, & must be worse than the first Bengalee, because in the Bengalee Brother Carey knew something of the language but in these comparatively little can be known; respecting the construction, shades of meaning, words to convey spiritual ideas, &c. &c . . . . I recommend to Bren. Carey & Marshman to enter upon translations which we, with our hands, can distribute, & which may be fitted for stations which we ourselves can occupy . . . . I remind them that life is short; that this life may evaporate in schemes of translations for China, Bootan, Mahratta, &c. while the good in our hands & at our hands is left undone.<sup>61</sup>

With these words—and many other thoughts similar to them—Ward made it clear that he believed such a massive effort to translate and print the Bible for languages with which they had no personal interaction was an unwise use of their time. He proposed a different approach to spreading the Bible throughout Asia:

I have urged Bre[thre]n C[arey] & M[arshman] to urge this forward, as a faithful translation into the Shanscrit will render all the translations into the other Eastern

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<sup>60</sup>For an example of this approach, see Ward, Journal MSS, October 19, 1803. In that entry, Ward summarized how he, Presad, and Fernandez gathered 50 people in Kanchanghaut, preached to them, and distributed testaments and papers to them.

<sup>61</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, April 27, 1806.

languages easy & certain; for all the eastern pundits know the Shanscrit; &, making the Shanscrit the original, every real pundit in the East could make from this a good translation into his own vernacular tongue. I have told them that by translating the scriptures into Shanscrit they at once, in a sense, translate the Scriptures into all the languages of Asia.<sup>62</sup>

Ward desired to distribute widely the Sanskrit Bible, as this language was foundational for many eastern tongues according to his perspective. An able recipient would be able to translate the Sanskrit into the local vernacular. Rather than spending the remainder of their missionary careers in Bible translation, he wanted to invest in this process. Then, the men could return their focus to personally preaching, distributing evangelistic material, and cultivating native leadership. For Ward, tract and Bible distribution either preceded and prepared the way for personal evangelism or supplemented this central effort. Blindly translating the Bible with no hope of personal interaction and distribution did not resonate with Ward's ministerial convictions.

When travelling to share the gospel, Ward put forward a message one would expect from a Particular Baptist missionary. In several journal entries, he gave an account of his sermons' subject matter. For instance, he wrote,

In the evening we went by a pleasant walk to the neighbouring town called Patalee, where the gospel, I suppose, had never been before proclaimed. We had a pretty large congregation, who with the exception of two pert young brahmans behaved well. One man seemed to understand well, but I suspect his sincerity. My principle aim was to bring home their sins—to shew that God would judge them either as righteous or unrighteous, not as Hindoos—as wearing a poitu, or as English wearing a hat—I shewed them the death of Xt. & the provisions of the Gospel – as the alone way of pardon & sanctification—& I pressed upon them, by the nearness of death, the vanity of worldly things—& the righteousness of God's future Judgment—to

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<sup>62</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, June 6, 1806. Ward, nevertheless, participated personally in this effort. Although he disagreed with Carey and Marshman concerning the effectiveness of this plan, he went along with his co-laborers, thus illustrating how the three men worked together even when they disagreed with each other on a principle. Ward recorded, "There is a remarkable similarity in the different Indian languages. Without having bestowed any attention to the Orissa [language] I go through a proof of the Testament in this language every week, comparing it with the English. I go through another Bengalee one; have begun to go through another in the Hindoostanee to which language I have not sat much. I intend in future to go through the Shanscrit in the same way . . . . But these proofs take up much time"; see Ward, Journal MSS, December 16, 1806. From this quote, it is clear that translating the Scriptures into various Asiatic languages did not reside with Carey alone, but rather was an effort conducted by all three members of the Trio.

become the disciples of Xt. and obey his commands.<sup>63</sup>

According to Ward, Englishman and Bengali alike were sinners in need of the gospel's provision as the way of pardon. God's future judgment was based on pardon and sanctification in Christ rather than one's cultural practices. His message remained the same whether speaking to listeners with Bengali ethnicity or European heritage: all men are enemies of God apart from Christ and completely helpless otherwise.<sup>64</sup>

Ward followed the missionaries' typical pattern when preaching in Serampore's surrounding villages. In most cases, he and a native Christian would gather a crowd in a village's bazar and preach a sermon or use a question and answer approach to sharing the gospel.<sup>65</sup> Then Ward would distribute printed material to reinforce his message.<sup>66</sup> A good picture of his effort to preach the gospel and distribute material comes from his journal entry on June 17, 1802. He wrote, "Going farther I met a poor old man, whom I addressed; told him of his nearness to death, of the danger of sinners, who must

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<sup>63</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, September 29, 1803. Note that Ward used the term "Hindoo" to describe his listeners, but this phrase refers to their Indian cultural practice of wearing a head covering rather than indicating religious identification. He contrasted this head covering with an English hat. Therefore, one can assume that the crowd comprised of typical Bengali consistency: a mixture of Muslims and Hindus. Whether speaking to Muslims or Hindus, Ward's message remained consistent regarding these themes.

<sup>64</sup>For another example of his sermon contents, see "Bengal Mission: Serampore and Calcutta," *Circular Letters Relative to the Missions in India* 5 (January 1812): 14–15. In this sermon, he focused specifically on his view, based on Romans 3 and 5, that his Bengali listeners were enemies of God and that God's love was made available through the atonement provided by Christ Jesus. In his message, Ward showed them the nature of evil from the Ten Commandments, how all men are evil by nature, and encouraged them to embrace Christ's offer of atonement, becoming friends of God rather than enemies. Following this sermon, he distributed tracts that contained Scripture extracts, but did not have enough copies for every one of his hearers.

<sup>65</sup>Ward followed the example established by Thomas and Carey, but expanded this model to include the distribution of his printed material. For a detailed summary of the missionaries' precedent based on Ward's efforts, see William Carey, Joshua Marshman, and William Ward to the Society, Serampore, December 18, 1801, in *Periodical Accounts*, 2:226. His contribution became the standard practice of the BMS missionaries. See the missionaries' summary of their pattern of evangelizing the area surrounding Serampore: William Carey, Joshua Marshman, and William Ward to the Society, Serampore, July 16, 1802, in *Periodical Accounts*, 2:291. This pattern became the norm for the Serampore-Calcutta church. The missionaries led many members of the congregation to follow their example. See "Review of the Mission at the close of the year 1811: Serampore and Calcutta Bengal," *Circular Letters Relative to the Missions in India* 5 (January 1812): 3.

<sup>66</sup>For example, see Ward, Journal MSS, November 7, 1805; November 11, 1805, and June 1, 1806.

give an account to God—that his sins must necessary be many—but that there was one way of salvation. The old man, & others who collected, seemed attentive. One man took a book, & read it off at hand to the others. The old man took this paper home.”<sup>67</sup> A few months later, he recorded,

This morning we left papers at Chanpore, & afterwards finding Monoo again he took us into Mutterpore, where I explained & the people heard with some attention. I went over the sins of the debtahs & of Mahomet & showed the inefficacy of the two systems in the universal wickedness of all casts, & then preached the Gospel & showed the holy fruits of faith in Xt. This is indeed our common way, & sometimes a feeble opposition & sometimes an obstinate one is made in defence of the two systems, & a good deal of contempt shown for Xt. & the gospel, notwithstanding the fear the native in general have of offending an Englishman.<sup>68</sup>

This quote offers a picture of Ward’s regular method of sharing the gospel. He critiqued the religious system of his hearers, expounded upon the message of Christ, and showed the superior nature of the Christian religion to Islam or Hinduism while answering objections to his assertions. On such occasions, Ward gave evangelistic pamphlets to his listeners to strengthen his impact on their thinking. He recorded, “At night we came to Battar-gassee, a village of Mussulmans. I went with the Lanthorn [lantern], & was shown into a cow-house, or something like it, where I sat down, & a number of people came, to whom I read & talked for about 2 hours, & left them papers.”<sup>69</sup> Several months later, Ward had a similar experience:

This morning we went out into [the] Hoogley, & had in three places three congregations; at the last we had a man who seemed an inveterate enemy, & was ready to quarrel with Creeshnoo Presad. I enjoyed some liberty, & the people in general heard with attention; I pressed upon them the absolute necessity of believing in Xt. By the shortness of life, the greatness of their sins, & their inability to bear eternal fire. We gave a Musselman from Moorshedabad a testament & pamphlets of his own language.<sup>70</sup>

In this instance, Ward pressed upon his listeners the need to embrace the Christian

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<sup>67</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, June 17, 1802.

<sup>68</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, October 20, 1802.

<sup>69</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, October 21, 1802.

<sup>70</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, September 25, 1803.

message and focused his concluding remarks on a Muslim's response. The Bengali Muslim received Ward's message favorably and took a Bible and several tracts back to his village. These journal entries reveal his common practice: reinforcing his sermons or dialogues with his pamphlets. Ward's established pattern of preaching and distributing printed material became the method used by native Bengali preachers as well as they became more independent in ministry.<sup>71</sup>

Ward also sought to dialogue with individuals while itinerating in Bengal. He found these encounters to create a deeper impression as he could answer specific questions and distribute his material to persons who truly wanted it rather than a crowd trying to receive a novelty. For example, Ward recorded one instance when numerous groups and individuals came to his boat after hearing that one of the BMS missionaries was in the area. He wrote, "After we got to the boat 4 others came & got testaments & tracts; afterwards other groups came till late at night when at last we found 20 testaments had been given away amongst them . . . . At the close I went out & held a conversation with a number by the side of the boat who made many sensible enquiries."<sup>72</sup> A few weeks later, Ward found his way to Mudnabatty, the very city where Carey had his first glimpses of productive ministry in Bengal. Spending two days in the area allowed Ward to dialogue with several Muslim villagers whom Carey had proselytized several years earlier. Ward reflected on this positive encounter:

One of them when mentioning Bro[ther] C[arey]'s name made a salam towards the place in the hall where he used to sit & teach them . . . . Presad & Rotten talked, and we then took leave. Our brethren told them that they had become Xns. with a number of others of almost all casts. One of them, a Musselman, seemed surprised

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<sup>71</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, January 11, 1806. For another example, see "Jossore. (Jusohuru). Journal of brother Carapiet Chator.," *Circular Letters Relative to the Missions in India* 1 (September 1808): 88–89. In this journal, Carapiet described his attempts to share the gospel with Hindus and Muslims. Also, see Ward's account of an "instance of the power of the Gospel among the heathen" when Carapiet converted a Muslim in the Serampore area: "Serampore and Calcutta," *Circular Letters Relative to the Missions in India* 1 (November 1812): 220.

<sup>72</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, September 30, 1803.

when he was told that Musselmans were among the number of those who had become Xns.<sup>73</sup>

Ward found these Bengalis to be shocked at the thought of other Muslims leaving their Islamic faith, and therefore, their established social category. In many cases, the opportunity to handle listeners' objections or deeper inquiries adequately thus came through prolonged conversations with individuals as in this encounter.

In certain instances, their attempts to propagate the Christian message were not positive experiences however. On one occasion, Ward feared for his safety when interacting with a frightening Muslim holy man. He provided a fascinating recollection of his frightening encounter with a type of Muslim known as a Fakier, which seemed to be a Muslim Sufi or mystic, on October 26, 1801.<sup>74</sup> The Fakier lived in a wilderness hut that successive Muslim Fakiers occupied as a leader among the Muslim community seeking Allah. The Fakier received the offerings brought by Muslim worshipers to the local pere's monument.<sup>75</sup> Ward noted sarcastically that the enormous amount of superstition within local Muslims caused this Fakier to be without hunger or need. Ward used a logical argument to persuade this man that his act of living in the wilderness as a Fakier was insufficient. The previous Fakier had been dragged into the forest by a tiger and

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<sup>73</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, October 14, 1803. Ward indicated that one of the Muslims present during this encounter was Fool Mahomed, who served as one of Carey's servants when he lived in Mudnabatty. Fool Mahomed continued to seek out the missionaries occasionally, primarily seeking employment opportunities. For instance, he came to Serampore to dialogue with Carey in January, 1803. Marshman recorded the encounter and stated that this visit gave much encouragement to the missionaries that the gospel was taking root among Fool Mahomed's fellow Muslim villagers; see Joshua Marshman, Journal MSS, Bound Letters of Joshua Marshman MSS, IN/19A, Angus Library Archives, Regent's Park College, University of Oxford, Oxford (hereafter cited as Marshman MSS), December 21, 1802. Two weeks later, Carey went to Luckfool to visit Fool Mahomed and preach to his village again; see Marshman, Journal MSS, Marshman MSS, January 4, 1803. Additionally, Ward wrote, "Fool Mahomed arrived on Thursday from Luckfool, to seek for employment. He brings nothing new"; Ward, Journal MSS, March 30, 1804. His case was one that exhibited cases in which potential for deeper evangelistic dialogue existed, but the Bengali had an ulterior agenda.

<sup>74</sup>All quotes in the remainder of this paragraph are taken from Ward, Journal MSS, October 26, 1801.

<sup>75</sup>As discussed in chap. 3, a "pere" was a Muslim saint, and Muslims brought offerings to their burial site to receive various blessings.



eaten. Ward asked him how their acts could be holy if a tiger spoiled their asceticism by killing them in such away. Ward then told this man he was a sinner, a statement that seemed to stir a sharp response from the Fakier, a response which brought about an evident fear within Ward. Ward responded quickly that he too was a sinner and needed forgiveness from sin. Ward described this Bengali Muslim as having “a great wildness in his looks” and as a “very ignorant fanatic, unable to read.” Confessing his feeble response to this encounter, Ward wrote, “I confess I was a little afraid; for I had no faith to save me in this spot.” This situation was much different than other instances when Carey and Ward seemed to offend their listeners and calm their rising emotions by identifying with their need for atonement as mutual sinners. Clearly, Ward sensed something much deeper than the occasional human frustration described in other journal entries. The Fakier’s response struck great fear in Ward’s soul and his only comfort was the presence of several others. In other situations, Ward encountered less threatening circumstances but found his listeners less than receptive nonetheless. Within a larger journal entry in which he recounted several discouraging developments, he stated he went out preaching “amongst the natives frequently, but are mostly met with a great share of contempt.”<sup>76</sup> Nonetheless, Ward continued to preach the gospel despite various encounters that were difficult. Ward thus sought out opportunities to proselytize Bengali Muslims, but not all of his evangelistic efforts were a result of his initiation.

**Ward’s responsive evangelism.** Ward had many reasons for encouragement because of Muslims inquiring about Christianity, which gave him an opportunity to respond with the Christian message. At times, Bengali Muslims would approach Ward, requesting to discuss religious topics or hear more about Christianity. For example, three

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<sup>76</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, December 24, 1802.

Muslims came to Serampore on May 27, 1802 to discuss the gospel.<sup>77</sup> Ward and his Bengali co-laborers hosted these men for two days, discussing the gospel, sin, and the essence of God. In situations such as this one, Ward did not indicate the way that the inquirers first heard about the Serampore Mission or Christianity. One of these men returned two month later with an extremely encouraging word from his village. The four men had shared their message with their village and the people in that place wanted to know more. In fact, they were so eager to hear the gospel that the Mission received its first opportunity to establish another mission station. Ward wrote,

This morning Moratt, one of the Mussulmans mentioned in my Journal of March [*sic*, May] 27 & 29, arrived. He says his friends have sent him to call one of us to go over, that more than a hundred people in that neighbourhood wish to hear the Gospel. He says it would be well for one of our Xn. brethren to go & live there. He says some reject the news of the Gospel altogether. He waits a few days, when Bro[ther] M[arshman] will accompany him, if possible.<sup>78</sup>

Moratt continued to live with the missionaries for several months rather than a few days. Ward's next mention of him came in early August. At that point, he journalled, "Moratt has behaved well since he arrived, & has got many ideas in his mind about the way of salvation. He appears truly disposed to put on Xt... First 4 or 5 came; & now they have sent this man to invite one of us to go over. This looks like Providence. May the word reach their hearts & may a church be formed in those parts."<sup>79</sup> This journal entry provided a summary of the missionaries' relational progression with the village from which Moratt came. Eleven days later, Ward was thrilled to record the results of Muslim and Hindu villagers seeking out the missionaries and their message: "We hope God has

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<sup>77</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, May 27 and May 29, 1802.

<sup>78</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, July 26, 1802. Note: Ward cited March 27 and 29 as the record of his first encounter with Moratt, but the actual dates were May 27 and 29. Although he recorded an interaction with an inquirer on March 27, there is no record of this person being a Muslim. Also, there is no record of an evangelistic encounter of any type on the 29th. His entry for March 29, 1802 read, "This afternoon Samdas & his wife were married by Brother Carey at our house. I have sent to Dr. Ryland the form & ceremony of Marriage. Its simplicity pleased me."

<sup>79</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, August 10, 1802.

been preparing a people there for himself, & that the second Baptist church in Bengal will very probably be at Punchetalakfal.”<sup>80</sup> As is evident from the passages in this paragraph, this instance was not an attempt to spread their message broadly. It was the missionaries’ first opportunity to establish a new mission station. Significantly, this promising harvest arose within a Muslim village. On another occasion, a Muslim from Nudea sought out Ward after losing caste and being expelled from his village by his brother.<sup>81</sup> Yet another example came later that year: “Several persons in this & other places have enquired for Persian and Nagaree books. The news of Jesus Christ & of the church at Serampore seems to have gone much further than I expected. It appears to be known in most villages [but] to a few.”<sup>82</sup> Ward was elated in these instances that not all opportunities came through the missionaries’ efforts, but rather some Bengali Muslims sought them out to dialogue about Christianity and receive Ward’s pamphlets.

Typically, such individuals came to Serampore and lived with the missionaries for an undefined amount of time while they inquired about the missionaries’ message. Throughout the missionaries’ writings, they reference instances in which Bengali men resided with them for this purpose, ranging up to fifteen individuals at one point.<sup>83</sup> Some

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<sup>80</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, August 21, 1802. Within Ward’s journal, one will find the alternate spelling of this village in various entries. At times, he spelled it “Ponchitaluckfool.” See his entries for October 19, 1802 and October 25, 1802. The missionaries and their native brethren had consistent ministry requests and efforts among Muslims in Ponchitaluckfool. For example, see Ward’s journal entries for February 3–4, 1803. In this journal entry, Ward recorded Marshman’s evaluation of the response within this village. He recorded that Marshman observed that they are ready to “publicly renounce cast, both Hindoos & Mussulmans—[they] profess desires to hear & understand the Gospel.”

<sup>81</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, February 18, 1803.

<sup>82</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, September 30, 1803. For another example, see Marshman, Journal MSS, Marshman MSS, September 24, 1804. In this journal entry, Marshman recorded a recurring encounter in which a Muslim named Najeer came from a neighboring village to hear the gospel preached and request a missionary to come to his village. According to Najeer, “there are some in his village who wise to embrace the gospel, but are unable to come” to Serampore.

<sup>83</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, October 20, 1805. I have not discovered any instances in which Bengali women resided at the Serampore Mission to inquire about the gospel. Most likely, cultural commitments regarding the place of women in Bengali society would have prohibited females from journeying to Serampore from nearby villages.

evangelistic ministry to Bengali Muslims, therefore, came about through spontaneous opportunities as in these cases and developed into highly promising situations rather than being the effect of the missionaries' initiation.

In some cases, Muslims continued to search for greater knowledge about Christianity and appeared ready to convert under his guidance. For example, he recorded, "Two other persons who live in Serampore give us hopes. The one a Mussulman & the other a Hindoo, both advanced in years... The Mussulman professes to believe in Xt. & has been waiting & attending on the word at our house & at the meeting houses two or three months."<sup>84</sup> Ward saw consistency in the inquiries of certain men and believed they would unite with the Serampore congregation shortly. Such displays of Bengali Muslims wanting to ask further questions regarding Christianity were not limited to the Serampore area however. While itinerating along the Hoogly River, Ward was approached by several Bengali Muslims who sought to continue their discussion as he was leaving their village of Jergunge. He recorded,

When we had put the boat off 5 or 6 persons . . . came into our boat & went some way with us, hearing & asking questions. Two more persons followed a good way, & at last came into our boat & joined the rest. We gave them old & new testaments & tracts, & parted in a very friendly manner, they wishing we could have staid with them a couple of days, & seeming pleased with any hope of seeing us on our return. They were both Hindoos & Musselmans, apparently respectable persons.<sup>85</sup>

On such occasions, Ward saw that his desire to dialogue with Muslims was reciprocal. Generally, Bengali Muslims wanted to hear his message and he was willing to fulfill their desire. Such encounters thus encouraged Ward to continue this ministry personally as he saw the effects of his preaching efforts.

