and hear the details of those operations in which the warriors had been engaged; at which time all who had evinced cowardice were selected, brought forth, received the fiat of their ferocious master, and were led off immediately to be impaled, as an atonement for their offence, and as an example to others who should feel disposed to pursue a similar conduct. Such warriors who distinguished themselves in battle were honoured with a *nom de guerre*, by which they were afterwards accosted.

* * *

He can hold secret councils, and have any member killed, not excepting even the principal chief, if he fancy him opposed to his schemes. He is generally at variance with one half his chiefs, who are members of this military tribunal, and prevents their meeting by having his regiments in opposite directions and at positions at some distance apart. Although meetings are not publicly prohibited, it is well known they create Shaka's wrath and suspicion, and that they terminate with death to such as assemble without his knowledge. All meetings of this military council are held at the gateway of the king's kraal, or in the cattle-pound, which is their council-room, unless the king be present, when they meet in the palace.

Shaka had an extreme aversion to any thing like commercial traffic, and forbade it among his people. Towards the Europeans he always expressed himself decidedly opposed to any intercourse, having for its object the establishment of a mercantile connection with his subjects. His whole soul was engrossed by war, and he conceived that anything like commerce would enervate his people and unfit them for their military duties.

## Questions

1. Shaka seized control of the Zulu kingdom shortly before Isaacs arrived. What evidence does Isaacs provide of a ruler consolidating his power? Why might Isaacs not explain this context of contested succession?
2. Can you identify passages that seem likely to be exaggerated? Can you suggest why?



3. Isaacs describes the region as "wild and unfrequented," yet the conversation he reports with Shaka at the beginning of the excerpt suggests a ruler who is aware of the wider world, familiar with the Portuguese based in Mozambique, and able to connect Isaacs to Farewell. How can you account for this discrepancy?

# Maulvi Syed Kutb Shah Sahib, Call for Hindu-Muslim Unity (1858)

Originally written in Urdu by a Muslim leader, this letter is both a call to action and a list of specific grievances against expanding British rule in South Asia. The letter seeks to capitalize on the anti-British sentiment violently expressed in the Indian Rebellion the year before and to change the local political landscape. With a history of both religious strife and periods of significant tolerance in India, there was political and cultural precedent behind Maulvi Syed Kutb Shah Sahib's plea for concerted cooperation between Hindus and Muslims against British rule. He made the case that British policies sought to undermine both Hindus and Muslims by challenging religious belief and social practices. Note that Maulvi Syed provides examples of British affronts to both Muslims and Hindus, including references to popular belief that the British intentionally broke food taboos (pork for Muslims, all meat or animal fat for Hindus) in order to challenge people's faith. He was critical of Christian missionary efforts as well as government policies that eroded local choice in matters such as inheritance of property and political titles (in 1856 the British extended their rule in Lucknow and the province of Oudh by using English inheritance rules to overrule local practice) and social/religious practice such as *Sati* (widow burning), which the British sought to restrict although the practice was not widespread. Spelling has been updated in the following excerpt to reflect modern orthography.

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CITATION: *Accounts and Papers, East Indies. Mutiny, King Delhim Oude Proclamation* (1859), vol. 18, pp. 110–11.

* * * The English are people who overthrow all religions. You should understand well the object of destroying the religions of Hindustan; they have for a long time been causing books to be written and circulated throughout the country by the hands of their priests, and, exercising their authority, have brought out numbers of preachers to spread their own tenets: this has been learned from one of their own trusted agents. Consider, then, what systematic contrivances they have adopted to destroy our religions. For instance, first, when a woman became a widow they ordered her to make a second marriage. Secondly, the self-immolation of wives on the funeral pyres of their deceased husbands was an ancient religious custom; the English had it discontinued, and enacted their own regulations prohibiting it. Thirdly, they told people it was their wish that they (the people) should adopt their faith, promising that if they did so they would be respected by Government; and further required them to attend churches, and hear the tenets preached there. Moreover, they decided and told the rajahs that such only as were born of their wives would inherit the government and property, and that adopted heirs would not be allowed to succeed, although, according to your Scriptures, ten different sorts of heirs are allowed shares in the inheritance. By this contrivance they will rob you of your governments and possessions, as they have already done with Nagpur and Lucknow.

Consider now another of their designing plans: they resolved on compelling prisoners, with the forcible exercise of their authority, to eat their bread. Numbers died of starvation, but did not eat it; others eat it, and sacrificed their faith. They now perceived that this expedient did not succeed well, and accordingly determined on having bones ground and mixed with flour and sugar, so that people might unsuspectingly eat them in this way. They had, moreover, bones and flesh broken small and mixed with rice, which they caused to be placed in the markets for sale, and tried, besides, every other possible plan to destroy our religions. At last some Bengali, after due reflection, said that if the troops would accede to the wishes of the English in this matter, all the Bengalis would also conform to them. The English, hearing this, approved of it, and said, "Certainly this is an excellent idea," never imagining they



would be themselves exterminated. They accordingly now ordered the Brahmans and others of their army to bite cartridges, in the making up of which fat had been used. The Muslim soldiers perceived that by this expedient the religion of the Brahmans and Hindus only was in danger, but nevertheless they also refused to bite them. On this the English now resolved on ruining the faith of both, and blew away from guns all those soldiers who persisted in their refusal.

