Sagas of Victory, Memories of Defeat? The Long After-life of an Indo-Muslim Warrior Saint, 1033-2000

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It may seem odd to stand here, three miles from where the apostle of nonviolence was assassinated, and talk about a medieval warrior saint. For surely Gandhi's life and the brief of this conference point in the direction of forgetting and forgiveness, ministering to the aggrieved memories of the past with the balm of reconciliation and an empowering narrative. The title of my paper seems to hark back to early-medieval pillage and conquest, that unlovely period of our past when Turkish horsemen supposedly laid North India waste, looting and destroying temples as a matter of course.

The road that has brought me from 30 January Marg, the street where Gandhi was gunned down in 1948, to this conference at Lodhi Road, named after the Muslim dynasty that was snuffed out by Babur, the founder of the Mughal empire, is in a sense the same road that Hindu majoritarianism has traveled since the mid-1980s, but to a very different destination. For the Hindu majoritarian, one of whom killed Gandhi, it leads to the city of Ayodhya and to the destruction on December 6, 1992, of Babur's mosque, which a "Hindu nation" seeks to reclaim as the birthplace of their own Lord Rama. Eight years after the fact, a judicial commission is still sifting through the "truths" of that event, which in my view is as important a landmark as August 15, 1947, when India gained its independence. And if I am inserting this date from late in 1992 into our national calendar, it is not out of a gnawing sense of outrage: a nation is not only what it remembers but equally what its nationals are "obliged already, to have forgotten," Ernest Renan wrote famously in the early 1880s.[1] The dictum still holds, and I am an Indian national.

Politicians at the helm of contemporary India have dubbed this day, December 6, alternatively as a "sad day" and as a "manifestation of national sentiment." Every anniversary of the demolition will no doubt bring out the customary trading of charges and countercharges, while the business of running a fractured Indian polity will continue as usual. How the interplay between remembering and forgetting will work out in this particular case in the long run has, I suggest, enormous consequences for India as a nation state. And that is why I wish to invoke December 6, 1992, to help frame what I have to say about my medieval warrior saint.

"India has a majority of Hindus" is of course a descriptive truism that does not in itself lead to majoritarianism. It could be and in fact has been the beginning of a number of sentences that have elaborated on this ground reality so as to produce very different statements. I could give some examples from the 1950s to the 1970s, from the first twenty to thirty years of the life of the Indian republic, and of my own for that matter. For example,

1. India has a majority of Hindus, yet the Hindus themselves are internally differentiated socially, economically, linguistically, and by regions.
2. India has a majority of Hindus, yet there are a large number of Muslims, Sikhs, and Jains as well.
3. India has a majority of Hindus, yet at the level of everyday life here there is a great deal of overlapping with the other communities; the Indian national movement, the legacy of Gandhi, the spirit and the structure of the Indian constitution, and the very Idea of India are all based on the recognition not only of the Hindus but of the Others as well.

Hindu India and the Indian nation were not interchangeable in those years, because the numerical brute force of that descriptive phrase *India has a majority of Hindus* was mitigated by the refusal to allow it the status of a self-evident statement. The phrase met its denouement in a "yet" or "but" to generate the idea of a plural, nonmajoritarian India.

A crucial change has taken place over the past fifteen years or so: since the mid-1980s, majoritarian politics has institutionalized itself by doing away with these qualifiers and insisting on a narrow elaboration of the earlier phrase. Now it goes something like this: India has a majority of Hindus ... and the reconfigured Hindus have to be the subject of all subsequent sentences that follow from this original sentence. Thus: *India has a majority of Hindus* who have to reconfigure the nation; and who have been misled into forgetting this basic fact; and who have been denied their prior due in the nation state; and who have been at the receiving end of History for an entire millennium, from the beginning of Turkish invasions and conquest, c. A.D. 1000-1200, to the present. In a word, the replacement of a qualifying "but" by an insistent "and" changes a descriptive truism into a majoritarian battering ram. It is obvious that such a move has enormous consequences for our past, present, and future.