Typically, however, Bengali Muslims would request to dialogue or hear a sermon after reading some of Ward's printed material. In most cases, these opportunities

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<sup>84</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, June 1, 1802.

<sup>85</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, October 6, 1803.

occurred when Bengalis read one of his tracts and journeyed to Serampore to hear more about Christianity. One example of this type of encounter became evident through inquiring villagers from Jessore. Ward recorded, “This day Nasir Mahomed the man mentioned Aug.[ust] 29, returned, with a letter from the people, with whom he is connected. They are a very numerous body of people. How far they will like Xnity. I know not. But they want one of us to go & live there, & teach them.”<sup>86</sup> In such cases, the effect of his pamphlets brought about an opportunity to preach the gospel at the Bengali’s initiative. Apparently, his “paper missionaries” were producing a high level of interest throughout the Bengal Presidency.

In some cases, responding to the requests of inquirers to hear more of the gospel spurred Ward unto extended preaching tours into Bengal. For instance, he ventured into Jessore following the numerous inquiries discussed above to cultivate further the locals’ rising interest in Christianity. He wrote, “In the afternoon Petumber Shinge, Bishoo Naut, Kreeshno Presaud, Kawny, Ram Kanta, Golamee, Boxoo, Sheetaram, Koobeer, Tonoo & I left Serampore. I am going into Jessore [for] a Missionary Journey.”<sup>87</sup> The missionaries felt the need to respond to Bengali inquiries appropriately; a preaching tour by Ward was an appropriate response in this case.

### **Pastor at Calcutta and Serampore**

Examining Ward’s first decade in Bengal reveals a progression from a support role into greater ministerial responsibilities. As his gifts for missionary labors developed, Ward became a deacon at the Serampore church and the brethren began looking to him

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<sup>86</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, September 24, 1804. Nasir Mahomed arrived in Serampore on August 27, 1804, after reading one of Ward’s pamphlets. He said that his village had forsaken caste and rejected their religious beliefs. He stayed with the Serampore missionaries for approximately two weeks, but “went away rather angrily, & said he would not come again” on October 2, 1804. For an additional example, see Ward, Journal MSS, October 5, 1805. These four entries provide exemplary accounts of this standard pattern.

<sup>87</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, November 5, 1804.

for pastoral leadership. As he exhibited a consistent ability to preach the Scriptures effectively, he took on the role of pastor in the church alongside Carey and Marshman in mid-1805.<sup>88</sup> Carey asked him and Marshman to become co-pastors with him on July 13, 1804.<sup>89</sup> Carey was not quick, however, to move forward with this desire. He publicly announced his intentions on July 12, 1805, to the Serampore church, thus waiting approximately one year after making his original desire known to his two co-laborers.<sup>90</sup> After praying and considering the matter for three months, the BMS personnel agreed to Carey's proposal and recognized Ward and Marshman as co-pastors with Carey.<sup>91</sup>

Throughout the evolution of his roles within the Mission, Ward had the responsibility to preach during worship services. On September 18, 1803, he recorded the fact that he preached in Calcutta on the Lord's Day.<sup>92</sup> Most entries were like this one, in which Ward simply recorded the fact that he preached in Calcutta or at Serampore. There were other entries, however, that give additional insight to his preaching such as the text he used or the basic framework of his message.<sup>93</sup>

With this expanded role resulting from an increased level of respect and trust, Ward exerted theological and missiological influence over the Mission's efforts in Bengal. He was the primary author of the *SFA* in 1805, which established formally the

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<sup>88</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, July 19, 1804. Ward's confirmation as a pastor at Serampore would come later. First, he was recognized as a deacon of the church on August 5, 1804. By late September 1805, Fuller and Carey were urging Ward and Marshman to become co-pastors with Carey over the Serampore Church; see Fuller to Ward, September 12, 1805.

<sup>89</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, July 18, 1804.

<sup>90</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, July 14, 1805.

<sup>91</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, October 5, 1805.

<sup>92</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, September, 18, 1803.

<sup>93</sup>For example, see Ward, Journal MSS, March 14, 1800; June 26, 1801; October 15, 1801; October 18, 1802; and September 25, 1803. These five instances were but a few of Ward's entries that describe the message he delivered to his Muslim listeners and the way he interacted with them.

rules that governed the Serampore Mission.<sup>94</sup> Additionally, he began to oversee the spiritual health of the Serampore community of faith, especially with Carey spending an increased amount of time at Fort William College. Ultimately, Ward became the lead pastor of the Serampore congregation, in conjunction with the obvious continued presence of Carey and Marshman, and had an increasingly influential role over the budding Calcutta believers as well.

### **Conclusion**

Ward thus distributed his “paper missionaries” in one of two ways: through efforts that he initiated or by responding to the requests of Bengalis for his printed material. Evangelism and distributing his printed material were not, however, Ward’s only contribution to the expansion of Christianity in Bengal. Over time, BMS leaders saw the value of expanding role of Ward’s leadership responsibilities within the missionary community. Also, Ward became convinced of his own contribution as the BMS image-bearer and as an author. The question at this point concerns how Fuller and Ward worked together in a way that enabled Ward to be so influential over a Western audience.

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<sup>94</sup>To read this document, see the *Periodical Accounts*, 3:198–211. This document established formally these rules because the Serampore missionaries were living out many of these positions before Ward wrote the document.

## CHAPTER 6

### THE FULLER-WARD PRINCIPLE: SELECTIVE REPRESENTATION

It is vital to understand that Fuller and Ward agreed upon a policy of how to edit the material sent from the field for public consumption among the supporters of the BMS, and others both interested and concerned about the Mission. Fuller was convinced of this principle long before Ward ventured to Bengal. The earliest reference the present author discovered in which Fuller expressed his views concerning this issue was a note to John Ryland that he attached to the bottom of a letter from Carey to the BMS Committee. In this note, Fuller wrote, “I think it is bad to say to say nothing about ‘the plan’ Carey proposes, but as you think the introduction to it which I have retained improper to be printed . . . . I have suffered almost all to remain.”<sup>1</sup> Fuller thought it unwise to print Carey’s lengthy plan for the BMS work in Asia and Africa enclosed in this letter, but he felt it equally unwise to exclude the entire plan. Therefore, he edited Carey’s letter before circulating the material publicly. Fuller and Ward agreed to abide by a similar arrangement early in Ward’s missionary career. They entered into a mutually-agreed-upon principle: they would carefully represent the BMS image in a particular way. Adhering to this principle enabled Ward to become the image-bearer of the BMS discussed in the previous chapter.

#### **Selective Representation Established**

From an early date, Ward was aware that officials within the British

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<sup>1</sup>William Carey to Committee, Hoogly River, December 28, 1796, William Carey to the Baptist Missionary Society Committee, 1794–1824 MSS, IN/13, Angus Library Archives, Regent’s Park College, University of Oxford, Oxford (hereafter cited as Carey to BMS MSS).



government were not thrilled about his work in Bengal. Referring to a discussion between David Brown (1763–1812) and Governor General, Marquis Wellesley (1760–1842), Ward wrote, “Mr. Brown assured his Lordship that we should print nothing on the subject of politics.”<sup>2</sup> This statement followed a summary of fears expressed by the Governor General in Calcutta that he would print material that undermined British interests in Bengal. Knowing Ward’s former flirtation with radical politics, such journal entries must have put Fuller on edge.<sup>3</sup> Peter Morden captured Fuller’s concern for the precarious nature of the BMS at this point when he penned, “Fuller was sensitive to the fact that, from the time Carey and his party had slipped into Calcutta without an official permit

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<sup>2</sup>William Ward, Journal MSS, IN/17A, Angus Library, Regent’s Park College, University of Oxford, Oxford (hereafter cited as Journal MSS), June 29, 1800.

<sup>3</sup>Concerning the overall political situation regarding India related to the Serampore missionaries’ context, see Stephen Neill, *A History of Christianity in India, 1707–1858* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 1–27. EIC officials were intolerant to any threat to a recently stabilized, yet shaky political situation within their Indian colonies. Ward began printing editorials reporting favorably on the French Revolution and meetings that called for political change. See Christopher A. Smith, “William Ward, Radical Reform, and Missions in the 1790s,” *American Baptist Quarterly* 10 (1991): 228–29, for an overview of Particular Baptist political views; particularly, see p. 239 for the views of Andrew Fuller, John Rippon, and Robert Hall. Particular Baptists were outspoken politically, although not to the same activist degree as Ward and the organization to which he belonged—The Derby Society for Political Information. See Basil Amey, “Baptist Missionary Society Radicals,” *Baptist Quarterly* 26, no. 8 (1976): 373–74, which builds upon Hammonds’ view that the Gordon Riots through the mid-nineteenth century could be considered “The Bleak Age.” This time was one of movement, speculation, inequalities and injustices, and full of bitter strife. For the Hammonds’ perspective, see J. L. Hammond and Barbara Hammond, *The Bleak Age* (London: Pelican, 1947). According to Amey, Grigg, Fountain, and Compere—all three of whom he considered BMS radicals—were influenced by the events, controversies, and spirit of the age. Christopher Smith provided convincing evidence to show that Ward fit well into the framework that Amey applied to these three individuals. Amey traced the same influences, such as Thomas Paine on the three individuals he highlighted, as significant in Ward’s life during his pre-Serampore years. As the horrors of the French Revolution circulated throughout England, however, reform societies began to drown under the swelling tide of Loyalist sentiment; see Smith, “William Ward, Radical Reform, and Missions in the 1790s,” 226. Officially, people like Ward had to find new causes to trumpet when Pitt’s government passed a law on May 21, 1792 against seditious meetings and literature. This time in Ward’s life ultimately proved that he did not possess a radical fervor that pushed him to sustained sedition or outright rebellion, but rather a politically and socially aware consciousness with a slight flare for activism. For an excellent overview of the emerging evangelical missionary movement within the developments of broader, and closely associated, movements within Europe at this time, see Brian K. Pennington, *Was Hinduism Invented? Britons, Indians, and the Colonial Construction of Religion* (New York: Oxford Press, 2005), 23–57. Pennington applies Porter’s admonishment that historians who study the missions movement in the colonial context “should perhaps be prepared to take not only theology but a good many other things as seriously as did most missionaries of the day”; Andrew Porter, *Religion versus Empire? British Protestant Missionaries and Overseas Expansion, 1700–1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), 11.

from the British East India Company, the mission to India hung by the ‘slenderest of political threads.’”<sup>4</sup> Surely, Ward would not become another Jacob Grigg (1769–1835). Such accounts likely established Fuller’s initial inclination that he should control the message relayed to England through Ward’s journal entries. Ward’s early letters and journals held very little back as he offered reports without giving much consideration to the implications of his words. Fuller felt the need to encourage him to be more discerning: “Your journal, my dear bro[the]r, also those of brethren Marshman & Brunson are very interesting. But your now and then dropping a hint of a private nature to me, renders it improper to send them out of my house.”<sup>5</sup> A few years later, Fuller expressed the same concern in a letter to Ward:

I have full confidence in you and your colleagues that you will not go into anything of this kind [a potential business partnership] but what you judge necessary, nor entangle yourselves for the sake of worldly appearances. We are somewhat grieved however to learn from Oakham that Sis[te]r W[ard] sh[oul]d expend so enormous a sum for a straw bonnet, & send the account to England! Were such a thing generally known here, it w[oul]d do the mission great injury.<sup>6</sup>

According to Fuller, Ward needed to rethink the content he recorded and sent back to England.<sup>7</sup> This issue was of primary importance in Fuller’s mind.

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<sup>4</sup>Peter J. Morden, *Offering Christ to the World: Andrew Fuller (1754–1815) and the Revival of Eighteenth Century Particular Baptist Life*, Studies in Baptist History and Thought (Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster, 2003), 139. Morden’s quote comes from Brian Stanley, *The History of the Baptist Missionary Society, 1792–1992* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1992), 24. Concerning the unsure standing of the BMS at this point, also see Timothy George, *Faithful Witness: The Life and Mission of William Carey* (Birmingham, AL: New Hope, 1991), 91 and Stanley, *The History of the Baptist Missionary Society*, 23–25.

<sup>5</sup>Andrew Fuller to William Ward, “The Letters of Andrew Fuller,” transcribed by Joyce A. Booth, gathered by Ernest A. Payne, and scanned to Disc by Nigel Wheeler (Angus Library, Regent’s Park College, University of Oxford), September 21, 1800. Note: All instances within this dissertation that discuss letters from Fuller to various recipients are taken from this collection. The short reference form, therefore, will cite Fuller to the recipient with the specific date.

<sup>6</sup>Fuller to Ward, “The Letters of Andrew Fuller,” September 12, 1805. Elsewhere, Fuller expressed similar concerns regarding the public image of the BMS cause as depicted through publications in Britain and America. See Fuller to Ward, “The Letters of Andrew Fuller,” March 1, 1811 as an example of this concern. Also, see Fuller to William Carey, “The Letters of Andrew Fuller,” August 25, 1806. In that letter, Fuller stated this principle to Carey: I hope you may rest assured that we shall avoid publishing in the P.A. any thing wh[ich] might give offence.”

<sup>7</sup>By the time Ward arrived in India, Fuller was experienced in promoting a positive BMS

Including unwanted content was not always Ward's shortcoming however. On one occasion, Ward's decision not to inform Fuller concerning William Grant's death proved to be a source of frustration for the Secretary. In this situation, the copied version of Ward's journal that Fuller received did not include details that Fuller deeply desired on this matter. Although Grant died on October 31, 1799, Ward continued to leave out these details in the journal Fuller received. One should not think that Ward was unaffected by Grant's death. Simple disregard was not to blame. He lamented,

'How unsearchable are thy judgments, O Lord! & thy ways past finding out.' Recovered from the depths of infidelity he promised to be a useful Missionary in the hands of our Saviour; he could command many weighty arguments in favour of Xnity. I know not when any death so much affected me. The infidelity of my heart says, Surely if God mean to convert the Hindoos to Xt. he would not cut off his instruments on the threshold of their work, after they have come 15,000 miles on such an errand.<sup>8</sup>

Despite such pain, Ward felt no need to inform Fuller of this tragic news. Rather, he chose to sift details of Grant's death through his own filter. This exclusion was an example of Ward's initial editorial work that was confusing to Fuller. Fuller expressed his disbelief concerning Ward's decision to withhold information on this matter.<sup>9</sup> This choice puzzles modern readers, as it proves to be a rare instance in which Ward excluded material that Fuller wanted. Typically, he proved to err on the side of including material that Fuller believed unhelpful to the BMS cause if seen by anyone other than himself. In this case, however, he left Fuller wanting much more. Why would he leave out such vital

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image through the print medium. Paul Brewster writes, "It fell to Secretary Fuller to act as the chief publicist for Carey and his associates. To that end, he wrote numerous status reports on the progress of the BMS that were inserted in many of the leading religious periodicals of the day," Paul Brewster, *Andrew Fuller: Model Pastor-Theologian*, Studies in Baptist Life and Thought, ed. Michael A. G. Haykin (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2010), 137. Fuller regularly published articles in *The Evangelical Magazine*, *The Baptist Magazine*, and *The Baptist Register* on behalf of the BMS.

<sup>8</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, October 31, 1799. The actual distance between various seaports in England and Calcutta, India is approximately 4,200 miles.

<sup>9</sup>Fuller to Ward, "The Letters of Andrew Fuller," July 14, 1800. Fuller was forced to learn initially of Grant's death from Captain Wickes and by reading a letter from Mr. Forsyth to the London Missionary Society.

information regarding one of the Society's newly-appointed servants?

One explanation for Ward's decisions was Daniel Potts' evaluation that he simply lacked judgment as to what should or should not be recorded or printed in certain situations.<sup>10</sup> Apparently, his lack of editorial discernment was a problem that haunted him in England and followed him to Bengal. While Potts' assessment is helpful, he failed to explain Ward's editorial experience in various newspapers before departing for India. By this time, Ward had plenty of knowledge as to what was interesting to a British audience. He chose, after all, pieces from London newspapers to include in his local printings. Granted he was not always successful in his choices as discussed in the previous chapter, but he had years of experience in selecting strategic storylines nonetheless. Therefore, Potts was correct to some degree, but his evaluation was incomplete. Ward's errors were not the result of inability or ignorance. The problem at this point seemed to be twofold: he was a recovering activist with a lack of sensitivity concerning material that would be unwise to print and his working relationship with Fuller was undefined.<sup>11</sup> Because of the unclear nature of their joint effort in Ward's early career, the two men were not in total agreement about the material that should go before the public. In such instances, their principle of selective representation needed development if Ward wanted to enhance BMS efforts. According to Fuller's view, Ward needed to rethink his reported

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<sup>10</sup>Potts wrote, "For a practised journalist Ward apparently lacked judgment as to what would interest an English reader." See E. Daniel Potts, "William Ward's Missionary Journal," *The Baptist Quarterly* 25, no. 3 (1973): 112.

<sup>11</sup>Ward was a "recovering activist" in that his efforts were no longer focused on the political change that he sought in the 1790's. Over the course of his missionary career, his attention turned to changing social ills in India through gospel preaching. His perspective on bringing about changes within a society evolved to a position that the gospel must permeate society before lasting change would occur. He continued to call for social action, but unlike his earlier years in England, Ward coupled these calls with the necessity of spreading Christianity within the targeted culture. For a helpful picture of Ward's combined call to social action and gospel preaching, see William Ward, "Letter VI," in *Farewell Letters to a Few Friends in Britain and America, on Returning to Bengal in 1821*, 2nd ed. (London: S. & R. Bentley, 1821), 62–85. Concerning the effects of the missionaries' calls—made before the British government—to implement certain social reforms, see Neill, *A History of Christianity in India*, 156–85. Also, see E. Daniel Potts, *British Baptist Missionaries in India, 1793–1837: The History of Serampore and Its Missions* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 144–56.

contribution to the BMS cause at certain points.<sup>12</sup>

Eventually, Ward came to understand the immense value of holding to the principle of selective representation.<sup>13</sup> In 1805, he gave an account of Claudius Buchanan (1766–1815) offering the missionaries 5,000 rupees to establish a mission station in Assam to reach China with the gospel.<sup>14</sup> Anglican financial support of Dissenters' work would not be wise to publish. Therefore, he exhorted Fuller, "Don't print this!"<sup>15</sup> Later that year, he wrote to Fuller, "When you put the *Periodical Accounts* to press be careful that the freedom with which I write to you, exposing the secrets of the Mission, & the relative state of things betwixt us here as Brethren in the same work—take care that the utmost delicacy be observed."<sup>16</sup> Also, Ward believed it would be unhelpful to put into

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<sup>12</sup>See the previous chapter to understand Ward's evolving contribution to the Serampore Mission during these early years. During his first decade on the mission field, Ward transformed from simply a printer to the BMS image-bearer for Fuller's efforts in England with pastoral responsibilities equal to Carey in Bengal.

<sup>13</sup>Marshman came to see the wisdom in Fuller's editorial sifting as well. He admonished Fuller to avoid printing certain elements of a personal letter he sent to Fuller and warned the Secretary that he would not "be disposed to trust you again" if such material made it to the *Periodical Accounts*. See Joshua Marshman to Andrew Fuller, Serampore, July 1, 1805, Bound Letters of Joshua Marshman MSS, IN/19A, Angus Library Archives, Regent's Park College, University of Oxford, Oxford (hereafter cited as Marshman MSS). Typically, Marshman wrote indicators at the top of each page to instruct Ryland, Sutcliff, or Fuller if the material below was "public," "more private," or "private" in his mind.

<sup>14</sup>Ward spelled Buchanan's name in various ways. The proper spelling of his name was Buchanan.

