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## The Great Fear of 1857

Rumours, Conspiracies and the Making of the Indian Uprising

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### Book synopsis

The Indian Uprising of 1857 had a profound impact on the colonial psyche, and its spectre haunted the British until the very last days of the Raj. For the past 150 years most aspects of the Uprising have been subjected to intense scrutiny by historians, yet the nature of the outbreak itself remains obscure. What was the extent of the conspiracies and plotting? How could rumours of contaminated ammunition spark a mutiny when not a single greased cartridge was ever distributed to the sepoys?

Based on a careful, even-handed reassessment of the primary sources, *The Great Fear of 1857* explores the existence of conspiracies during the early months of that year and presents a compelling and detailed narrative of the panics and rumours which moved Indians to take up arms. With its fresh and unsentimental approach, this book offers a radically new interpretation of one of the most controversial events in the history of British India.

### Contents

Contents: The Greased Cartridges - Barrackpore and Berhampore - Rumours and *Chapattis* - Mangal Pandey - Arson at Ambala - Meerut - Alarm at Ambala - The Outbreak - Meerut Ablaze - The World Turned Upside Down - Meerut Aftermath - To Delhi! - The Fall of Delhi - The Uprising - The Great Conspiracy.

### About the author(s)/editor(s)

Kim A. Wagner is Lecturer in Imperial and World History at the University of Birmingham. He has published extensively on crime and rebellion in British India and his first book, *Thuggee: Banditry and the British in Early Nineteenth-Century India*, was shortlisted for the History Today Award 2008.

### Reviews

«A compulsory read for anyone with a serious interest in this crucial event in Indian and British colonial history.» (Dr Crispin Bates, Reader in Modern South Asian History, University of Edinburgh)

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