The logic of majoritarianism is of course to enforce the idea of the singularity of a narrowly majoritarian-national history. In this, majoritarianism shares a certain ground with nationalism, but there are important divergences as well. Both are committed to an accredited version of the past — the majoritarian and the nationalist past respectively. But while both seek to construct a sense of an uncluttered national past, the national past for the nationalist is not confined to the defeats and victories of any one community; for the votaries of majoritarianism in India, on the other hand, the past, present, and future of India belong largely to the life of the Hindus.

Revulsion against the idea of a cluttered national past is almost visceral with the majoritarian nationalist, for it disorders a history that is considered singular. It needs stressing that in a certain basic sense the majoritarian in India (as elsewhere) cannot recall a narrow "national history" without cleansing and avenging it. In the Indian case the enactment of a historical vendetta against the Muslim conquerors of precolonial India becomes simultaneously the condition for the realization of Indian history and for demarcating the natural citizens of postPartition, independent India. According to this view, the citizens of the nation have, at the very least, to give assent to the forging of a "New Hindu History" whose positivist base is alloyed crucially with religious belief and nuggets dug out from the seams of a "common memory."[2]

I

The politics of the imagination of "Hindu India" have depended crucially on a particular reading of the oppression of the disunited denizens of India by Muslim conquerors and rulers from the eleventh century until the establishment of British rule in the mid-eighteenth century.

> Believing in four Vedas, six Shastras, eighteen Puranas and thirty-three core devtas, Hindus, to begin with, were differentiated according to *bhav-bhesh-bhasha* (language, beliefs and customs), and then the Mahabharata caused further havoc. The one or two germs of valor that remained were finished off by the ahimsa of Lord Buddha. … Our ferociousness simply disappeared, our sense of pride deserted us, and as for anger, all sorts of sins were laid at its door. The result: we became *devtas, mahatmas*, or for that matter nice fellows (*bhalmanus*), but our spunk, we lost that. No fire, no spark, simply cold ash, that's what we became: "*Nihshankam deepte lokaih pashya bhasmchye padam.*"

> And on the other side in the desert of Arabia a soul appeared who was brave as his word, and in whose new religion killing, slaughtering, fighting and marauding were the principal elements.[3]

Thus wrote Mannan Prasad Dwivedi, Bhojpuri poet, Hindi novelist, and writer of nationalist prose in an impressive two-part *History of Muslim Rule [in India]*, commissioned by the Hindi-nationalist Kashi Nagari Pracharini Sabha in 1920.
There are obvious continuities here with what Partha Chatterjee has called the "new nationalist history of India" written in Bengali in the late nineteenth century. These vernacular histories transmitted the stereotypical figure of "the Muslim," endowed with a "national character": fanatical, bigoted, warlike, dissolute, cruel.[4] Chatterjee writes:

> This distinct history originates in and acquires its identity from the life of Muhammad. In other words, the dynasty that will be founded in Delhi at the beginning of the thirteenth century and the many political changes that will take place in the subsequent five centuries are not to be described merely as the periods of Turko-Afghan or Mughal rule in India: they are integral parts of the political history of Islam.
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> The actors in this history are also given certain behavioral characteristics. They are warlike and believe that it is their religious duty to kill infidels. Driven by the lust for plunder and the visions of cohabiting with the nymphs of paradise, they are even prepared to die in battle. They are not merely conquerors, but "delirious at the prospect of conquest" (*digvijayonmatta*), and consequently are by their innate nature covetous of the riches of India.[5]

"*Jin javanan tuv dharam nari dhan tinhon linhaun*": "You Muslim-foreigners! You have robbed us [Hindus] of [our] dharma, women, and wealth," wrote the North Indian Hindi poet Bhartendu Harishchandra in 1888, echoing the stereotypical recollection of Muslim conquest and its effect on a Hindu India.[6] Implied in this memorable couplet by one of the founders of modern Hindi is a conflation of the foreigner-Turk conquerors of North India with the entire population of Muslims in India.