<sup>15</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, August 5, 1805. The following year, Ward felt the need to urge Fuller to leave out a particular journal entry from the *Periodical Accounts* when he gave an account of an Anglican supporting their work financially in mid-1806. He threatened Fuller to cut off his primary source of news concerning the Serampore Mission with these words: "I suppose you'll publish this, but if you do, I'll send you no more news," Ward, Journal MSS, June 13, 1806. This entry provided an indication that Fuller and Ward had slightly different perspectives on material that should not go to print. They agreed with one another that some things should not go before the reading public, but the specific implications of their mutual commitment required a dialogue between the two men at times. Fuller's primary concern seemed to be his willingness to include material that would build the financial backing of BMS efforts while avoiding political turmoil. In many cases, he was unwilling to print material regarding the missionaries' ecumenical connections in Bengal such as their relationship with EIC chaplains and Henry Martyn. On the other hand, Ward was willing, in most cases, to make public the Mission's ecumenical relationships. There is no clear statement that guided their decisions on these matters.

<sup>16</sup>William Ward to Andrew Fuller, November 6, 1805, quoted in Potts, "William Ward's Missionary Journal," 112. Also, see Fuller to Ward, November 1, 1806. He affirmed Ward's admonition to him to be cautious when printing material from his letters to Fuller.

print the Trio's support of Henry Martyn (1781–1812) for a few reasons. Therefore, he admonished Fuller to avoid any hint of their relationship with Martyn: "This forenoon Mr Martyn set off to Dinapore. We have given him 50 Hindoostanee Testaments & 20,000 tracts to begin his Missionary career. Don't publish this."<sup>17</sup> Such a significant contribution to Martyn's ministry was to go unnoticed by the broader British public according to Ward's counsel. He had come to understand the path to offering a helpful image to BMS supporters and outsiders through a careful editorial process. According to this understanding, certain stories had to remain untold. These two men thus reached an agreement concerning their contributions by Ward's sixth year of missionary service.

In this agreement, they found the correct balance that would offer certain material to satisfy the desires of their BMS constituency while placating the fears of on-looking government officials.<sup>18</sup> Ward's message needed to be changed at times.<sup>19</sup> Hence,

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<sup>17</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, October 15, 1806. One should note that the BMS missionaries had translated the Bible into Persian at this point; see Ward, Journal MSS, September 13, 1806. Henry Martyn is recognized generally as the first one to translate the Bible into this language since the fifth century, but he would have accessed the Trio's translation during his time at Serampore. Therefore, Martyn's translation built upon the work of his BMS brethren. Also, see Ward, Journal MSS, December 7, 1806; Ward gave Fuller a personal report on Martyn's journey to Dinapore, the site of his first missionary labors, including his distribution of Ward's tracts and counseled Fuller strongly: "You must not insert any thing respecting these men which I have written on any account whatever."

<sup>18</sup>Fuller had to satisfy the theological concerns and social prejudices of other British Baptists, particularly the metropolitan London Baptists. See Stanley, *The History of the Baptist Missionary Society*, 18.

<sup>19</sup>A. De M. Chesterman, a member of the Baptist Historical Society in the mid-twentieth century, detected this editorial process as well. Through his close comparisons of the original manuscripts to the printed versions of certain documents, Chesterman noticed certain changes at various points. The archive box containing Ward's manuscript journal extracts, for example, contains a hand written note by Chesterman stating, "Fuller alters obvious mistakes of Ward and sometimes strikes out words for theological reasons, eg July 1807"; A. De M. Chesterman, "Ward's Journal," IN/17, Angus Library, Regent's Park College, University of Oxford. Fuller was not the only author with interests in reshaping original manuscripts however. For Chesterman's comparison of Carey's manuscript journal to supposed quotes in early biographies on Carey, see A. de M. Chesterman, "The Journals of David Brainerd and of William Carey," *Baptist Quarterly* 19, no. 4 (October 1961): 147–56, particularly pp. 149–50. In this article, Chesterman shows that Fuller's *Periodical Accounts*, as well as Carey's popular biographers such as Samuel Pearce Carey and George Smith, altered Carey's original text for their own ends. He offered a clear summary statement concerning these editorial maneuvers: "The foregoing may have enabled the reader to gauge a little the manner in which the journal of Carey has been conveyed to the public, and to note that among the hero worshippers there has been a slight tendency not to let him speak for himself"

Fuller felt the need to alter Ward's entries to avoid potential difficulties in relation to these two audiences.<sup>20</sup> In doing so, he sought to offer a more favorable image of the Serampore missionaries by cultivating a filtered perception to the *Periodical Accounts'* various readers; an image filtered by selective representation. It was a process, therefore, controlled by Fuller. With this arrangement, any concern of Ward offering material that would be unwise to go to print seemed resolved. Operating within these parameters, Fuller did not have to worry about Ward's activist tendencies that could offend British officials. Also, he did not have to fret over the young missionary writing something that would hurt the growing BMS momentum among an evangelical support base that Ward was only beginning to understand. They arranged an effective process to control the message portrayed to their various readers. Through this arrangement, they established the means for upholding a helpful image.

This principle remained intact throughout Fuller's service as the BMS Secretary although their relationship changed during the course of Ward's career as discussed above. As the years passed, other incidents justified the emphasis they placed on their commitment; especially in regards to anti-mission alarmists. Fuller and Ward established and abided by this principle throughout their work together, but how did they

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(150).

<sup>20</sup>Although beyond the argument of this dissertation, it is helpful to remember that this time period (1772–1850) in Bengal, known as a period of political, economic, and social consolidation for the British Raj, was encompassed largely within a tone of uncertainty as power solidified after the shift from Mughal to British rule. For an introduction to life in Bengal during this time, including the realities that the missionaries encountered, see Barbara D. Metcalf and Thomas R. Metcalf, *A Concise History of India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 55–90. For helpful resources concerning specific social, political, and economic considerations during this time, see the Metcalfs' bibliographic essay, particularly 304–5. To understand the overwhelming tensions faced by Bengali Muslims and Hindus and the British alike, see Marshall G. S. Hodgson, *The Gunpowder Empires and Modern Times*, vol. 3 of *The Venture of Islam: Conscience and History in a World Civilization* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1974), 333–38. According to Hodgson, the change from Mughal to British rule was a simple shift in official masters for Bengali Hindus, but for Muslims, it was a loss of power, prestige, and guaranteed income. British invasion was particularly grating to Bengali Muslims because "it was largely the Hindus who took the training necessary for positions of responsibility, commercial or governmental, while the Muslims had the added pain of seeing their former subjects taking the lead over them"; Hodgson, *The Gunpowder Empires and Modern Times*, 334. Thus, one can see why concerns were so high, from the EIC's perspective, to do nothing that would increase Muslim natives' frustrations.

implement it?

### **The Process of Selective Representation**

To push the BMS constituency to greater missionary support and quell any fears that the BMS might undermine British interests overseas, Fuller and Ward established and abided by their principle of selective representation. The process of selecting proper material according to this principle resided with Fuller primarily as the editor of the *Periodical Accounts*. This section will examine the process of selective representation by addressing how Fuller's role could be misunderstood, discussing Fuller's additions to Ward's text, and explaining why Fuller omitted certain elements of Ward's writings.

### **The Selective Representation Process**

Ultimately, the arrangement that Fuller wanted was a business-like report on the Mission's happenings with vivid detail. He would decide at that point what should or should not go to their readership. Perhaps awakened to the need of such an arrangement by Fuller's exasperation concerning his silence on Grant's death, Ward shifted his method of sending his journal to the BMS Secretary. He began sending an exact copy of his journal to Fuller after arriving in India. Eventually, he employed the help of an associate to send these copies back to England. Fuller indicated that "Jno Fernandez," presumably John Fernandez, was responsible for composing these extracts.<sup>21</sup> No evidence

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<sup>21</sup>Fuller to Ward, "The Letters of Andrew Fuller," Dec 31, 1803. Also, see Potts, "William Ward's Missionary Journal," 112. Potts notes that a "young European" composed these extracts. It is unclear how long Fernandez copied Ward's journal. By the end of 1807, however, Ward began using a new copyist. He was "the son of the late Reuben Burrow (1747–1792), one of the greatest Mathematicians of the age," see Ward, Journal MSS, January 1, 1808. Burrow had been in Ward's employment for quite a while according to this journal entry. Other perspectives confirmed Ward's evaluation of Reuben Burrow as British officials looked to him as the leading mathematical expert and his work became important for understanding Indian mathematics. For example, Hugh Murray et al., *Historical and Descriptive Account of British India* (New York: J. & J. Harper, 1832), 3:310. Reuben Burrow's family joined him in India in 1790 and returned to England following his death in 1792. Therefore, this unnamed copyist had some previous exposure to India as a child. He moved back to India as an adult after becoming an officer in the EIC. Significantly, Ward used an officer in the EIC to produce an extract of his journal to send to Fuller. This



exists that Ward's copyists altered his original journal in any way, but rather sent an exact copy to Fuller. A close comparison between Ward's original journal and the extracts that Fuller received reveals a word for word transcription. Therefore, the person responsible for these changes between the original journal and what Fuller published was the BMS Secretary himself.

Ward proved to be satisfied with this process, as he never expressed disagreement with Fuller's decisions in his personal letters to Fuller. He thus abided by this arrangement for several more years before discontinuing his journal for other reasons. Also, one must remember that Ward received the *Periodical Accounts* and never gave an indication of dissatisfaction with Fuller's work. By 1805, therefore, Ward not only came to realize the value of selective representation, but also the method of carrying out this principle successfully. He sent content to Fuller, who edited the material to cultivate a particular image.

This arrangement meant that Ward viewed his contribution to be a provision of content that Fuller would craft into a more acceptable message and form. Daniel Potts correctly stated, "Although reasonably complete regarding the major activities of the mission . . . I found the journal disappointing in providing rationalizations or explanations of mission activities. The key decisions are often given but usually not the factors which led to certain decisions being taken."<sup>22</sup> Additionally, Ward's journal proved to be a very 'dry' read as he rarely recorded personal feelings in a manner that went beyond stating their existence. For example, although Ward admitted the existence of fear when a French privateer pursued the *Criterion*, his emotion does not come across with

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arrangement meant that he had to be guarded in his journal entries. Therefore, the entries he wrote concerning the "Persian Pamphlet" controversy in the fall of 1807 may have been posturing, knowing that an EIC officer was reading his thoughts firsthand.

<sup>22</sup>Potts, "William Ward's Missionary Journal," 112.

much force in that particular entry.<sup>23</sup> An example from a few years later offered the same approach when reporting the death of a fellow missionary. Ward found himself “overwhelmed with the afflicting news of the death of Sister Chamberlain, who it seems died at Cutwa on Wednesday night last, after having been delivered on Friday last of a fine girl.”<sup>24</sup> Although he alluded to his sense of being overwhelmed by her death, he expressed this emotion in considerably mild terms. Again, he reported this development to Fuller, but was unwilling to offer more than a tame statement on the subject. Ward was fully aware of the reality that his journal entries were Fuller’s main source of information concerning the Serampore Mission. Also, he was cognizant of the fact that Fuller would select certain passages from the larger body of his material and shape a particular message for the *Periodical Accounts*’ readers. Perhaps, this arrangement explains the lack of expression concerning the emotions he undoubtedly felt in such times. Whatever the reason, he did not communicate his feelings in a significant way in his journals.

Aware that Fuller would edit material not suitable for the public, Ward included personal notes to Fuller in his journal extracts. Barely on the ground in Bengal, Ward asked a favor of Fuller in the margin: “Let me know whether Brother Pearce be on earth or in heaven.”<sup>25</sup> Knowing that Pearce was gravely ill, Ward wanted news of his good friend. Also knowing that Fuller would not publish this request in the *Periodical Accounts*, Ward inserted a personal comment to the Society’s secretary. Readers should note that Ward wrote this request on the left-hand margin of the page with brackets around it. It is clear that he intended this sentence for Fuller only. Perhaps, he was unsure

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<sup>23</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, June 11, 1799 Compare this entry with a letter he received from a friend and included in his journal entry on August 29, 1807. This letter was packed with convincing emotion that moves the reader to experience the fear expressed by that author.

<sup>24</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, November 16, 1804.

<sup>25</sup>William Ward, Extracts from Ward’s Journals to Andrew Fuller MSS, IN/17, Angus Library, Regent’s Park College, University of Oxford, Oxford (hereafter cited as Extracts from Ward’s Journals MSS), December 1, 1799.

of the editorial process at this stage of his missionary career. As the years passed, however, this process became clearer in Ward's mind. For example, Ward had Fuller in mind when writing certain journal entries and inserted his thoughts into the body of the text. He wrote one such entry in mid-1803 when he recorded frustrations regarding some lost boxes sent from England. After pressing the Captain of the *Admiral Gardiner* for not delivering these items, he realized that Fuller had not sent the proper paperwork and apologized for his actions. Ward's journal entry concerning this incident was not a reflection on these events, but rather a direct rebuke to Fuller. He wrote, "I was entering into a controversy with him about not bringing them up to Calcutta, when he informed me that he had received nothing for their freight from England. On hearing this (which by the by should have been made known to us by you) I immediately apologized . . . . No Invoice. Surely you could not have neglected to send one."<sup>26</sup> Taking note of the pronouns in this text, it was obvious that he intended this journal entry for Fuller himself. Although in journal format, it was a direct letter in substance. Ward felt the freedom to write such words to Fuller, knowing that the Secretary would not send them to print.

Upon receipt of Ward's writings, Fuller edited the text to serve the purposes of their agreed-upon principle. In many instances, one finds an editorial sifting through an initial perusal of Ward's letters and journals and a close comparison of these materials to the published equivalents produced by Fuller. An initial scan of these documents shows notations in the margins, phrases or sentences that are marked out, and a movement of certain passages to other places within the material.<sup>27</sup> This process resulted in the

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<sup>26</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, July 28, 1803. Other examples of Ward including personal notes to Fuller abound throughout his journal. For instance, see Ward, Journal MSS, February 20, 1809. This entire entry was a note to Fuller, urging him to take action regarding a never ending problem with William Robinson (1784–1853), a fellow BMS missionary.

<sup>27</sup>For an example that epitomizes Fuller's edits, see Ward, Extracts from Ward's Journals MSS, December 1, 1799. When compared to the version in the *Periodical Accounts*, it is obvious that Fuller reworked Ward's text significantly. He deleted large portions of the entry and changed certain phrases. See *Periodical Accounts*, 2:41–42. For other examples, see Ward's journal for June 8, 9, and 22,

occasional addition and omission of particular details that reveal more than simple editorial work in some entries. At times, Fuller deleted entire passages from Ward's journal extracts.<sup>28</sup>

Before examining these additions and omissions, however, readers should recognize an expected part of Fuller's editorial role. Without first acknowledging the assumed responsibilities of Fuller's job, one might mistakenly believe he misrepresented Ward. For the majority of Ward's journals and letters, Fuller's changes were part of his expected editorial responsibilities. Naturally, as editor of the *Periodical Accounts*, Fuller was expected to edit the material received from the mission field to correct grammatical or spelling errors. That was his job. His responsibilities also included summarizing unnecessary details before putting such material in print. Of course, Fuller did not alter every account delivered to him by Ward. Generally, he transcribed the majority of Ward's writings as he received them. Fuller either printed them in what could be considered a reasonable word for word transcription compared to what Ward penned originally or summarized the main elements of the entry in a way that remained faithful to Ward's intent. Without acknowledging this natural process of minor editing by Fuller, one might unnecessarily conclude that Fuller misrepresented Ward for his own ends. Fuller acted as the steward of the *Periodical Accounts* and altered Ward's journals and letters according to their mutually-agreed-upon principle of selective representation. Thus, the BMS Secretary fulfilled his duties, but he also felt that the Fuller-Ward agreement called for some additions that would offer a more compelling account of happenings in Bengal.

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1800 compared to the *Periodical Accounts*, 2:65. Originally, Samuel Pearce (1766–1799) served as the editor of this publication although Fuller was involved and helped him. With Pearce's death, editorial responsibilities fell upon Fuller completely.

<sup>28</sup>For example, see the following three entries in Ward's journal and journal extracts that Fuller did not include in the *Periodical Accounts*: May 13, 19, and 20, 1803. See *Periodical Accounts*, 2:477–78, for these passages that Fuller did not include.

### **The Principle Applied: Additions**

A comparison of Ward's journal and his journal extracts that he sent to Fuller with the published version in the *Periodical Accounts* reveals specific additions to the original text in certain entries. Fuller created an idealized William Ward and the other Serampore missionaries to champion the BMS cause. In some ways, Fuller fell into a standard nineteenth-century practice of writing hagiography. For instance, a self-described melancholy Ward was further plunged into emotional struggle when Sisters Hannah Marshman (1767–1847) and Ann Grant (died 1806) argued with one another.<sup>29</sup> One can sense Ward's longing for eternal release from such effects of sin when he concluded that day's entry: "but God made it up...we had a most precious prayer-meeting . . . . I was much melted in prayer; as well as our brethren & we longed for nothing so much as for the latter-day glory."<sup>30</sup> Fuller, however, skipped the disagreement between the two women and changed Ward's concluding remark: "we seem to long for nothing so much as the spread of the Redeemer's kingdom."<sup>31</sup> Fuller changed this text for two reasons—one that was obvious and one that was likely: First, Fuller passed over Ward's remarks concerning the disagreement as to avoid bringing to light the existence of an occasional antagonistic spirit among the missionaries. Fuller believed this would hurt his organization's fledgling support base. Second, Fuller apparently changed the theological desire of Ward—longing for latter day glory—to preserve his image as a BMS standard bearer rather than an enthusiast longing for the eschaton. In another entry, an obviously agitated William Ward became an other-worldly saint in Fuller's hands. After describing Calcutta in very scant detail, Ward wrote, "Sometimes I am disgusted

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<sup>29</sup>A few years after the death of her husband, William, Ann Grant married the recently widowed John Chamberlain on December 28, 1805. Less than a year later, Ann Grant died on September 17, 1806. See William Yates, *Memoirs of Mr. John Chamberlain, Late Missionary in India* (Calcutta: Baptist Mission Press, 1826), 207–11.

<sup>30</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, September 2, 1799.

<sup>31</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 2:11.

with the view of our situation altogether; the weakness of our sisters; the speedy loss of our dear Capt[ain]; the clashing of discordant tempers now and then; the want of government sanction; the obstacles in the way of success; yet I mostly feel willing to concur in divine purposes, be they what they may.”<sup>32</sup> After Fuller finished his edits, however, the Calcutta scene was bursting with beautiful colors, serene scenes of peaceful Indian life, and an abundance of choice foods; all of this with only one thing missing as stated by Fuller’s “imagined Ward”: “Oh! if the christian virtues could be planted in their hearts, this would indeed be a paradise.”<sup>33</sup> It seems that Fuller imagined an idealized William Ward in an idealized India from several thousand miles away, but the disgusted Ward of reality had to confess trust in God’s providence through his clenched teeth. Several entries in Ward’s journal, such as this one that displayed emotional struggle or an occasional bout against sin, faced editorial revision under Fuller’s oversight. The Secretary preferred to focus on the gospel’s forward progress through Ward, not his struggles.

In other places, Fuller added interpretive sentences to make either the text more interesting or offer a theological evaluation of the recorded events. On one such occasion, Fuller apparently added a comment to Ward’s journal concerning Grant’s evangelistic encounters with the *Criterion*’s cook.<sup>34</sup> For instance, a comparison of Ward’s journal entry to Fuller’s edited version in the *Periodical Accounts* for the date July 9, 1799, revealed the Secretary’s addition to Ward’s original text. While Ward offered a favorable account of the discussion between Grant and the cook, Fuller added, “He acknowledged, that if he died a sinner, he must go to hell: to avoid it, he supposed he must pray. Brother G. told him of Jesus.” There is no clear explanation why Fuller added

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<sup>32</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, October 9, 1799.

<sup>33</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 2:12. To better see this contrast, see transcriptions of these texts in Appendix 1.