Seeing this excessive tyranny, the soldiery now, in self-preservation, began killing the English, and slew them wherever they were found, and are now considering means for slaying the few still alive here and there. It is now my firm conviction that if these English continue in Hindustan they will kill every one in the country, and will utterly overthrow our religions; but there are some of my countrymen who have joined the English, and are now fighting on their side. I have reflected well on their case also, and have come to the conclusion that the English will not leave your religion to both you and them. You should understand this well. Under these circumstances, I would ask, what course have you decided on to protect your lives and faith? Were your views and mine the same, we might destroy them entirely with a very little trouble; and if we do so, we shall protect our religions and save the country. And as these ideas have been cherished and considered merely from a concern for the protection of the religions and lives of all you Hindus and Muslims of this country, this letter is printed for your information. All you Hindus are hereby solemnly adjured, by your faith in the Ganges, Tulsi, and Saligram; and all you Muslims, by your belief in God and the Quran, as these English are the common enemy of both, to unite in considering their slaughter extremely expedient, for by this alone will the lives and faith of both be saved. It is expedient, then, that you should coalesce and slay them.

The slaughter of kine [cows] is regarded by the Hindus as a great insult to their religion. To prevent this, a solemn compact and agreement has been entered into by all the Muslim chiefs of Hindustan, binding themselves, that if the Hindus will come forward to slay the English, the Muslims will from that very day put a stop to the slaughter of cows, and those of them who will not do so will

be considered to have abjured the Quran, and such of them as will eat beef will be regarded as though they had eaten pork; but if the Hindus will not gird their loins to kill the English, but will try to save them, they will be as guilty in the sight of God as though they had committed the sins of killing cows and eating flesh.

Perhaps the English may, for their own ends, try to assure the Hindus that as the Muslims have consented to give up killing cows from respect for the Hindu religion, they will solemnly engage to do the same, and will ask the Hindus to join them against the Muslims; but no sensible man will be gulled by such deceit, for the solemn promises and professions of the English are always deceitful and interested. Once their ends are gained they will infringe their engagements, for deception has ever been habitual with them, and the treachery they have always practised on the people of Hindustan is known to rich and poor. Do not, therefore, give heed to what they may say. Be well assured you will never have such an opportunity again. We all know that writing a letter is equivalent to an advance half way towards fellowship. I trust you will all write answers approving of what has been proposed herein. This letter has been printed under the direction of Maulvi Syed Kutb Shah Sahib, at the Bahaduri press, in the city of Bareilly.

## Questions

1. What justification does Maulvi Syed give for resisting British rule? Do you think any of his depictions of British intentions are exaggerated? Why or why not?
2. Some scholars have described this call for unity as an example of early Indian nationalist politics. What evidence supports this characterization? Do you think this is a nationalist document? Why or why not?
3. Why did Maulvi Syed argue that this was the most opportune moment for united action against the British?



# Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, What Is Property? (1840)

Industrialization in Europe in the early nineteenth century occurred amid glaring inequalities of wealth, producing a new class of impoverished workers and a new class of wealthy employers. Socialist thinkers argued that Europe needed not only a political revolution, like that which had taken place in France, but also an economic revolution that would eliminate inequality. One of these thinkers was Pierre-Joseph Proudhon (1809–1865), a French printer, journalist, and politician. Although Proudhon famously declared that "Property is theft!" unlike some other socialists he opposed state ownership of the means of production. Instead he favored ownership by associations of workers, a variety of socialism he called mutualism. He was also one of the earliest advocates of anarchism, the belief that society can regulate itself without state authority. Although he corresponded with Karl Marx, Marx was a fervent critic of his work. Proudhon's most important publication was *What Is Property?*, written soon after he moved to Paris and engaged with socialist ideas circulating there.

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If I were asked to answer the following question: *What is slavery?* and I should answer in one word, *It is murder*, my meaning would be understood at once. No extended argument would be required to show that the power to take from a man his thought, his will, his personality, is a power of life and death; and that to enslave a man is to kill him. Why, then, to this other question: *What is property?* may I not likewise answer, *It is robbery*, without the certainty of being misunderstood; the second proposition being no other than a transformation of the first?

* * *

*Property is robbery!* * * * What a revolution in human ideas! *Proprietor* and *robber* have been at all times expressions as contradictory as the beings whom they designate are hostile. * * * On

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CITATION: P. J. Proudhon, *What Is Property?*, translated by Benjamin R. Tucker (Princeton, Mass., 1876), pp. 11–13, 42, 53, 82–83, 148–49.