<sup>34</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 2:7.

this sentence to Ward’s journal entry other than to make the passage more appealing to the *Periodical Accounts*’ readers. In an entry a few weeks later, Ward discussed other sailors aboard the ship. Ward said that they were less willing to listen to the missionaries concerning religion than they had been earlier on the voyage. He wrapped up this entry on a positive note by adding remarks concerning two of the sailors’ progress spiritually. Fuller published this entry with a less optimistic ending: “Yet it is very difficult indeed to write the plan of salvation on their minds, so prone are they, with all men, to expect salvation from their own efforts.”<sup>35</sup> Fuller thus took an opportunity to state theologically why the sailors displayed a diminished interest in the gospel. In these instances, Fuller clearly added remarks to invoke a desired response among their readers. Not only did Fuller make such additions, but the Fuller-Ward agreement also brought about certain omissions.

### **The Principle Applied: Omissions**

While exact motivations for omissions are unclear in some places, they fall into two general categories. At times, the decision was one of message-driven deletion. Fuller and Ward believed that their evangelical supporters and broader audience would react negatively to certain details. For instance, Ward told of a dispute that occurred between two of the missionary women over a three-day period, which included Ann Grant’s refusal to reconcile in the matter. Evaluating the incident a few weeks later, Ward saw the gospel’s effects on reconciling and strengthening relationships. Fuller, however, excluded the entire matter from the *Periodical Accounts*, apparently because he believed

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<sup>35</sup>Compare Ward, Journal MSS, July 25, 1799, to Fuller’s edited version: *Periodical Accounts*, 2:8. For other instances of Fuller’s additions to Ward’s journal, see Ward, Journal MSS, June 17, 1799 compared to *Periodical Accounts*, 2:5; Ward, Journal MSS, June 22, 1799 compared to *Periodical Accounts*, 2:5; Ward, Journal MSS, July 11, 1799 compared to *Periodical Accounts*, 2:7; Ward, Journal MSS, August 4, 1799 compared to *Periodical Accounts*, 2:9; Ward, Journal MSS, October 11–13, 1799 compared to *Periodical Accounts*, 2:12.

such reports would undermine the Society's positive momentum.<sup>36</sup> Ward recorded another such incident between Hannah Marshman and Ann Grant on September 2, 1799, but Fuller excluded it from the *Periodical Accounts*.<sup>37</sup> Fuller picked up with the next sentence in Ward's journal. As noted above, Fuller seemed especially ready to omit any material that exhibited struggles with sin in favor of a more positive image.<sup>38</sup> On another occasion, Fuller chose to leave out Ward's account of charges brought against Mrs. Mardon (died 1812), before the other Serampore missionaries for her excessive drinking.<sup>39</sup> For obvious reasons, Fuller believed these remarks regarding Mrs. Mardon would be unhelpful to the BMS image. Such instances were deleted rather than potentially allowed to fragment a growing support base.

In other cases, some material proved unworthy of going into the *Periodical Accounts*, which brought about the second category—unnecessary details. Ward's journal recounted an attempt by seven native brethren to preach the gospel in the Serampore market. When the Bengali Christians would sing, the crowd remained quiet but frothed into an unruly mob when the believers tried to pray or speak. The Bengali believers decided to leave the market, but the mob followed them back to the missionaries' house, harassing them until the door was shut. All of this material surfaced in the *Periodical*

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<sup>36</sup>Compare Ward, Journal MSS, July 5–8, 26, 1799 to *Periodical Accounts*, 2:6–8. Fuller applied this editorial standard to all of the missionaries' writings before sending them to print if he believed the material would harm the BMS image. For example, he crossed out an entire entry from Carey's journal before sending it to print; see William Carey, Journal MSS, IN/13, Angus Library, Regent's Park College, University of Oxford, Oxford (hereafter cited as Journal MSS), April 1.2.3, 1794. At the end of the entry, he wrote, "All the above [is] very good, but improper to be made public." On another occasion, he deleted a paragraph from a letter written by Marshman in which he reported the sorrowful news of excluding several native brethren from the church for immorality. See Joshua Marshman to John Ryland, Serampore, May 25, 1806, Marshman MSS.

<sup>37</sup>See *Periodical Accounts*, 2:11.

<sup>38</sup>See Ward's remarks concerning his personal "timidity or shamefacedness which I am ashamed of" when trying to share the gospel: Ward, Journal MSS, June 26, 1799. Fuller completely deleted this sentence when printing the published material; see *Periodical Accounts*, 2:6.

<sup>39</sup>Compare Ward, Journal MSS, June 26, 1807 to *Periodical Accounts*, 3:388. Ward wrote that "Sisters Marshman, Ward, & Moore" charged her with drinking too freely.



*Accounts*, but Fuller deleted several lines from Ward’s journal extracts. The original text included an opening statement by Ward: “Rev. Mr. Brown was a hearer with us to-day. He has bought a house & lives here . . . . Bro[ther] C[arey] preached. I was twice at Creeshnoo’s.”<sup>40</sup> Fuller, however, did not find the opening lines worthy of the broader BMS readership’s view. Also, Fuller bracketed out two sentences near the end of the journal entry, which read, “I spoke in Bengalee at night. Rev. Mr Brown was present.”<sup>41</sup> These deletions were examples of material that Fuller believed irrelevant to the ultimate message concerning the BMS efforts that he wished to portray. Fuller was fascinated by the harassment of Bengali Christians, but the other material did not relate to the entry’s primary message. Therefore, Fuller, deleted the lines.<sup>42</sup> Ward consistently took the route of dryly reporting the facts—often, meandering from one subject to another—rather than offering descriptions that were succinct and cohesive. Fuller reduced these longer entries to a summarized version that went to print.<sup>43</sup> Thus, Ward’s material made it to the *Periodical Accounts* while points of insignificance did not.

Among the numerous instances of Fuller’s editorial work, one particular occurrence represented both categories of omitted material. On this occasion, Fuller cleaned up Ward’s account of a riveting debate with an antagonistic Muslim on October 21, 1801. Fuller reprinted this entry from Ward’s journal extract with three changes. First, Fuller deleted the first two lines of the entry, as they appeared to be irrelevant to the

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<sup>40</sup>William Ward to Andrew Fuller, May 22, 1803, “Preface” to Ward, Extracts from Ward’s Journals MSS. Note: Ward included this letter as a preface to his journal extracts. Typically, he would write a letter to Fuller when sending his extracts to England. These preface letters are cited in this manner because they are attached to the journal extracts and not a separate document. If researchers desire to read the indicated letters, the above reference will denote the correct extract to find and thus the attached letter.

<sup>41</sup>Ward to Fuller, May 22, 1803, “Preface” to Ward, Extracts from Ward’s Journals MSS.

<sup>42</sup>See this account in *Periodical Accounts*, 2:478.

<sup>43</sup>For other examples of seemingly irrelevant material, compare the following journal entries with the corresponding *Periodical Accounts*: see Ward, Journal MSS, November 25, 1802 compared to *Periodical Accounts*, 2:352 as well as Ward, Journal MSS, May 15, 1803 compared to *Periodical Accounts*, 2:478. These instances are but a few of the voluminous examples one could cite on this issue.

larger message of the encounter. Typically, Ward's journal contained an unending stream of thoughts that provided no logical explanation from one subject to the next one. In this instance, Ward's first two lines stated that he went shooting with Mr. Short in the forenoon in a village called Nhatty. Without any special spacing or beginning a new paragraph, Ward transitioned to giving an account of this evangelistic encounter with a Muslim in a completely different village known as Milky. Rightly, Fuller believed these details to be unnecessary in relation to the more compelling story of Ward's encounter with a Muslim. A second decision by Fuller was a grammatical alteration to condense the material. He chose to shorten a plural subject into a first-person personal pronoun on this occasion. Ward's journal extract stated, "In the afternoon Creeshnoo & I," whereas Fuller printed, "In the afternoon we" in the entry's first paragraph.<sup>44</sup> Fuller's third change to the text came a few lines later when he deleted a theologically significant sentence, yet avoiding a change in the overall sense of Ward's intent. Ward wrote, "I had tried to show them that without God showed his anger against sin either upon sinners or their substitution his [the Muslim Fakier] holiness would be destroyed."<sup>45</sup> Fuller did not include this line in the *Periodical Accounts*, possibly because of the sentence's poor grammatical structure. It does appear odd that Fuller would delete this text because of the substitutionary atonement language of the text, but he believed it was unnecessary for some unknown reason. Perhaps, Fuller wanted to convey the intensity of this frightening encounter with a Muslim shaman. In that case, it was his opinion that these extra lines did not contribute to the central message he wished to convey. Certainly, Fuller had the option to alter Ward's grammar, as he did in other texts, to make the text acceptable for publishing. Ultimately, he offered no explanation concerning this decision in the margin

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<sup>44</sup>Ward to Fuller, October 21, 1801, "Preface" to Ward, Extracts from Ward's Journals MSS.

<sup>45</sup>Ward to Fuller, October 21, 1801, "Preface" to Ward, Extracts from Ward's Journals MSS. See chap. 3 concerning Muslim Fakiers and their role within the Bengali Muslim community.

of Ward's *Extracts*. None of these changes, however, altered Ward's message in any way. Readers of the *Periodical Accounts* received a succinct introduction to the entry's setting rather than the unnecessary information concerning Ward accompanying a British companion on a shooting excursion in Nhatty. Also, they lost very little with Fuller's decision to utilize a personal pronoun in the second change. Finally, the *Periodical Accounts'* audience would be well aware of Ward's views concerning the atonement based on official BMS doctrine, his other journal entries, and his text within the remainder of this particular entry.

Thus it can be said Fuller's editorial oversight represented Ward's journal faithfully in ninety to 95 percent of Ward's entries. Hence, Fuller and Ward were committed to a policy of representing the Serampore Mission to BMS supporters in a selective way.<sup>46</sup> This policy led Fuller to carry out a process of either adding or deleting certain material for the Mission's greater health. Ultimately, Fuller portrayed what he wanted the missionaries to do and be rather than what they did and who they were in certain situations. For the most part, it seems that this principle of selective representation worked on many thorny issues. One will find very little negative feedback tracing back to

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<sup>46</sup>Fuller utilized this editorial process for all material received from the missionaries before sending it to print. The examples presented above examine Fuller's editorial work applied specifically to Ward's journal extracts. For an example of Fuller applying this selective representation principle to other material, see William Carey et al. to the Society, Serampore, September 29, 1806, in *Periodical Accounts*, 3:280–83 compared to the original letter, William Carey et al. to the Society, Serampore, September 29, 1806, William Carey, Joshua Marshman, William Ward, and Others to the Baptist Missionary Committee, 1800–1827 MSS, IN/21, Angus Library Archives, Regent's Park College, University of Oxford, Oxford (hereafter cited as Carey, Marshman, and Ward MSS). The version that Fuller published in the *Periodical Accounts* summarized several paragraphs that contained unnecessary details and omitted a few paragraphs that contained substantial material regarding the missionaries' work and perspectives. For example, Fuller summarized the missionaries' expression of thankfulness for God bringing several Anglican clergy—along with the two Baptist missionaries Chater and Robinson—to Bengal recently. The missionaries stated their belief that these men would be essential in spreading the gospel among the Hindus and Muslims in Bengal. Fuller, however, omitted the material related to the Anglican missionaries as well as the missionaries' specific thoughts regarding Hindus and Muslims. He summarized their thoughts into two general sentences regarding Chater and Robinson and God's concern for the heathen's low spiritual estate. For another example, see William Carey et al. to the Society, Serampore, December 25, 1806, in *Periodical Accounts*, 3:317–22 compared to the original letter, William Carey et al. to the Society, Serampore, December 25, 1806, Carey, Marshman, and Ward MSS.

the *Periodical Accounts*. But, did it work in all situations?

### **A Nearly Faultless Process of Selective Representation**

For the most part, this Fuller-Ward commitment withstood the various tests that emerged over their sixteen-year ministerial relationship. Fuller received and edited Ward's material in order to offer an encouraging image to the BMS constituency. Fuller's product became the means of garnishing widespread support that grew over the years. He used this material effectively while on preaching tours throughout the British Isles to secure donations and oaths of consistent contributions.<sup>47</sup> Also, he avoided any material that would upset suspicious government officials. Fuller guarded carefully the BMS image put forward to unfriendly members of the anti-missions movement. Little did he realize that one of Ward's "paper missionaries" would prove to be the most troubling hurdle he would encounter in this effort.<sup>48</sup> Both Fuller and Ward were vigilant to abide by their principle of selective representation concerning material that Ward sent to print in England. They did not appear, however, to have considered material printed in Bengal as potentially problematic literature. Why would they be concerned? Material printed in Serampore found its way to Britain only on rare occasions. Leaving this consideration unexplored, Ward's "Persian Pamphlet" caused great turmoil politically and nearly brought BMS efforts in Bengal to an end. The following paragraphs will examine the Fuller-Ward principle in relation to the controversial "Persian Pamphlet" and the anti-mission movement. Doing so will enable readers to grasp Ward's print ministry to

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<sup>47</sup>For example, see Fuller to Ward, "The Letters of Andrew Fuller," February 6, 1809. For an overview of Fuller's fundraising efforts, see Brewster, *Andrew Fuller*, 135–36.

<sup>48</sup>This first instance in which their commitment to this principle was tested concerned the issue of communion. Ward advocated "mixed communion" whereas Fuller held to "closed communion." The primary concern surrounding this disagreement in Fuller's mind was that their positive image would be diminished in the minds of the BMS constituency if this issue came to the surface. Therefore, he buried Ward's thoughts on this matter and did not publish one word of his writings on communion. This issue is unrelated to the overall purpose of this dissertation and therefore excluded from these pages. For more information on this issue, however, one can see E. Daniel Potts, "'I Throw Way the Guns to Preserve the Ship,' a Note on the Serampore Trio," *The Baptist Quarterly* 20 (1963–1964): 115–17.

evangelize Bengalis and portray a desired image the Society's Western onlookers.

### **The “Persian Pamphlet”**

Studying the controversy surrounding the “Persian Pamphlet,” reveals that Ward's thirteen-page tract was not the problem.<sup>49</sup> Anti-mission advocates sought to capitalize on the potential upheaval that Ward's tract could possibly bring about. Rather than Ward's message being offensive, another concern caused EIC officials to react negatively against the pamphlet.

**“Persian Pamphlet” summarized.** This pamphlet was one of Ward's various print efforts to disperse the gospel throughout Bengal. The origin and composition of this tract were not completely Ward's work in that he performed a synthesis of two documents available at that time: George Sale's “Preliminary Discourse” in his widely-known four-volume translation and commentary on the Qur'an and Samuel Pearce's *Address to the Lascars*.<sup>50</sup> Using these two works as foundational material, Ward

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<sup>49</sup>To read the “Persian Pamphlet,” see Edmonstone's transcribed copy of Carey's translation of the tract: William Ward, *An Address from the Missionaries at Serampore to all persons professing the Mohammedan religion*, IOR Home Misc. 690, British Library, London. Chatterjee transcribed a large portion of a letter that the Serampore Missionaries wrote to Lord Minto when submitting eleven evangelistic tracts for consideration as they appealed his prohibition against their activity in the Calcutta area following the “Persian Pamphlet” incident; see Sunil Kumar Chatterjee, “Serampore Missionaries and Christian Muslim Interaction in Bengal (1793–1834),” *The Bulletin of Christian Institutes of Islamic Studies* 3 (1980): 126–28. For two helpful perspectives on the “Persian Pamphlet” controversy, see Penelope S. E. Carson, “Soldiers of Christ: Evangelicals and India, 1784–1833” (PhD diss., University of London, 1988), 159–77; and Potts, *British Baptist Missionaries in India*, 183–92.

<sup>50</sup>Samuel Pearce wrote an evangelistic tract—*Letter To The Lascars*—to evangelize Muslim dockworkers in England, who were called Lascars. Ward recorded this tract before leaving England for evangelistic purposes in Bengal and used it to compose his “Persian Pamphlet” by adding Sale's historical material to form the document. A native convert, named Hadatullah, translated the pamphlet into Bengali and Persian. See William Carey to Andrew Fuller, Calcutta, September 29, 1807, Carey to BMS MSS. In this letter, Carey identified the “Persian Pamphlet” as Ward's work and offered the summary from which I composed this section regarding this pamphlet. Carey's letter to Fuller offered the most thorough summary of the controversy surrounding the “Persian Pamphlet” and should be, therefore, the first document one consults when researching this topic. Samuel Pearce, “Letter To The Lascars,” in *The Baptist Annual Register*, ed. John Rippon (London: Button and Conder, 1798[–1801]), 433–38. Michael Haykin has reproduced this tract here: Michael A. G. Haykin, ed., *Joy Unspeakable and Full of Glory: The Piety of Samuel and Sarah Pearce* (Kitchener, ON: Joshua Press, 2012), 173–79. One noteworthy point is that

composed his “Persian Pamphlet” to appeal to Bengali Muslims specifically. Ward summarized the contents of his tract in a letter to Fuller: “We have printed two pieces in the Hindoostanee language. One of them is Brother Pearce’s *Letter to the Lascars* with some additions respecting the Life of Mahomet & the faults of the Koran. Hindoostanee is the language of many missions in India.”<sup>51</sup> While Ward utilized Sale’s work for his historical material, Pearce’s tract served as the foundation for Ward’s message to Muslims.<sup>52</sup> The pamphlet opened with tidings from British Christians who were concerned for Muslim souls, followed by sobering words for persons who neglected the commands of God. Drawing from Sale, Ward offered a history of Mohammed’s origins and rise to religious and political leadership. The subject matter then transitioned to a critique of Mohammed’s borrowing and twisting of previous religious writings, particularly the Scriptures. Ward concluded the tract by arguing that Mohammed had perverted the law of God by promoting a law directly opposed to that of the Scriptures and urged his readers to embrace the one way of salvation found in Christ Jesus.

**The stated problem.** British officials first noticed the potential danger of Ward’s “Persian Pamphlet” in the summer of 1807 when a “Moghul merchant” complained of the pamphlet’s abusive language toward the prophet Mohammed. Minto agreed that it asserted “the most direct and unqualified abuse of the principles and tenets

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Ward did not copy Pearce’s tract word-for-word, but Pearce’s work served as the heart of Ward’s evangelistic pamphlet for Bengali Muslims. A comparison of the two documents shows several of Ward’s changes to the degree that one should conclude that Ward paraphrased Pearce’s material. For instance, compare the five paragraphs starting with “You believe that Moses was a prophet”—the first full paragraph on p. 434—found here: Pearce, “Letter To The Lascars,” 434–35; with the four paragraphs in Ward’s “Persian Pamphlet” starting with “You say that God who communicated”—the first full paragraph on the second page—found here: Ward, *An Address from the Missionaries*. Ward’s material retained the essence of Pearce’s tract, but rarely used more than four or five word quotes in his pamphlet.

<sup>51</sup>Ward to Fuller, October 18, 1804, “Preface” to Ward, Extracts from Ward’s Journals MSS.

<sup>52</sup>Ward became close friends with Pearce before leaving England and copied his evangelistic tract for potential use in Bengal. Concerning Ward’s use of Pearce’s tract, see Ward’s journal entry for June 1, 1799.

of [Islam], and of its founder.”<sup>53</sup> Therefore, he felt his responsibility was to suppress this offensive literature according to the principle of toleration regarding native religion as stated by Britain’s Parliament.<sup>54</sup> He was responsible to do so at all costs. What would cause such alarm and potentially severe actions by Minto?

**Not Ward’s message.** Nothing about the pamphlet’s content appeared to be problematic. In fact, contrasting the pamphlet to other writings produced by Ward’s press and the missionaries’ preaching illustrates that the problem was not the actual message. For instance, Ward described one of his exchanges with a listener who began interacting with him while he was preaching in a Muslim village. He wrote,

I now found it necessary to attack the character of Mahomet, in order to prove that he could not be a true prophet. He acknowledged that Mahomet put people to death because they would not be Mussulmans, but not understanding him when he was offering an apology for it; I could not reply. He seemed exceedingly vociferous, & threatened to say something bad about Jesus Xt. I told him that when Jesus Xt. saw a dead man he gave him life, so far was he from killing people. But he growing warmer & warmer, at length said his prophet was a very great sinner, & murderer & adulterer . . . . I told him we were going to Judgment; it became us therefore now to examine, for that God would surely condemn sinners, whatever their names might be.<sup>55</sup>

Ward proved to be confrontational in his dialogue with individual Muslims as well as his sermons to larger gatherings. William Carey was Ward’s model and the student appears to have followed his master’s evangelistic approach. Some journal entries present a negative response to the message of the missionaries or their native Christians. Two of Ward’s journal entries gave an account of Muslim employees resigning from their posts rather than attend the missionaries’ worship services because it was offensive to their Muslim faith.<sup>56</sup> In most recorded instances, however, Bengali Muslims were not offended

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<sup>53</sup>Quoted in Carson, “Soldiers of Christ,” 159–60.

<sup>54</sup>Carson, “Soldiers of Christ,” 160.

<sup>55</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, October 21, 1801.

<sup>56</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, September 23, 1805. In this journal entry, Ward recorded, “Our

by their aggressive evangelistic preaching, which was more critical of Muhammad and the Qur'an than the pamphlet.

The confrontational nature of the missionaries' preaching made Ward's "Persian Pamphlet" seem mild by comparison. In one paragraph, Ward warned Muslims of God's impending wrath:

The evils and misfortunes of life belong to God who has said that he will burn all sinners for ever in hell fire. In the inspired books of Moses it was written that those who should not obey the commands recorded there should suffer the pains of hell. Alas alas for your miserable state O you Muhummudans who have perverted his commands and thereby incurred the wrath of God. Reflect seriously how deserving of punishment are those who do evil with their eyes open.<sup>57</sup>

Elsewhere, he contrasted the inadequate message of salvation in the Qur'an with the message of sufficiency found in the Bible:

The book of those who are wandering in the paths of error / the kooraun / cannot in any point of view be considered as the word of God for it is there said that those three books / the Bible and the psalms / were superceded by the commands of God whereas it is declared in those divine books that whoever shall act in a manner inconsistent with the precepts which they contain is guilty of evil. Moreover it is stated in the kooraun that the salvation of man is insured by fasting and Prayer and the pilgrimage to Mecca wherein it appears from the word of God / that is to say from the Old and New testament and the psalm of David / that good actions are not in themselves sufficient for the salvation of man except through the means of Gods goodness.

Even Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, and the other prophets have repented of their sins and rested their hopes of pardon on the Messiah alone. O my friends there is nothing of the salvation of man according to those three books but only through the medium of Jesus Christ.<sup>58</sup>

While firm, Ward's message was not unexpected. As a Particular Baptist missionary, he held forth typical doctrine learned in England and disseminated throughout Bengal. These paragraphs from his pamphlet were not overly offensive. Quite simply, his pamphlet was

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Musselman Moonshee (learned man) this quitted his place rather than come to hear preaching at our house in the Lord's Day evening." This Muslim servant resigned from his employment among the missionaries rather than hear their preaching. The other incident occurred a few months later on January 22, 1806. As mentioned above, other servants expressed their dislike of the Serampore worship services as well; see Ward, Journal MSS, April 2, 1804.

<sup>57</sup>Ward, "Persian Pamphlet," 11–12.

<sup>58</sup>Ward, "Persian Pamphlet," 17–18.



not equal to the antagonism of their verbal exchanges with Muslims.

Generally, Bengalis received the “Persian Pamphlet” with an attitude of great admiration and thankfulness. A letter received from one of his friends offered an example of this response: “My Brahmin on his presenting one (Bro[ther] Pearce’s Address to the Lascars) to a schoolmaster, after he had produced his reading of it - says that the man replied—‘This word is above all good’—& on being told he might have a copy, he expressed much pleasure, as well as some others who were with him, & his scholars.”<sup>59</sup> Ellerton’s comments affirmed the value of Ward’s evangelistic material for engaging Muslims. Also, this entry shows readers the significance that other British citizens in Bengal placed on Ward’s material. Therefore, one should not point to Ward’s message in this pamphlet as the cause of alarm within EIC circles.

**Errant editing.** The problems associated with Ward’s work arose during the actual production of the pamphlet when a former Muslim, named Hadatullah, converted and began working for Ward at the Mission’s press.<sup>60</sup> He inserted the word “Tyrant” before every mention of Mohammed’s name. The Serampore church excluded him from communion for a time in 1807 for improper conduct. He was readmitted to the church’s fellowship in February, 1808. According to the Serampore *Circular Letters*, “the case of Hedutulla, who had been for some time separated from communion for improper conduct, was brought before the church. Many of the native brethren bearing testimony to the propriety of his subsequent conduct, he was re-admitted to communion by the

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<sup>59</sup>Mr. Ellerton to Ward, recorded in Ward, Journal MSS, January 22, 1801. Ward described him as “a serious friend up the country,” but offered no indication of their relationship or where Ellerton lived.

<sup>60</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, June 28, 1806. Ward spelled Hadatullah’s name without the “h” in some entries. For the most part, however, he included this letter on the end of the name in this journal. In the Serampore *Circular Letters*, however, the missionaries consistently spelled his name as “Hedutulla.” See “Serampore,” *Circular Letters Relative to the Missions in India* 1 (February 1808): 16, in Serampore Circular Letters, 1807–1819 MSS, IN/26, Angus Library Archives, Regent’s Park College, University of Oxford, Oxford (hereafter cited as *Circular Letters Relative to the Missions in India*).

unanimous voice of the church. We have been pleased to observe, that during his separation he has constantly attended the preaching of the word, and meetings for prayer.”<sup>61</sup> Although the records do not state expressly the nature of his “improper conduct,” it is highly likely that he was excluded because of his malicious act concerning Islam and the “Persian Pamphlet.” At no point in any of the missionaries’ journals, published reports, or letters to various recipients, did they indicate a problem with the character or conduct of Hadatullah other than at this point. Rather, they held him in high esteem from the moment they met him to the point of sending him out as a missionary four years after the “Persian Pamphlet” controversy. In this situation, however, Hadatullah simply became a bit too ambitious when translating the tract into Persian and setting the characters for the printing process. For putting the BMS work in such jeopardy, through this malicious act toward Islam and their Bengali neighbors, he received the disfavor of the Serampore believers through a season of church discipline.

Swamped with his usual heavy workload and an inability to read Persian quickly, Ward failed the Mission by sending the document to print without checking the translation’s accuracy. Surely, Ward had no intention of violating George Sale’s admonition:

The Muhammadans will be apt to conclude we have little to say then we urge them with arguments that are trifling or untrue... We must not give them ill words; but must avoid all reproachful language, all that is sarcastical and biting: this never did good from pulpit or press . . . . I have not, in speaking of Muhammad or his Quran, allowed myself to use those opprobrious appellations, and unmannerly expressions, which seem to be the strongest arguments of several who have written against them. On the contrary, I have thought myself obliged to treat both with common decency, and even to approve such particulars as seemed to me to deserve approbation; for how criminal soever Muhammad may have been in imposing a false religion on

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<sup>61</sup>“Serampore,” *Circular Letters Relative to the Missions in India* 1 (February 1808): 16. Carey baptized Hadatullah’s wife, Lukshmuna, on December 31, 1809; see “Serampore. (Shreerampoora),” *Circular Letters Relative to the Missions in India* 2 (December 1809): 62. Hadatullah and Lukshmuna moved to Digah—a town near Patna—to assist Mr. and Mrs. Moore and Mr. and Mrs. Rowe in a new mission effort in that area; see “Review of the Mission at the close of the year 1811: Serampore and Calcutta Bengal: Brethren laboring occasionally,” *Circular Letters Relative to the Missions in India* 5 (January 1812): 8.

mankind, the praises due to his real virtues ought not to be denied him.<sup>62</sup>

Influenced by Sale's work as he was, Ward certainly had no purpose in using reproachful language that was biting. Placing "Tyrant" before Muhammad's name violated Sale's warning as well as the overall pattern of interaction evident between Ward and Bengali Muslims. But, his momentary blunder had major implications. Ward's lack of oversight thus became an opportunity to rekindle the claims and supposed validity of anti-mission advocates. As is evident from the missionaries' preaching, however, the underlying problem did not reside with Ward's content; the issue was much deeper.

### **Tensions and Resolutions in Bengal**

Although Ward's pamphlet had been in circulation throughout Bengal for years, the Persian printing of the tract revealed the shaky nature of the tenuous relationship with the EIC and BMS missionaries. Barely-suppressed apprehensions emerged quickly, but the missionaries and officials representing Danish and British interests reached satisfactory resolutions in Bengal.

**A tenuous relationship.** The relationship between evangelical missionaries and British political and economic interests in Bengal was uneasy for years preceding the "Persian Pamphlet."<sup>63</sup> Before 1802, it was uncertain as to whether the Mission's ministry

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<sup>62</sup>George Sale, *A Comprehensive Commentary on the Quran: Comprising Sale's Translation and Preliminary Discourse*, ed. E. M. Wherry (London: Trübner & Co., 1882), 1:5.

<sup>63</sup>One should not believe the false perspective that Protestant missionaries simply perpetuated colonial interests or that they held a cultural arrogance that European Christianity was superior to indigenous Indian culture. The personal views of BMS missionaries and their relationship to the EIC was much more complex than this uninformed—yet sometimes widely accepted—perspective would have readers believe. This argument is outside the parameters of this dissertation, but I hold the position that BMS missionaries did not use religion as a tool of repression and a mask for hegemony or to gain greater social or political standing as some scholars argue. Rather, their religious ideas informed their social and political positions. Ultimately, Norman Etherington is correct: missionaries used their relationship with government officials to benefit their evangelistic goals, but they were willing to forsake this relationship if it hindered their deeper goals; see Norman Etherington, "Introduction," in *Missions and Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 3–5. Several chapters in Etherington's edited volume support this perspective. For additional works that support this view, see Penelope Carson, *The East India Company and Religion, 1698–1858* (Woodbridge, UK: Boydell Press, 2012); Pennington, *Was Hinduism Invented?*,

would face various consequences because of evangelistic efforts such as printing Ward's evangelistic tracts.<sup>64</sup> The missionaries were clear, however, that they had no intention of causing trouble for British interests and hoped that this commitment would be reciprocated: "The taking of Serampore by the English, has produced no alteration in our circumstances. We have reason to hope that our conduct has given government some confidence in us . . . for indeed it is a constant rule with us to be subject to the powers that be; not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake."<sup>65</sup>

Despite the missionaries' efforts to live peacefully under the EIC's rule, fears abided that the government might impose difficulties on them at any moment. These fears were not without justification. Within a few months of landing in Bengal, British officials were concerned about Ward; that his printing the Scriptures in local languages would undermine their political and economic interests. Brown relayed the Governor General's concerns: "His Lordship asked Mr Brown if he thought it were safe to publish the Bible without a commentary, seeing it taught the doctrine of Xn. equality?"<sup>66</sup> According to these concerns, Ward's printed Bibles would promote the concept of equality—an idea

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9–10, 12–17; Andrew Porter, "An Overview, 1700–1914," in *Missions and Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 51. Andrew Porter, "Church History, History of Christianity, Religious History: Some Reflections on British Missionary Enterprise Since the Late Eighteenth Century," *Church History* 71 (2002): 555–84; Brian Stanley, *The Bible and The Flag: Protestant Missions & British Imperialism in the Nineteenth & Twentieth Centuries* (Leicester, England: Apollos, 1990), 33–84; and Max Warren, *The Missionary Movement From Britain in Modern History* (London: SCM Press, 1965), 41–48. Of course, these texts also point readers to the opposing view, that British missionaries had various colonial, imperialistic, and personal motives that served as their true intentions rather than their expressed ones. For the most extensive examination of missionary motives, see Johannes Van Den Berg, *Constrained by Jesus' Love: An Inquiry into the Motives of the Missionary Awakening in Great Britain in the Period between 1698 and 1815* (Kampen, The Netherlands: J. H. Kok, 1956). Perhaps, Carey and Ward most exhibited a combination of several categorical motives as designated by Van Den Berg: humanitarian-cultural, romantic, theocentric, love and compassion, eschatological, and obedience to Christ's commission. For an overview of the establishment of European world hegemony, see Hodgson, *The Gunpowder Empires and Modern Times*, 176–222. Hodgson argues that the expansion of the Occident into the East, in conjunction with the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution, represented a global cultural transformation.

<sup>64</sup>Carey to Sutcliff, March 17, 1802, Carey to BMS MSS.

<sup>65</sup>William Carey, Joshua Marshman, and William Ward to the Society, Serampore, December 18, 1801, in *Periodical Accounts*, 2:228.

<sup>66</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, December 12, 1802.

that did not help British attempts to keep a subjugated people in check. It was feared that Ward's printed materials could possibly disrupt economic and political stability, which was a major problem from the EIC point of view. Barbara and Thomas Metcalf stated succinctly what was at stake: "From the early eighteenth century onwards, the trade of Bengal had grown ever more profitable to the East India Company. By 1750, this rich deltaic province, the outlet for the trade of the entire Ganges valley, accounted for 75 per cent of the Company's procurement of Indian goods."<sup>67</sup> In light of the recent loss of the American colonies, the British allowed little room for potential instability. Ward thus contributed to an already unstable missionary-government relationship with additional reasons for concern.

Tenuous toleration moved toward a growing sense of congeniality between EIC officials and the BMS missionaries. Missionary work in Calcutta was a risky endeavor until Buchanan assured Carey that the Baptists could preach anywhere in Calcutta except near the Government House.<sup>68</sup> David Brown, an EIC chaplain, reassured the missionaries that the Company would overlook their efforts in a conversation two years later.<sup>69</sup> Such developments were the result of concerted efforts by both groups.

The missionaries did their part to secure EIC toleration. Seeking to cultivate amiability, the missionaries exerted a thoughtful effort to give no offense to the British or Danish governments. For example, Ward wrote, "We returned a manuscript pamphlet to a gentleman in this place this morning, fearing it might offend the law officers at Calcutta. The Governor, to whom we showed it did not think it dangerous."<sup>70</sup> They were under no official obligation to honor the perspective of British officials at this point, but

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<sup>67</sup>Barbara D. Metcalf and Thomas R. Metcalf, *A Concise History of India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 49–50.

<sup>68</sup>Carson, *East India Company and Religion*, 58.

<sup>69</sup>See Ward, Journal MSS, December 24, 1802.

<sup>70</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, June 9, 1800.

they were willing to discontinue the circulation of pamphlets that proved to be offensive.

Rather than being indifferent or oppressive, the missionaries generally found British officials to be mildly cooperative toward them and even supportive of BMS activity in the Bengal Presidency at times. Numerous examples illustrated that some government officials viewed the missionaries as beneficial to Britain's larger efforts.<sup>71</sup> For instance, Marquis Wellesley believed it to be his duty as Britain's chief representative to "make it be seen that the christian religion was the religion of the state."<sup>72</sup> Both British and Danish government officials attended the Mission's worship services on occasion.<sup>73</sup> When the Court of Directors wanted to discontinue Carey's position at Fort William College, the Governor-General promised to extend his work an additional year and a half.<sup>74</sup> Buchanan approached Carey about translating the Bible into every Indian language and Persian and proposed the idea to the Governor-General to gain his support. He responded that "he could not as Governor-[General] patronize it, but he would be a friend to it as much as he could."<sup>75</sup> EIC officials even pressed the missionaries to begin a worship house in Calcutta in late 1802.<sup>76</sup> According to his

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<sup>71</sup>See Carson, *East India Company and Religion*, 58–61. Carson highlights Wellesley's perspective that the key to continued rule was Christianity in general and the Anglican Church in particular. Therefore, he attended church regularly, supported the Serampore missionaries by appointing Carey as a teacher at Fort William College, and gave the Serampore press his business when he needed material printed. Minto continued this legacy of unofficial support for the missionaries' efforts.

<sup>72</sup>David Brown to Undisclosed Recipient, "Extract from a Letter to a Friend," August 1805, in *Memorial Sketches of the Rev. David Brown: With a Selection of His Sermons, Preached at Calcutta*, (London: Luke Hansard & Sons, 1816), 303.

<sup>73</sup>Potts notes that Governor Olave Bie of Serampore helped the missionaries, paid them to print all of the Danish official printing, enrolled Danish children in Marshman's school, and purchased Ward's printed religious materials; see Potts, *British Baptist Missionaries in India*, 174n3.

<sup>74</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, June 25, 1802.

<sup>75</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, December 17, 1802.

<sup>76</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, December 24, 1802. Two years later, the Serampore missionaries considered the proposal seriously. They wanted to make sure that the EIC would be supportive and that the missionaries would not offend British officials by building a church in Calcutta. See Ward, Journal MSS, December 24, 1804. After confirming that such an endeavor would not offend British officials on January 1, 1805, they printed a proposal for "erecting a chapel at Calcutta" and began receiving donations; see

recorded thoughts in this entry, Ward recounted the Marquis' vow to build a large church funded by the Bengali Presidency before leaving India.<sup>77</sup> Additionally, Brown told Ward that it was the duty of the British government to enable the advance of Christianity in Bengal. Brown promised that the government would not be offended by the missionaries' work and had already found a location for their church. Any fear of government interference was completely groundless according to Brown.<sup>78</sup> The missionaries even approached an EIC magistrate when they faced persecution by Hindus at one point.<sup>79</sup> Buchanan offered financial backing to the Serampore Mission if they would establish a mission station in Assam.<sup>80</sup> Later that year, Buchanan and Brown followed Carey's lead and resubmitted a plan to the Governor for the EIC to fund the Serampore missionaries' effort to translate and print the Scriptures in every Indian language.<sup>81</sup> Hence, many government officials in British-controlled Bengal sought to support the BMS in various

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Ward, Journal MSS, January 27, 1805.

<sup>77</sup>The East India Company used the term "Presidency" for territories under the oversight of a Governor General. Carey and Marshman held the first BMS worship service in Calcutta on January 23, 1803.

<sup>78</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, December 31, 1802.

<sup>79</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, March 24–25, 1803. See Ward's journal entries for June 2–3, 1803 for another such instance of the EIC offering protection to the Christians associated with the Serampore Mission. Elsewhere, Ward thanked Lord Minto for the government's protection for BMS missionaries throughout India although the EIC-BMS relationship was unstable at certain points; see Ward, Journal MSS, November 26, 1810.

<sup>80</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, August 5, 1805. Buchanan offered 5,000 rupees for this endeavor.

<sup>81</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, December 4, 1805. Buchanan devised this plan initially and proposed it to Carey in late 1802. See Ward, Journal MSS, December 17, 1802. Ultimately, the Governor—George Barlow (1763–1846)—responded to Carey's resubmitted plan in 1805 exactly as Marquis Wellesley did three years earlier: he could not, as the Governor, support this effort in any official capacity. The Serampore missionaries received official notification of Barlow's decision in the spring of 1806; see Ward, Journal MSS, March 15, 1806. In the same journal entry, Ward indicated that Buchanan responded to this rejection by raising funds privately for the venture. Barlow gave an indication that he would like to see Christianity spread throughout India although he was prohibited to assist the missionaries' efforts officially. Barlow was a temporary Governor following the unexpected death of Lord Cornwallis only three months after his appointment to that position. Barlow simply upheld the precedent that Wellesley normalized in his official rulings on this matter. For an overview of Wellesley's ruling concerning the EIC's prohibition in promoting Christianity, see Carson, *East India Company and Religion*, 60. Wellesley wanted to avoid the appearance that the EIC would force Indians to forsake Hindu beliefs or Islam and become Christians.

ways; some directly and some indirectly.

Concerning the BMS missionaries, a wide variety of opinions existed, however, as to whether they would hinder or enhance British interests in the Bengal Presidency. Positive signs of a potentially healthy relationship emerged at times, but the BMS-EIC relationship was far from secure. For example, General Barlow became concerned that the missionaries' preaching would cause problems in Calcutta and enacted a moratorium on evangelistic activity in the area in late 1806. In this case, the missionaries received a message, stating "that Sir Geo[rge Barlow] would be much obliged to Mr Carey not to preach to the natives, nor distribute pamphlets, nor send out native brethren; in short, that as Sir Geo[rge Barlow] did not disturb the prejudices of the natives he hoped Mr Carey would not; & he wished him to communicate this to the other members of his society."<sup>82</sup> As this conversation intensified, British officials indicated that they would not tolerate missionary preaching to the natives and took action against BMS representatives.<sup>83</sup> Shortly thereafter, the missionaries' adversaries asserted that they were hiding in the Serampore area rather than having secured the Danish Governor's official

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<sup>82</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, August 27, 1806. The EIC became highly inflamed toward the BMS missionaries at this point for several months. One can follow the developments of this situation in Ward's journal. Weekly—and sometimes daily—developments emerged as the EIC-BMS relationship soured at this point. Although the EIC had no native complaints about the missionaries' preaching or pamphlets, a few EIC officials were afraid that they were disturbing native religious beliefs and that Ward's pamphlets were ; see Ward, Journal MSS, September 2, 1806. The EIC imprisoned several BMS representatives in Calcutta, confined the other missionaries to Serampore, and would not allow them to venture outside of Danish territory. The Governor of Serampore, Krefting, promised "to protect our brethren" from British aggressions; see Ward, Journal MSS, September 12, 1806.

<sup>83</sup>See William Carey, Joshua Marshman, and William Ward to the Society, Serampore, September 6, 1806, Carey, Marshman, and Ward MSS. The Governor General sent word to the missionaries that James Chater (died 1829) and Robinson (died 1853) had landed in Bengal and would not be permitted to enter the country. Also, one can find the general details of this account in the *Periodical Accounts*; see "A Brief Account of the Late Interruption from the Government at Calcutta," in *Periodical Accounts*, 3:276–80. According to the missionaries' report, the EIC admitted that they contributed nothing to the Vellore Mutiny. The Governor General believed such actions to be necessary, however, to prevent further disturbances. Fuller took the missionaries' letter from September 6 and formed a written defense of the missionaries' actions in this text, which was part of his advocacy for the BMS in answering secular critics in England and Bengal.



approval.<sup>84</sup> EIC officials began implying that the missionaries' should expect to be forced out of Bengal shortly.<sup>85</sup> Such discouraging events illustrated the missionaries' unstable relationship with the EIC. Thus, the stage was set for the EIC to question deeply the place of Dissenters in Bengal; a growing concern that Ward's antagonistic "Persian Pamphlet" inflamed. Ultimately, the "Persian Pamphlet" proved how quickly amiability could shift to volatility. These encounters were typical of the missionaries' relationship to the EIC; at one moment uncertain and hopeful in the next. Ultimately, such uncertainty was not settled during the Serampore Trio's tenure. Throughout their time in India the BMS missionaries were tenuously tolerated—especially during these early years—rather than welcomed openly.

**The Underlying Problem.** Although a congenial relationship emerged during the first few years of the nineteenth Century, the threat remained that Bengalis might take offense to the missionaries' message concerning the local religion.<sup>86</sup> If so, this relationship would sour quickly as economic profits and political stability EIC's ultimate concern.<sup>87</sup> British officials were not without precedent for such fears. Ward recorded, "One of the questions to be discussed at the College at the next Examination is 'The natives of India will embrace the Gospel as soon as they shall be able to compare the Xn.

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<sup>84</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, October 12, 1806.

<sup>85</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, October 13, 1806.

<sup>86</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, October 18, 1802.

<sup>87</sup>See Brian K. Pennington, *Was Hinduism Invented? Britons, Indians, and the Colonial Construction of Religion*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 4. According to Pennington, British officials held to this principle of noninterference for forty years. Their first official act against indigenous religious practices came in 1832 with the abolition of *sati*. Incorrectly, Sunil Chatterjee argued that the EIC did not want to repeat the mistake of Muslim invaders of the past who forced Hindus to convert to Islam. He claimed that EIC officials wanted to preserve Bengali customs. Therefore, they opposed Christian missionaries out of respect for Bengali culture and reverence for native Hinduism and Islam. See Chatterjee, "Serampore Missionaries," 118. According to the current writer's perspective, however, the EIC's hesitancy to interfere with native religious beliefs was a political and economic concern rather than a genuine reverence for local religions.

precepts with those of their own books.”<sup>88</sup> Muslims in the area did not respond favorably to the proposed question, believing the EIC would force Christianity upon them. Ward continued, “Many of the Musselmans mistaking this business, & being deceiv’d I fancy by a false report, that after this examination they were to be forced to appear at the Government house & become Xns. were much alarmed. They presented petitions to some members of government, & offered money, that they might not be forced to become Xns. &c.”<sup>89</sup> Bengali Muslims believed mistakenly that this proposed debate was a pretense for a forced conversion and responded with much alarm. Because of situations like this one, BMS missionaries felt the need to stick closely to Fuller’s counsel to remain disconnected from political involvement. Otherwise, they would threaten the tenuous toleration afforded them by government onlookers. Also, they might undermine their greatest purpose—to spread the pure gospel of Dissenters. Not only did the missionaries want to avoid the false notion that they were undermining British interests, but they did not want Bengalis to make a close connection between their message and government enforcement.

Despite the Serampore missionaries’ attempt to avoid unnecessary political entanglement, the “Persian Pamphlet” became a point of major contention. The particulars surrounding the tract, however, were only surface expressions of deeper and abiding concerns. Based on correspondence between Calcutta and London, the primary concerns regarding the “Persian Pamphlet” surfaced from the potential effects of another Vellore Mutiny, which was an uprising of EIC sepoy troops stationed in the Madras presidency in 1806.<sup>90</sup> The mutiny brought about the deaths of approximately 200

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<sup>88</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, February 18, 1804.

<sup>89</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, February 18, 1804.

<sup>90</sup>This skirmish occurred in July 1806. For a helpful understanding of the Mutiny within the long-standing question regarding the place of Christian missions in colonial India, see S. K. Mitra, “The Vellore Mutiny of 1806 and the question of Christian Mission to India,” *Indian Church History Review* 8, no. 1 (1974): 75–82. Perhaps, the best overview of this uprising is in Carson, “Soldiers of Christ,” 117–24.

European troops and provided anti-missions advocates with an apparent example of the effects of offending native religious sentiments. The general context, as discussed in the previous paragraph, proved that such uprisings should be expected if native Indians felt that Christianity was being imposed on them. If Ward's tract upset the 'happiness' of Bengalis and produced similar effects, British colonialism would not be valid according to the prevailing sentiment. The validation for Britain's presence in India rested with supposed concerns for the natives' welfare: "British rule could only be justified if it led to the 'happiness' of the people. How this somewhat nebulous concept was to be achieved was considered by the different groups with a stake in India."<sup>91</sup> For persons with anti-mission leanings, allegedly seeking the happiness of Bengalis was the perfect opportunity to undermine missionary efforts. According to some perspectives, missionaries such as Ward were offensive to native religion and, therefore, must discontinue their evangelistic efforts. An investigation into the incident found that Indians attacked European troops stationed at Vellore after military commanders offended native religious sentiments. The mutiny brought about a large number of deaths and provided anti-missions advocates with a proven incident to support their claim that offended Indian religion would undermine British colonial enterprises.

As a result of the Vellore incident, anti-missions advocates sought the expulsion of missionaries from EIC territory based on the supposed connection of BMS missionary teachings to the uprising.<sup>92</sup> Despite such efforts, readers must ask if the missionaries were the root problem. According to one perspective, "The question of Christian Mission to India was raised long before the incidence of the Vellore Mutiny of

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For an authoritative discussion based on in-depth primary source research concerning the Vellore Mutiny and the resulting implications for the question of continued missionary presence in Bengal, see David Kopf, *British Orientalism and the Bengal Renaissance* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), 136–41.

<sup>91</sup>Carson, *East India Company and Religion*, 2–3. Also see pp. 21–22, where Carson expounds on the "happiness" argument with greater detail.

<sup>92</sup>Potts, *British Baptist Missionaries in India*, 177–78.

1806.”<sup>93</sup> The Vellore Mutiny enlivened fears that began decades before the uprising and the “Persian Pamphlet” exacerbated those concerns. The question arose as to whether or not an offensive religious tract would stir another religious uprising, thus disrupting British economic and political stability. At this point, unlike any time before 1807, the EIC was especially determined to distance the Company’s rule in India from any perception that it would force Indians to convert to Christianity.<sup>94</sup> According to the anti-mission perspective, the Vellore Mutiny was the product of offending Indian religious commitments and social constructs, while evangelicals believed the problem arose from poor administration in Madras.<sup>95</sup> To say that Ward’s pamphlet and lack of oversight during its composition and printing were bad timing is an understatement. This situation affirmed that the relationship between the missionaries and the British government was plastic.

The years of reassuring EIC officials of their intentions were quickly demolished by Bengali instability. Rather than operating according to an expected level of trust that developed over the preceding years, the EIC was quick to receive news of this pamphlet with an air of suspicion. Minto wrote the Court of Directors, expressing his concerns. First, he sought to avoid the perception that Britain would impose Christianity on Indians through missionary activity. He wanted separation between official action by British representatives and that of the missionaries in the Bengali mind. Baptist publications might blur this distinction. Therefore, Minto was cautious when this offensive tract came to his attention. His second concern was that Ward’s tract was in Persian and thus had the potential to offend a large number of Indians. If it was as

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<sup>93</sup>Mitra, “The Vellore Mutiny of 1806 and the question of Christian Mission to India,” 75. Evangelicals pushed for the official sanction of Christian missionaries in the 1793 Renewal Bill of the EIC, but the Court of Directors rejected the missionary clauses for political and economic reasons. See Mitra, “The Vellore Mutiny of 1806 and the question of Christian Mission to India,” 75–76.

<sup>94</sup>Carson, “Soldiers of Christ,” 119.

<sup>95</sup>Carson, “Soldiers of Christ,” 117–18.

offensive as initially apparent, the potential for an uprising would spread throughout his Presidency.<sup>96</sup> Third, Minto expressed the great danger of unnecessary “bigotry” toward Muslims. A common assumption was that interfering with native religion would bring about unnecessary turmoil in the territory. The Company’s primary concern was the tremendous economic benefit gained from ruling Bengal. Therefore, any threat to stability in that area, including the efforts to evangelize Indians, faced severe punishment from the Company. Finally, the Vellore Mutiny proved that Indians were volatile if offended religiously, thus proving Minto’s third concern.<sup>97</sup> For years, British officials suspected Baptist missionaries of promoting the interests of France and Republican political thought.<sup>98</sup> Baptist missionaries would not be agents of political instability under Minto’s oversight.<sup>99</sup>

**Tensions in Bengal.** Tensions flared between the British and Denmark loomed over the matter and the British missionaries faced the sobering realities of being forced to leave India or imprisonment.<sup>100</sup> The Governor of the Denmark East Indies territory surrounding Serampore—Mr. Krefting—fully expected a British invasion. Initially, Lord

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<sup>96</sup>Minto held the position of the Bengal Presidency when Ward’s “Persian Pamphlet” became a potential problem.

<sup>97</sup>This summary is taken from Carson, “Soldiers of Christ,” 162. When reading the primary source documents, it is clear that Carson represents Minto’s perspective faithfully.

<sup>98</sup>See Carson, “Soldiers of Christ,” 77.

<sup>99</sup>Minto’s initial response to this matter was deeply disappointing to the missionaries. See Hannah Marshman to Mrs. Clarke, Serampore, September 19, 1807, Marshman MSS. In this letter, Hannah Marshman expressed her initial hope that Minto would continue to further the healthy relationship between the missionaries and the EIC, but “soon were my hopes blunted! What a vain thing is it, to put confidence in princes; but he that putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe.” Her letter went on to express her thankfulness that the Danish Governor had promised to protect them.

<sup>100</sup>See Ward’s journal entry for September 21, 1807. In that entry, also note Ward’s remark that the all of the missionaries were willing to follow Fuller’s counsel and go to the gaol before giving up the press and thereby the gospel’s complete interest in Bengal. I not have a letter in which Fuller makes this suggestion, but continue to search for it.

Minto demanded that the missionaries' printing press be handed over to his control and removed to Calcutta. He wrote his first letter, which was delivered by his personal Secretary, directly to the Serampore missionaries. This decision caused Krefling great offense because Minto bypassed his authority and made demands concerning an issue that occurred in his country's sovereign territory.<sup>101</sup> Krefling only learned of the letter when Carey and Marshman met with him on September 12 to discuss the matter. Krefling's initial response to Minto's official demands was not satisfactory however. On September 18, 1807, a Mr. Princeling, Governor Krefling's Secretary, visited the Serampore missionaries to give them a report on a second letter from Minto stating that he expected Krefling's full cooperation on this matter.<sup>102</sup> When comparing the two letters, Minto came to realize he had offended the Danish Governor although he continued to demand the press's removal to Calcutta. He took the approach of using a softer tone in the second letter and thanked Krefling for his expected help in resolving this matter. The Danish Governor refused the demand and assured Carey that he would not send the press to Calcutta unless forced to do so by an invading British army. He said that he was prepared to be captured and face imprisonment over the matter.<sup>103</sup> The building tension weighed heavily on the missionaries:

“Bro[ther] Carey dines today with Lord Minto. We have never been so heavily oppressed in mind by any thing as by Edmundstone's letter. Bro[ther] Carey wept like a child on Saturday morning at the prayer-meeting. The natives are triumphing over us, and it is reported all over this place & neighbourhood that the Governor of Calcutta is driving us out of the country.”

Carey was devastated. Had Ward's pamphlet brought the Mission to an end after fourteen years of toil and only recent signs of payoff? Ward's summary to Fuller of these

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<sup>101</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, September 12, 1807.

<sup>102</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, September 18, 1807.

<sup>103</sup>See Ward, Journal MSS, September 21, 1807. It is well known that the Danish government had friendly relations with the BMS missionaries. Throughout the primary source literature, one finds positive interactions between the two parties. Also, Danish officials attended Serampore worship services quite frequently. For example, see Ward, Journal MSS, June 27, 1802 and November 7, 1802.

developments also included the remark that they were willing to follow Fuller's counsel over the matter and join Krefting in the gaol before giving up the press and thereby the gospel's complete interest in Bengal.<sup>104</sup> It seemed that the Serampore community understood both the severity of Ward's editorial failure and the necessity of not allowing the BMS cause to be derailed over the matter. The desire way forward was to seek a resolution that did not include a British invasion or a missionary expulsion.

**Resolution in Bengal.** Minto's initial reaction to the pamphlet proved to be a bit excessive as this situation unfolded. In fact, Minto came to realize that the reports he received concerning Vellore before his departure to India had colored his early judgment of this situation. One cannot blame Minto, however, as he stepped into a situation biased by anti-mission advocates capitalizing on his naiveté as a newly appointed Governor General. Cultivating fears of a Vellore-like uprising in Bengal would not produce sanctions from Minto, however, once he investigated the situation thoroughly. Through a series of meetings and letters between the Serampore missionaries, Krefting, and Minto, the issue came to an agreeable resolution for the three parties.<sup>105</sup> Carey and Marshman represented the Serampore Mission, expressing grave regret for causing unnecessary concern, promising to discontinue the pamphlet's production. The Mission turned over all remaining copies of the tract and even agreed to submit future tracts to Krefting and Minto for approval before production. The missionaries' first significant opportunity to follow through on this commitment was their presentation of the newly-printed Sanskrit

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<sup>104</sup>Ward, Journal MSS, September 21, 1807.

<sup>105</sup>See Potts, *British Baptist Missionaries in India*, 192–93 for a helpful overview of the missionaries' increasingly friendly relationship with Minto. Marshman offered an excellent account of this meeting; see Joshua Marshman to John Ryland, Serampore, November 17, 1807, Marshman MSS. By October 1810, Minto was comfortable enough with the Serampore contingency to grant permission for BMS missionaries to carry out ministry in frontier districts of India. See Potts, *British Baptist Missionaries in India*, 194–95.

New Testament to Krefting on December 31, 1808. According to the missionaries, Krefting “was pleased to express much satisfaction on the occasion.”<sup>106</sup> Obviously, this incident did not damage the missionaries’ healthy relationship with the Danish government. The fact that Minto allowed them to continue their efforts in British territories points to the same conclusion. Krefting and Minto commended one another for handling the situation with tremendous honor and wisdom only displayed by excellent governors. No one went to the gaol and no army marched on another country’s territory over this issue. Most importantly, from the British perspective, Bengal did not experience its own version of Vellore and the missionaries were free to continue their ministry with the fragile and unofficial endorsement of these government officials.<sup>107</sup> While tensions in India subsided under the newly-reached arrangements between the missionaries and government officials, the scene in Britain was not as easily resolved.

### **Tensions and Resolutions in England**

While resolutions to the matter occurred quickly in Bengal after a few clarifying meetings, the scene in England proved to be more difficult.<sup>108</sup> Fuller found himself immersed in a quiet struggle that involved printed pamphlets and shrewd political maneuverings; all of which brought about unsettled resolutions and confirmed the necessity of selective representation.<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>106</sup>William Carey, Joshua Marshman, and William Ward to the Society, Serampore, March 26, 1809, Carey, Marshman, and Ward MSS.

<sup>107</sup>One should not think that Minto offered official endorsement of the BMS presence. He tolerated the missionaries and had an amiable approach to his relationship with them. The antagonistic spirit of John Chamberlain, who served as a BMS missionary in India from 1803 to 1821, frustrated Minto and renewed fears within Carey and Ward that he would enforce sanctions on their work. See Potts, *British Baptist Missionaries in India*, 196–97, and Carson, “Soldiers of Christ,” 180–82.

<sup>108</sup>Long before tensions in England settled, Minto investigated the matter and determined that the BMS missionaries were not undermining British interests in India. See Potts, *British Baptist Missionaries in India*, 192. Also, see Carson, *East India Company and Religion*, 95–99. Carson described the level of intensity in Britain as “furore”; see p. 95.

<sup>109</sup>The Serampore missionaries printed a succinct summary of these events and resolutions in



**Tensions in England.** As the potential for war in Bengal became a concern, anti-missions advocates had the perfect opportunity to undermine BMS claims in England.<sup>110</sup> Strangely, very little material regarding the “Persian Pamphlet” came to press in Britain from Fuller or anti-mission advocates.<sup>111</sup> While Fuller reported this incident in the *Periodical Accounts*, he did so with extreme caution without relaying the severity of these events.<sup>112</sup> Wisely, he avoided printing the details of this situation out of his desire to maintain integrity before the BMS constituency.<sup>113</sup> Noting publicly the details of this matter might cause the Society’s supporters to question the missionaries, thus jeopardizing continued support. The BMS image was at stake and Fuller was virtually silent. Also, he knew that Thomas Twining (1776–1861) and Major John Scott-Waring (1747–1819) were accessing BMS publications to gain information that would aid the anti-mission movement at home.<sup>114</sup> Fuller wanted to ensure that he was not giving Twining and Waring material to support their cause.

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their *Circular Letters*. This summary included letters from Fuller that summarized the chief opponents, their works, the responses of missions advocates, and various other developments through mid-1808. See “Miscellaneous,” *Circular Letters Relative to the Missions in India* 1 (October 1808): 95–96.

<sup>110</sup>For helpful overviews of the anti-mission movement and the BMS response, see Morden, *Offering Christ to the World*, 139–46; Potts, *British Baptist Missionaries in India*, 169–204; and Stanley, *The History of the Baptist Missionary Society*, 24–26.

<sup>111</sup>As discussed below, the “Persian Pamphlet” proved to be additional evidence in the minds of anti-mission proponents. Although pamphlets emerged against the BMS efforts, Waring, Twining, or other BMS adversaries did not target Ward’s tract specifically for rebuttal. Therefore, the pamphlet never became an incident widely known in the West as discussions surrounding it were restricted to a select group of influential persons. If this tract was as offensive as they claimed, it is unclear why they did not make this incident more public. Perhaps, BMS adversaries chose to not bring this matter to a broader Western public because of the potential support it could have produced for the BMS rather than furthering their own agenda. Clearly, Fuller and Ward had no intention of taking their cause public as Ward’s misstep was an embarrassment. Whatever the anti-mission advocates’ reasoning may have been, it was clear that no one wanted the political maneuverings regarding this tract to be public.

<sup>112</sup>*Periodical Accounts*, 3:392–94.

<sup>113</sup>Fuller’s choice to keep quiet details of the “Persian Pamphlet.” Potts highlights the shocked reaction of Grant when he learned the minuet details of this tract; see Potts, *British Baptist Missionaries in India*, 191.

<sup>114</sup>See Fuller to Ward, “The Letters of Andrew Fuller,” March 1, 1811. The anti-mission advocates collected material printed by and about the missionaries to use against the BMS and other mission societies. Fuller felt the weight of guarding carefully what he made available to the public eye. In

From Fuller's perspective, this incident clearly violated the apparent progress the BMS experienced to that point in avoiding political involvement. He intentionally positioned the Society as apolitical and strictly warned missionaries to avoid unnecessary problems through political antagonism.<sup>115</sup> After all, they were commissioned to extend the kingdom of Christ rather than become entangled in the world's affairs. This incident undermined Fuller's position on political activity among BMS missionaries and the apparent progress the organization experienced to remove suspicion that Particular Baptists would undermine British interests.

Fuller based his apprehension to resort to political action on two issues—one was historical and one was theological. Historically, such activity had not worked well as seen in the Dissenters' demands for the British government to repeal the Test and Corporation Acts. Reflecting on those demands and the results, he stated, "Our strength when tried was found to be weakness."<sup>116</sup> If defenders of missionary causes took this argument public and lost the political battle, missions in EIC territory would be forbidden and possibly stopped altogether. Coming forward with such demands, therefore, seemed risky to Fuller with very little to be gained in the effort. Theologically, he disagreed that the dissenters' demands concerning the Test and Corporation Acts were biblical. He continued, "Nor did such measures [to repeal the Acts] approve themselves to me as

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this March 1st letter, Fuller expresses an expectation of repercussions from the thoughtless publication of Chater's complaints about Rangoon in the *Baptist Magazine*. Also, note that British officials committed to the anti-mission position collected and sent to London material they deemed to be offensive that the BMS missionaries printed. For example, Robert Dundas, the President of the Board of Control and the son of Lord Melville, had a translated copy of *The Gospel Messenger*, a tract from the Serampore missionaries to the Hindus of Bengal. See Fuller to Ward, "The Letters of Andrew Fuller," July 9, 1807. For another example, see Fuller's decision to not print information concerning the conversion and baptism of Mary Wilson in the *Periodical Accounts* lest it "sh[oul]d reach the eye of the Town Major, who certainly there appears to a disadvantage and so make him an enemy," Fuller to Ward, "The Letters of Andrew Fuller," October 7, 1811. To illustrate the poor circulation of the *Circular Letters*, Ward had already published this account in that paper, but doing so had not caused any negative reactions at that point.

<sup>115</sup>Stanley, *The History of the Baptist Missionary Society*, 23–24.

<sup>116</sup>Fuller to Ward, "The Letters of Andrew Fuller," July 9, 1807.

Christian.”<sup>117</sup> Fuller was not convinced that political maneuvering was the Lord’s means to bring about official status for missionary efforts.

Although he strongly objected to missionaries immersing themselves in political struggles, Fuller did not apply the same standard to himself. Completely avoiding political interaction proved to be an elusive luxury for Fuller personally. He became convinced that he would have to act politically. The exact course of action required of him, however, proved to be allusive at first. Initially, he appeared uncertain concerning the means he should employ to defend the missionaries and the BMS cause. Fuller found himself eventually involved in a quiet—yet highly significant—set of diplomatic maneuvers to ensure ministerial freedom for BMS personnel. The BMS Committee decided to undermine the growing accusations against the missionaries by issuing a statement defending them. Charles Grant (1746–1823), however, convinced Fuller to leave the matters to himself and Edward Parry (died 1827).<sup>118</sup> By taking this route, Grant believed they could ensure the matter would never reach a vote. If Fuller, however, pushed this incident to become a highly-publicized argument, the result might be unfavorable. Parry was Chairman of the Board of Directors and sympathetic to the missionary cause. Other evangelicals urged Fuller to take a more aggressive posture.<sup>119</sup> Fuller was not, however, impressed:

After coming from his [Charles Grant] home I was waited on by three of the London Missionary Society, proposing to act with us, as it was a common cause. To this I did not object; but the high tone which some of them assumed—talking of

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<sup>117</sup>Fuller to Ward, “The Letters of Andrew Fuller,” July 9, 1807.

<sup>118</sup>Fuller to Ward, “The Letters of Andrew Fuller,” July 9, 1807. For an overview of the roles of Fuller, Grant, and Parry in these developments, see Potts, *British Baptist Missionaries in India*, 180–83. For a detailed summary of actions taken by Grant and Parry, including their influential letters to Dundas, see Carson, “Soldiers of Christ,” 128–33.

<sup>119</sup>Three LMS representatives visited Fuller on June 9, 1807 for a second time. Although Fuller does not provide the exact date of their first visit over this matter, it occurred between the latter half of May and this point in June. This letter, written on July 9, 1807, provided Ward with events from the previous two months. The letter, therefore, was nine pages long and provided a great deal of material concerning political developments surrounding the anti-missions efforts.

moving heaven and earth ag[ain]st the Directors—made me afraid. My mind revolted at such talk . . . . I ventured to say that I did not think we should go about the business by raising a body of proprietors to oppose the Directors—that we could not do it, and if we tried & failed, we should ruin our own cause.<sup>120</sup>

Eventually, Fuller concluded that their counsel was unwise and chose to follow the lead of his longtime friend Grant. Although the days prior to the vote were filled with uncertainty, Grant’s advice proved true as Parry did not allow the anti-mission petition to be successful when brought to the floor for a vote. Fuller summarized this fateful day: “Next day (the 17<sup>th</sup>) I found the motion was made at the India House; but our good friend P[arry] the chairman, had talked beforehand with the mover, and had so neutralised him, that his motion passed on as mere milk and water; and no reflections were ever thrown out ag[ain]st the missions.”<sup>121</sup> Fuller was more than happy to oblige by Grant’s counsel as he had very little desire to engage in political activities.

This assertion does not imply that Fuller avoided any attempts to win favor with politicians. In fact, his actions following this successful vote show that he met with sixteen of the twenty-four members of the EIC Board of Directors members. His goal was to convince them that “there has been nothing improper in the conduct of the missionaries.”<sup>122</sup> Fuller’s most urgent audience was with Robert Dundas (1771–1851), the President of the Board of Control and the son of Lord Melville.<sup>123</sup> Dundas expressed his reassurances to Fuller that he was in favor of the BMS, but he had some apprehensions concerning some of their evangelistic tracts.<sup>124</sup> Fuller answered his

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<sup>120</sup>Fuller to Ward, “The Letters of Andrew Fuller,” July 9, 1807.

<sup>121</sup>Fuller to Ward, “The Letters of Andrew Fuller,” July 9, 1807.

<sup>122</sup>Fuller to Ward, “The Letters of Andrew Fuller,” July 9, 1807.

<sup>123</sup>Robert Dundas followed in the political footsteps of his father Henry Dundas (1742–1811), who was the First Viscount Melville and ruled India into 1806. His political career was closing at the time of the Vellore Mutiny as he was impeached in 1806 over accusations of financial mishandlings.

<sup>124</sup>Fuller to Ward, “The Letters of Andrew Fuller,” July 9, 1807. In this meeting with Fuller, Dundas expressed that the missionaries needed to be cautious and to avoid being too zealous in evangelism before he stated these reassurances. Dundas told Fuller that “the minds of the Hindoos are attached to their superstitions, and require to be treated with prudence and caution.”

concerns, which led to Dundas' parting words: "Well, you must proceed with caution."<sup>125</sup> Caution was Fuller's ideal in light of such political turmoil and praiseworthy advances for Dissenters' relationships with government perspectives.

Caution turned to renewed uncertainty, however, within a matter of two months as Ward's "Persian Pamphlet" surfaced. When Fuller thought the matter was behind him, this tract rekindled the conversation and brought the danger to new heights. The "Persian Pamphlet" brought about a demanding situation to justify a call to expel BMS missionaries from India unlike any previous anti-missions accusations. Whereas the summer's motion before the Board of Control originated with the unfounded fears of Twining and Stewart, this pamphlet was proof that the missionaries were unwieldy. Not only was the tract more offensive than any material discovered before this point, but also a Muslim actually raised the objections, thus proving the potential ill-effects that British officials should expect. Unsettled emotions over the Vellore Mutiny and fears of another incident provided Twining and company with an excellent opportunity for action in light of Ward's material.

Having addressed significantly the anti-mission assertions, one might think that Grant and Parry would have no problems going forward; even with a misstep by the missionaries. The "Persian Pamphlet," however, proved to be extremely unsettling to Grant. He met with Fuller in early 1808 to express his fears. Fuller recounted,

Our friend (and a faithful friend he is) Mr. C[harles] G[rant] was much grieved in receiving the Gov[ernmen]t communications of the occurrences of last September. He sent for me to London and told me he feared our mission was crippled if not crushed; and was very sorry, and indeed discouraged, to find that your tracts would not bear a scrutiny for their temperateness. 'Of what use, s[ai]d he, is intemperate language? Who was ever convinced by it? Mr Carey added he, could not vindicate the language and has made his submissions to Gov[ernmen]t.' He felt much at having to expose all these communications to the Directors, ag[ain]st several of whom he had pleaded for you with all his might.<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>125</sup>Fuller to Ward, "The Letters of Andrew Fuller," July 9, 1807.

<sup>126</sup>Fuller to Ward, "The Letters of Andrew Fuller," May 5, 1808.

Grant felt no ability to convince his fellow Directors that such concerns were exaggerated claims by Twining, Waring, and Stuart. Rather, Ward's tract offered written proof that the missionaries were imprudent at times. Grant did not, however, leave the meeting in complete despair. Fuller recorded, "After I read your account of matters I saw him, & read them to him; and he requested extracts of them, wh[ich] I gave him—and when we parted he was in better spirits, saying, 'well, we must not be discouraged.'"<sup>127</sup> Armed with the missionaries' account of Ward's unfortunate oversight on this matter, Grant held that all hope was not lost.

These circumstances forced Fuller to produce one of his most impactful works: *Apology for the Late Christian Missions to India*.<sup>128</sup> Although it was not a well-written document, Fuller's tract proved to undermine the heart of his opponents' arguments.<sup>129</sup> Fuller defined a much different understanding of tolerance than Twining and Waring. Whereas these men argued that Christian missionaries were intolerant for trying to change the religious beliefs of Bengalis, Fuller argued that tolerance demanded the opportunity to present truth claims to Indians and allow them to believe or reject the missionaries' assertions. Morden evaluated Fuller's position: "Fuller had argued for a distinctively Christian view of toleration, with a commitment to a free and truly tolerant society which was not incompatible with evangelistic activity or indeed claims to absolute truth."<sup>130</sup> Prohibiting Christian missionaries to proselytize or coercing Indians to

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<sup>127</sup>Fuller to Ward, "The Letters of Andrew Fuller," May 5, 1808.

<sup>128</sup>Concerning an overview of the pamphlets produced by Twining, Scott-Waring, Fuller and others within this struggle, see Potts, *British Baptist Missionaries in India*, 188–91. The Vellore Mutiny brought about an approximately two year 'the pamphlet war,' occurring over the years of 1806–1808 roughly. Perhaps the most thorough treatment of the exchanges of pamphlets arguing various perspectives regarding Christian missionaries in India is Carson, *East India Company and Religion*, 70–89.

<sup>129</sup>For criticisms of Fuller's poor literary construction in this work, see E. F. Clipsham, "Andrew Fuller and the Baptist Mission," *Foundations* 10, no. 1 (1967): 13. Although not as critical as Clipsham, also see Morden, *Offering Christ to the World*, 143–46.

<sup>130</sup>Morden, *Offering Christ to the World*, 145.

believe were equally wrong, but free dialogue and unpressured response was the essence of tolerance. Authoring this apologetic allowed Fuller to argue his points without making his readers fully aware of the embarrassing “Persian Pamphlet.”

For Fuller, the anti-mission sentiment was built upon false caricatures. For example, he wrote a letter to Ward recounting the way that Waring twisted his words to undermine the Serampore missionaries. Waring quoted Ward, who stated “that the entrance of an European missionary into a bigoted city w[oul]d create an universal alarm.”<sup>131</sup> Fuller understood Ward to argue “for native rather than European preachers,” which caused Fuller to contend “that what was conceded did not respect you as missionaries, but as Europeans. Whether this construction will bear depends on the question, Whether the natives are alarmed at the appearance of other Europeans as well as missionaries.”<sup>132</sup> Clearly, Waring took Ward’s statement out of context. Whereas Ward made the statement to assert the superiority of native preachers to European ones, Waring used the statement to support his assertion that missionaries might upset natives.

**Unsettled resolution.** The expected date for a debate concerning Twining’s and Waring’s desires to recall the missionaries was January 20, 1808. Fuller noted that it occurred toward the end of January without much incident.<sup>133</sup> Such setbacks did not discourage the anti-mission sentiment however. Twining, Waring, and their like-minded colleagues continued to press the matter over the coming years. Ultimately, British officials did not deem the missionaries to be a threat to the empire’s larger interests at this point. This perspective did not result in complete government favor however. Rather, an

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<sup>131</sup>Fuller to Ward, “The Letters of Andrew Fuller,” February 12, 1808.

<sup>132</sup>Fuller to Ward, “The Letters of Andrew Fuller,” February 12, 1808.

<sup>133</sup>Andrew Fuller to Joshua Marshman, “The Letters of Andrew Fuller,” February 12, 1808. See Carson, “Soldiers of Christ,” 144–50; and Stanley, *The History of the Baptist Missionary Society*, 25.

undefined toleration would remain for another five years.<sup>134</sup> Carson wrote, “The extreme caution engendered by the Vellore mutiny seemed to have gone. Nevertheless, the missionaries were not permitted to proceed precisely as they wished.”<sup>135</sup> Although these efforts brought about an unsettled resolution, the matter could escalate quickly if BMS representatives offered another opportunity to raise anti-mission concerns.<sup>136</sup>

### Conclusion

Fuller and Ward felt pressure to satisfy two completely different audiences: secular government onlookers as well as their evangelical support base. Thus, they correctly felt a need to avoid any hint of material that undermined British interests in light of the recent political climate of the 1790s. Otherwise, the BMS image would be tarnished or even shattered. In the case of the “Persian Pamphlet,” Fuller’s and Ward’s carefully-guarded image came under a severe test. It was not so much that the pamphlet was offensive as it was an opportunity; an opportunity for anti-mission advocates to further their cause. The turmoil surrounding this evangelistic tract revealed the justification of the Fuller-Ward commitment to selective representation. Examining the case of the “Persian Pamphlet” shows that their commitment to selective representation proved to be a highly successful yet imperfect principle; one that only solidified with

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<sup>134</sup>Anglican missionaries received official legal status in the EIC’s renewed charter in 1813, which extended a somewhat official tolerance to Baptist missionaries as well. Non-Anglican missionaries could apply to the Court of Directors for a license to go to India after this renewed charter, but the EIC also had the right to cancel the license if the missionary proved to be troublesome. See Potts, *British Baptist Missionaries in India*, 199–201. Crockett and Noonkester argue convincingly, however, that the Missionary Clause in this charter was not to the benefit of Baptist missionaries. See Bennie R. Crockett, Jr., and Myron C. Noonkester, “The Chaplains’ Plot: Missionary Clause Debates of 1813 and the Reformation of British India” (paper presented at the Southern Conference on British Studies, Memphis, Tennessee, November, 2004), Center for Study of the Life and Work of William Carey, D.D. (1761–1834): 12–13, <http://www.wmcarey.edu/carey/lectures/chaplains-plot.pdf> (accessed April 25, 2013). Carson argues that the Baptist missionaries’ struggle in India was one of the two main reasons the Parliament forced the EIC to do more to promote Christianity in India; see, Carson, “Soldiers of Christ,” 192.

<sup>135</sup>Carson, *East India Company and Religion, 1698–1858*, 100.

<sup>136</sup>The missionaries’ relationship with the EIC began to worsen in 1810 and became increasingly heightened over the following two years. See Carson, “Soldiers of Christ,” 182–87.



Ward's ill-edited tract.

## CHAPTER 7

### CONCLUSION

What are the conclusions that one should draw from this dissertation? Based on the material discussed above, there are four categories that summarize this dissertation's primary contribution to BMS historiography: Fuller as editor, Ward's print ministry, a corrected understanding of the word "Hindoo" as used by BMS representatives, and the ministry to Muslims carried out by Carey and Ward.

#### **Fuller as Editor**

Examining Fuller's work as an editor is an important contribution of this dissertation. In many ways, one can say that Fuller shaped the voluntarist missionary movement like no other individual. His product—the *Periodical Accounts*—stirred interest concerning global missions among the trans-Atlantic readership. Not only did this periodical raise funds for the BMS cause, but also it served as the core content for the emerging culture of evangelical periodicals in America. Through the *Periodical Accounts*, he shaped both the awareness and the theological assumptions of the modern missionary movement. Therefore, it is not exaggerated to say that Fuller led the swelling tide of interest and effort regarding global missions through his use of print media. If Carey was the "Father of Modern Missions," Fuller was, in essence, the "Theological Journalist of Modern Missions."

Comparing Fuller's published versions of original documents is a tedious process. This observation is true, especially in the case of Ward's journal and one has to compare Ward's original journal to the extracts he sent to Fuller and Fuller's published version in the *Periodical Accounts*. In some cases, as discussed in chapter 6, Fuller was

responsible for changes—sometimes minor and sometimes significant ones—to the extracts that he received, but Ward decided to withhold information that Fuller felt he should have included in some instances. For the most part, however, the primary responsibility for guarding the desired image of BMS efforts and personnel was Fuller’s responsibility. An examination of other documents, such as the letters from Ward’s contemporaries, reveals a similar editing process by Fuller before the reading public received the *Periodical Accounts*. In all of these instances, Fuller made the final call concerning the message that the BMS audience received.

Through the process of comparing these documents, readers see that both Fuller and Ward applied this agreement concerning their principle of selective representation to all material that he received from BMS missionaries. His portrayal of the Society’s efforts and personnel created a particular image—what Fuller wanted the missionaries to say and to be—in order to further the cause of the Society in particular and global missions in general. The aspects of the missionaries’ journals and letters that Fuller chose to include or exclude when publishing his *Periodical Accounts* points to the significance of Fuller’s editorial work.

This principle of selective representation nearly served Fuller’s editorial agenda flawlessly. The one instance, however, of the “Persian Pamphlet” undermined a specific image cultivated by Fuller over the previous fourteen years. No longer could BMS representatives claim a clean record regarding their supposed apolitical commitments. Clearly, according persons advocating an anti-missions perspective, BMS missionaries were more than willing to disrupt EIC economic interests by creating religious strife in Bengal. Previously blurred lines were now clear: British officials could no longer ignore the presence of non-sanctioned missionaries.

Through the political maneuverings of Fuller and other evangelicals in England as well as Carey and Marshman in Bengal, Ward’s indiscretion was forgiven and

Fuller's healthy image of BMS efforts and personnel remained intact albeit somewhat blemished. Before the advent of Ward's *Circular Letters*, edited and printed at the Serampore press, Fuller served as the sole decision-maker who controlled the theological perspective and news of missionary activity portrayed to the British and American evangelical audience. Ward's publication, however, never found a wide circulation among Western evangelicals. Thus, Fuller's publication remained the primary source of information for those interested in BMS activity and researchers should consider him as the most influential editor of his time.

### **Philosophy of Missions**

The missionary activity of Carey and Ward was founded upon certain non-negotiable theological convictions. Taking their Particular Baptist beliefs with them to Bengal, Carey and Ward sought to minister based on these convictions. These elements comprised the missionaries' means of carrying out their perceived task from God, a task that Particular Baptists, under the emergence of Fullerism, came to hold most dear: making Christ's name known to the ends of the earth. They were there to spread the Christian faith in Bengal and its surrounding territories and would do so according to a doctrinally determined philosophy of missions. Whether one was a Muslim, a "heathen," a Catholic, or held to another false religious point of view, Carey and Ward believed that all people needed to embrace the Christian faith. Therefore, they sought to spread their beliefs according to the best means available based on their philosophical convictions expressed in the *SFA*.

Two doctrinal positions, in particular, provided an assured result of their expectations. Carey and Ward, in keeping with their Particular Baptist beliefs, held to the conviction that God is sovereign over all matters. They believed that God is able to establish his glory among the Bengali people despite the various trials that they encountered during their early years of ministry. The particular difficulties associated

with Bengali culture and religious beliefs were no obstacle that God could not sovereignly overcome when the Holy Spirit blessed the missionaries' preaching and imparted faith to their Bengali audience. Additionally, Carey and Ward believed that God would establish his glory in their lifetime. Based on their millennial expectations, these missionaries held to the conviction that they were on the verge of witnessing an outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

Their hopes were not unfounded—as time would show—when Bengalis began embracing their message and formed indigenous churches. Carey and Ward held to the conviction that this hoped-for outpouring of the Spirit would increase exponentially and become a solidified movement only if indigenous believers led the body of Bengali Christians. As they saw Bengalis break caste and follow Christ publically, therefore, Carey and Ward equipped their native brethren through a close communal life of discipleship to lead the expanding ministry.

### **Islam as Understood by Carey and Ward**

The version of Islam encountered by Carey and Ward was much different than any Muslim they may have encountered while living in England. They found that Bengali Islam looked much like the religion practiced by non-Muslim Bengalis. Although not a formalized religion during their time, Hinduism was the dominant religious expression in Bengal. Native Muslims held to a folk version of Islam, combining Islamic forms, terms, and certain doctrines with the convictions of their non-Muslim Bengali neighbors. The faith of Bengali Muslims was not a formal religion that was ontologically defined and highly institutionalized as Carey and Ward came to understand. Rather, Bengali Islam had no written texts that the populace used to define their theology or prescribe their worship and corporate ceremonies. Such matters, although largely defined by Fakiers, were mostly existential—defined by the folk who were surrounded by non-Muslim “heathen.” As an existential faith, Bengali Islam found a common expression in Sufism

as native Muslims sought to please and encounter personally their chosen deity: Allah.

Because Bengali Muslims were identified so closely with their “heathen” neighbors, they needed an identifying element that differentiated them from other Bengalis. As Islamic belief melted into the religious practices of the surrounding Bengali culture, the major distinction became one of social standing. Living within the Indian system of caste, Bengali Muslims were a distinct social group from non-Muslims living in the Bengal Presidency. The Bengali Muslims’ commitment to abiding by caste distinctions, according to BMS missionaries, paralyzed them religiously and held them in the grip of ignorance and superstition. Therefore, convincing a Bengali Muslim to break caste in order to embrace Christ was a sure sign of the genuineness of a Bengali’s intentions when entering the missionaries’ religious community and embracing their message.

Finally, Carey and Ward, in addition to other BMS leaders, used a common word to identify the indigenous people of India: “Hindoo.” For BMS representatives, this term meant something specific—a person from India—that later readers have misinterpreted. As argued above, Bengali Muslims, Bengali Christians, and Bengali “heathen” were all deemed “Hindoos” throughout the writings of Carey and Ward.

These aspects of Bengali Islam shaped the message that Carey and Ward proclaimed to Muslims only in specific application of the gospel. Employing their philosophy of missions, they believed all people needed to hear the same gospel content, spread according to the same means. Based on these beliefs, Carey and Ward carried out a particular ministry to Bengali Muslims.

### **Carey, Ward, and Ministry to Muslims**

Both Carey and Ward had a vibrant ministry to Bengali Muslims. Certain elements of their work, however, looked somewhat different than the other’s particular contribution. For instance, both men preached the gospel to Bengali non-Christians, but

Ward did so to a greater degree. Also, both men sought to work on translating Scripture into the native languages, but Carey's talents superseded Ward's abilities.

For Carey, the early years of his work among Bengali Muslims included preaching the gospel and trying to understand their culture and language. His primary ministry to Bengalis was his focus on translating the Scriptures. In accordance with his Particular Baptist convictions, one could not encounter the one true God without knowing and believing the gospel as found in the Bible. He was drawn, therefore, to the immense task of translating the Bible—not only for languages spoken in Bengal, but also for a broader range of Asian languages—for the purpose of making the Christian message available. Tied closely to this effort, Carey sought to educate Bengalis, a commitment that would become a major emphasis of Joshua Marshman as well. Believing that Bengalis were bound by their commitment to caste distinctions, grounded upon their ignorance and superstition, he believed that Bengalis needed knowledge—both religious and general knowledge—to be equipped to forsake the intellectual and spiritual paralysis that this social system engendered. Educating Bengalis, therefore, was a first step for one to come to faith in Carey's mind. Also, Carey set the standard for future missionaries. For the most part, his example became the model that other BMS representatives sought to emulate. Although Marshman and Ward became equal members of the Trio, Carey remained the symbolic figurehead for many BMS supporters. His central place within the BMS was subsequently secured by the ever-increasing focus given to him by biographers over the century following his death.

Ward, on the other hand, carried out a ministry to Bengali Muslims through three primary means. First, he composed, edited, and printed documents that had a much further reach than BMS ministers themselves. Ward's "paper missionaries"—often spread by the hands of non-Christian Bengalis—entered territories hitherto untouched by Christianity. Through his printed material, Ward was able to create evangelistic

opportunities that the missionaries would not have experienced otherwise. Often, Bengalis received a “paper missionary” and sought out the Trio to learn more about their message personally or invite the missionaries to share the gospel in their village. Second, Ward conducted a widespread effort to preach the gospel throughout Bengal. He travelled along the Hoogly River, faithfully dialoguing with Bengali individuals as well as larger crowds in certain villages. Although he left England as a printer who sought to further Carey’s ministry through his vocational abilities, Ward became a key BMS evangelist throughout Bengal and a pastor to Europeans and Bengali Christians. Within both of these two ministerial commitments, Ward carried out his third approach to ministering to Bengali Muslims. He mentored indigenous believers and entrusted an increasing amount of responsibility to native Christians. Whether conducting evangelistic trips to Bengali villages, printing and distributing his “paper missionaries,” or overseeing worship, Ward had Article VIII of the *SFA* in mind. He sought to create a lasting Christian presence in Bengal through indigenous leaders.

The significance of their ministry to Bengali Muslims rests on five primary factors. First, Carey and Ward made the Bible available to a broad audience throughout India. Through Ward’s print ministry, they reached Bengali Muslims with their message as well as strengthening the work of missionaries in areas outside of the Presidency. Second, their convictions regarding the centrality of indigenous leadership proved to be accurate beyond any doubt. By the end of this dissertation’s temporal parameters, the strongest church begun through the missionaries’ ministry was in an area—Jessore—comprised predominately of a Muslim population. Notably, this work was begun by and led by Bengali Christians. Third, Carey and Ward labored intensely to free Bengali Muslims from the shackles of the Indian caste system so that they would embrace Christ. Through their philosophy concerning the process of relinquishing one’s caste standing, readers can see their belief that there may be precursors on a person’s spiritual journey to



embracing Christ. They believed that they needed to address certain elements of a Bengali's belief and social paradigms if that person would come to faith. Fourth, these two men understood that Bengali Muslims, who forsook caste by embracing Christ, would encounter great difficulty through social ostracism and religious persecution. Therefore, they sought to provide means of caring for their converts. Close communal discipleship included more than spiritual nurturing alone. Through various means, including efforts such as employing over 200 people at Ward's press and helping indigenous believers start businesses, the Trio also cared for the physical needs of the men, women, and children placed under their care. Finally, it is completely accurate to say that Carey and Ward established the first permanently rooted community of faith comprised of Muslim converts. These major aspects of their work—as well as several other facets that one could highlight—illustrate the significance of Carey's and Ward's ministry to Bengali Muslims.

### **Conclusion**

This dissertation has argued that William Carey and William Ward came to see Bengali Muslims and conducted their ministry to address these hindrances in order to spread the gospel among this people group. Ultimately, they desired to see the glory of God made known among Bengalis and sought to accomplish that end through the means summarized in their ten-principle *SFA*. All of the missionary activism that one could discuss regarding their ministry served this great concern of seeing God's glory permanently rooted among the Bengali people. Because of their Particular Baptist Fullerism and the successful application of that theological heritage between 1793 and 1813—by carrying out the principles expressed in the *SFA*—one must say that Carey and Ward established a Christian legacy in Bengal, particularly among the Presidency's Muslim population, that continues to this day.

APPENDIX

EXAMPLES OF WARD'S JOURNAL COMPARED  
TO FULLER'S PUBLISHED VERSION

By reading the following journal entries by William Ward in comparison to the version that Fuller published in the *Periodical Accounts*, readers can gain a sense of Fuller's editorial efforts to portray what he believed would be a better image to his audience.<sup>1</sup> The following three exemplary journal entries offer a range apparent reasons why Fuller edited heavily Ward's material: Fuller condensed material he perceived to be unnecessary detail; he avoided passages that portrayed the missionaries as irascible; he deleted entries that hinted at creating problems for government officials; and ignored texts that might give an impression that other religious sects were successful—however skewed the methods might have appeared—in converting Bengalis to their fold.

**February 29, 1802**

As is evident from this entry, Fuller deleted a large portion of this journal entry.<sup>2</sup> Particularly important was his choice to delete the portion regarding the discipline of the three native believers. Curiously, however, Fuller excluded Ward's observation concerning Carey's evangelistic prowess. It could be the case that Fuller did not want to

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<sup>1</sup>Samuel Pearce edited the *Periodical Accounts* before his death in 1799; see Peter J. Morden, *Offering Christ to the World: Andrew Fuller (1754–1815) and the Revival of Eighteenth Century Particular Baptist Life*, Studies in Baptist History and Thought (Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster, 2003), 136. None of the material discussed in chap. 6 or in this appendix, however, concerns Fuller's editorial work.

<sup>2</sup>These entries are located here: *Periodical Accounts*, 2:244–45; William Ward, Extracts from Ward's Journals to Andrew Fuller MSS, IN/17, Angus Library, Regent's Park College, University of Oxford, Oxford (hereafter cited as Extracts from Ward's Journals MSS), February 29, 1802; and William Ward, Journal MSS, IN/17A, Angus Library, Regent's Park College, University of Oxford, Oxford (hereafter cited as Journal MSS), February 29, 1802.

portray Carey as a “sledge-hammer.” As was evident in the cases of John Fountain and John Chamberlain, both of whom were short-tempered missionaries, Fuller was very hesitant to publish anything related to their irascible moments.

### **Ward’s Journal**

Lord’s Day, Feb. 29. Bro[ther] Fernandez, Powell, Felix & I went this morning to Creeshnoo’s. I expounded to them the Lord’s prayer. Bro[ther] C[arey] preached in English, Bro[ther] M[arshman] not being sufficiently recovered, tho’ much better. Bro[ther] & Sister M[arshman] were at Chinsurah on Friday & yesterday. Several Dutch families are very kind there. We have three young ladies from three families there. Mr Forsyth preaches in their church. In the afternoon we had a church meeting, when the public letter from the meeting of ministers at Oakham was read & translated into the Bengalee. After this, the case of Gokol, his wife, & Unna was considered. Their conduct, & their absenting themselves so long from all means were truly grievous to us. It was resolved that Bre[thre]n C[arey] & M[arshman] should wait on them, & try to recover them. After this was over Koomal & several brahmans came, with whom Bro[ther] C[arey] talked a long while. For my own instruction, I sat & listened while he combated the folly of Hindooism, & pointed out the true way. He is a wonderful hand at knocking down a barman: it is something like Bro[ther] F[ernandez] and his sledge-hammer. To-day Samdas said he had given his whole life to Xt. and that he wished to obey all his commands. In the evening Bro[ther] M[arshman] preached on the atonement and righteousness of Xt. in Bengalee.

### **The *Periodical Accounts***

February 29.—Brother and sister Marshman were at Chinsurah last week. Several Dutch families there are very kind to us. We have three young ladies from amongst them at our boarding school. Mr. Forsyth preaches in their church.—This afternoon we had a church-meeting, when the letter from the society, addressed to us from the Oakham association, was read, and translated into Bengalee. Syam Doss said to day, he had given his whole mind to Christ, and wished to obey all his commands.

### **May 16, 1803**

Fuller excluded Ward’s journal entry for this date as well as May 19 and 20 from the *Periodical Accounts*.<sup>3</sup> Fuller offered no indication why he chose to pass over these three entries. The journal entry for May 16, 1803, contained valuable information concerning Hindu worship, but the point of concern may have been the missionaries and

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<sup>3</sup>These entries are located here: Ward, Extracts from Ward’s Journals MSS, May 16, 1803; and Ward, Journal MSS, May 16, 1803.

their indigenous disciple being called before the Governor. As argued in this dissertation, Fuller wanted to avoid wholesale any hint of causing concern in the minds of government officials.

### **Ward's Journal**

This day Kreesnoot set off a journey towards a famous temple marked in Rennell's Map Jaggernaut's Pagoda, to which place many 1000's of people go every year, to worship this god, from all quarters. He has heard that several hundred people who could not get food on the way have perished; & he supposes that others on this account may be more inclined to hear the Gospel. For several days the friends of Holladdor, the young man mentioned before, have been laying in wait for him, to take him away. This evening they attempted to fetch him away by force. He was sitting a few yards from Creeshnoot's door singing, & a stout man took him up in his arms, & was carrying him off. He cried out, & Joymonee ran, & laid hold of him, when the man let him go, but in the struggle Joymonee and Holladdor got bruised. I wrote a letter & sent it by one of our men to the Governor. He requested that the young man might be sent to him. He sent a soldier, & with this man Holladdor, Gokol, the young man's father, &c. went to the Governor's house. The Governor asked the young man whether the Padre Sahib's had committed any force upon him, or whether he from choice wished to become a Xn. He said he chose to become a Xn. & offered some reasons. His father began to cry. The Governor endeavoured to assuage his grief, by telling him that now his son was become the child of God; that he might come & see him twice a day, &c. The father said, His son was his only comfort & support. The Governor told him if he wanted any thing to come to him. They returned. I repeat very briefly.

### **The *Periodical Accounts***

Excluded.

#### **August 3, 1806**

Fuller printed a large portion of the following journal entry with several alterations to the part that he included, but he deleted entirely the second half of the account.<sup>4</sup> Notably, he deleted Ward's account of two Bengalis supposedly converting to Catholicism and his criticism of the Catholics' approach to making converts.

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<sup>4</sup>These entries are located here: *Periodical Accounts*, 3:303–4; Ward, Extracts from Ward's Journals MSS, August 3, 1806; and Ward, Journal MSS, August 3, 1806.

## Ward's Journal

Lord's-Day, Aug. 3. I was again at Calcutta & administered the Lord's Supper. Bro. Forsyth preached, but would not sit down with us this time. A young native from Patna, who heard the work in the Lal Bazar came to Mr Lindeman's & declared his resolve to become a Xn. I sent him up to Serampore in the evening. Mr and Mrs Smith of America sat down with us. Mrs Smith has presented us with two plated cups for the Lord's Supper. Felix was at Chandernagore, where we have opened a place for worship. Santeram from Chittagong was baptized at Serampore. He is a simple plain man, but seems sincere. In the evening I was supping by invitation at the house of a young man, native-born, whose father is clerk to the Portuguese church at Calcutta. He seems pleased with Bengalee preaching; the Bengalee is the only language which these persons know so as to enter with feeling into what they hear. An Armenian, who is married to a Portuguese Xn. regularly attends. His name is John Peter. He has sent to me two or three notes thanking me for my sermons & requesting Bengalee pamphlets. The above young man told me a curious story: He said some time ago two Hindoos were under sentence of death at Calcutta; & also a Portuguese Xn. To prepare the latter for death the Catholic priest went to the goal. These two Hindoos had, on the night they committed the robbery, performed the worship of Kalee in order that this goddess might protect them in the act of thieving, & prevent their being taken. They were, however, taken, if I recollect right, the same night; in consequence they were so angry with Kalee, that they now resolved to renounce her worship. Seeing the priest come to visit their fellow-prisoner, they addressed themselves to him, & resolved that they would die in the Feringee faith. To prepare them for death, the priest got one of the Police Magistrates to translate a prayer into the Bengalee. I saw a copy of this prayer in this young man's house. After these two men were hanged they were buried with great ceremony by the Catholics, drums beating, & because they had become Xns. from conviction; a thing never known among them—at least now a days. Three Catholic Missionaries lately came out from Europe. One went to Delhi & was murdered by the Musulmans; another went into Assam, where he is since dead; the third (an Irishman) returned to Europe, so says this young man. Here, as in Europe, in the Catholic church, all is in Latin. Bengalese learn to mutter a few words in Latin before they are christened! What a blessed way of making Xns.

## The *Periodical Accounts*

Aug. 3. Lord's day. I was again at Calcutta & administered the Lord's Supper. A young native from Patna, who heard the word in the Loll Bazar, came to Mr Lindeman's and declared his resolution to become a christian. I sent him up to Serampore in the evening. Mr. and Mrs. Smith from America united with us at the ordinance, and she has presented us with two plated cups for the Lord's table. Felix was at Chandernagore, where we have opened a place for worship. Santeram, from Chittagong, was baptized at Serampore: he is a plain man, and apparently sincere. In the evening I was invited to supper by a young man, native-born, whose father is clerk to the Portuguese church at Calcutta. He seemed much pleased with the Bengalee preaching, it being the only language which these persons know so as to enter with feeling into what they hear. An Armenian, who is married to a Portuguese christian, regularly attends. His name is John Peter: he has sent to me two or three notes, thanking me for my sermons & requesting Bengalee pamphlets.

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## ABSTRACT

### EVANGELIZING BENGALI MUSLIMS, 1793–1813: WILLIAM CAREY, WILLIAM WARD, AND ISLAM

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William Carey (1761–1834) and a printer from Derby—William Ward (1769–1823)—are central figures in discussions concerning missiology. Generally, the importance of Carey and Ward to the early formation of the Baptist Missionary Society (hereafter, BMS) and their ministry to Hindus are accepted points of conversation. Despite the existence of a large body of writings concerning their efforts in India, one of the most important aspects of Carey’s and Ward’s ministry remains unexplored. The primary goal of this dissertation is to address the two-part question: what was Carey’s and Ward’s understanding of Bengali Islam and what was their resulting ministry to Muslims in Bengal during the first twenty years of BMS efforts in India? This dissertation argues that Carey and Ward had a deeply-held interest in Muslim evangelization and carried out that interest in an active ministry to Muslims.

The first chapter discusses the context within which Carey and Ward received the Particular Baptist inheritance that they took to India, surveys the current state of scholarship on Carey and Ward in relation to this dissertation, and establishes the research questions that this work addresses. Also, this chapter states the thesis of this work, which answers the research questions based upon the defined parameters.

Chapter 2 establishes a framework through which one should interpret the ministry of Carey and Ward. This framework becomes the answer to the dissertation’s secondary research question: they conducted their ministry to Bengali Muslims according

to the *Serampore Form of Agreement*. Surveying the philosophy of missions that guided Carey and Ward provides an essential and foundational insight into their ministry to Muslims.

The third chapter of this dissertation provides clarity concerning the theology and religious expression of Islam in Bengal as interpreted by Carey and Ward. In Bengal, these two missionaries found a deeply embedded relationship between Islam and the Indian caste system, which had tremendous implications for Bengali Islamic theology and practice.

The fourth chapter of this dissertation addresses Carey's efforts to evangelize his Muslim neighbors in Bengal. Carey's established ministerial pursuits shaped Ward during his early ministry to Muslims. The model that Carey established included his pursuit of evangelizing Muslims personally, receiving the inquiries of Bengali Muslims, and a specific message to his hearers.

Chapter 5 turns to William Ward's efforts to propel the ministry forward through his print ministry. His efforts enabled the BMS effort in Bengal to reach out to individuals through the means of print in ways that were inconceivable through personal interaction. Additionally, Ward participated in Muslim evangelism through consistent preaching and occasional debate as well as pastoral ministry over the budding Bengali church.

The sixth chapter concerns a framework that Andrew Fuller and William Ward used to determine the best way to carry out Ward's print contribution discussed in chapter 5. Ward's print ministry caused turmoil in some situations, particularly in regards to his Muslim ministry, almost causing war between Britain and Denmark in late 1807. Fuller and Ward, despite this episode, sought to abide by a principle of selectively representing the missionaries' work in a particular way to their various reading audiences.

Finally, the conclusion summarizes this dissertation's primary contributions to the field of Carey-Ward scholarship based on the material argued throughout this work.



Truly, the ministry of Carey and Ward to Bengali Muslims is well represented in this work as restated in the conclusion.

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