There have been a series of retorts to this "communalization of history," as it is called in South Asia, the term "communal" implying an adherence to narrow religio-sectarian loyalties that color and impede the development of a properly contextualized historical past and a composite cultural present.[7] The most powerful (and very nearly the first) such critique came from Professor Mohammad Habib, of Aligarh Muslim University, who in a series of essays penned between 1931 and 1952 sought to counter the communalization of India's medieval history from a broadly Marxist perspective.[8] Habib's ire was directed particularly against the partisan-political scholarship of British administrator-"orientalists" who had consistently projected the "Muslim India" of c. 1000-1700 as a period of oppression and fanaticism from which colonial rule had at last liberated (Hindu) India.

Habib countered by arguing that the "real motives of the plundering expeditions" of the beginning of the eleventh century, associated with the name of the notorious despoiler of northern India, Mahmud of Ghazni, "was greed for treasure and gold. The iconoclastic pretensions were meant only for the applause of the gallery." The Muslims of India were not so much the progeny of Turkish conquerors, he wrote, as local converts from the artisanal classes, socially and spatially at the margins of both Hindu society and early medieval towns; and "an Indian Muslim had as little chance of becoming a warlord of the empire of Delhi as a Hindu *Sudra* [low caste] of ascending a Rajasthan throne" occupied by Hindu rajas. More important for Habib, "Such limited success as Islam achieved in India [as a proselytizing force] was not due to its kings and politicians but to its saints."[9]

> With a new faith everything depends upon the method of its presentation; and if Islam in this land had worn no other aspect except the conquering hordes of Ghazni, it would not have been accepted even by a minority of people. But Islam had nobler and better representatives, who far from the atmosphere of court and camps lived the humble life of humble people according to the Sunnat of the Prophet to whom "his poverty was his pride." And Hinduism in its cosmopolitan outlook enrolled the Muslim mystics among its *rishis*, and neighborly feelings soon developed a common calendar of saints. So it was in the thirteenth century and so it remains today.[10]

For Habib, one of the founders of a "scientific history" of medieval India, syncretism was an engrained characteristic of the land marked by a shared cultural space. "The Indo-Muslim mystics, without perhaps consciously knowing it, followed the footsteps of their great Hindu predecessors."[11] Habib's efforts were to blunt the "Sword of Islam" motif in the construction of the Indian past in both the colonial and the immediately postcolonial present. To trace Indian history as a sort of religious genealogy of India's present-day Muslims, he argued, was to do both the nation and its largest minority a grievous historical wrong.

> It is a grave injustice to the Musalmans of India to judge them by the character of their kings, for whom they were in no way responsible, while their religious leaders, their artists and poets, who exercised an immeasurably greater influence over them, are ignored.[12]

The colonial masters, however, had mischievously conceived the task of history primers in colonial India as disseminating dissension and "communal hatred" between the subject population. To this end,

> The peaceful Indian Musalman, descended beyond doubt from Hindu ancestors, was dressed up in the garb of a foreign barbarian as a breaker of temples and as an eater of beef and declared to be a military colonist in the land where he had lived for about thirty to forty centuries. All the opposite vices were attributed to the Hindu; weak, emaciated from the excessive heat of the Indian plain, quiet in his manners, unambitious in his outlook, he was obviously a fit object for "stratagems and spoils" and had no right to complain when conquered by more virile races from colder climes.
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> Year after year, thoughtless school-masters have instilled these ideas into the impressionable minds of their pupils; year after year, boys who could not repeat these noxious platitudes in their examinations were ploughed [failed]. The result of it is seen in the communalistic atmosphere of India today.
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> The Hindu feels it his duty to dislike those whom he has been taught to consider the enemy of his religion and his ancestors; the Musalman, *lured into the false belief that he was once a member of a ruling race*, feels insufferably wronged by being relegated to the status of a minority community. Fools both! Even if the Musalmans eight centuries ago were as bad as they are painted, would there be any sense in holding the present generation responsible for their deeds? It is but an imaginative [i.e., imaginary] tie that joins the modern Hindu with Harshvardhana or Asoka, or the modern Musalman with Shihabuddin or Mahmud.[13]

In this moving passage, written in 1931, Habib sketches the essentials of what amounts to much of the professional secular-national view on medieval India. Not that there have been no efforts to counter this perspective by discovering the existence of a "Hindu India" in the thirteenth century.[14] Not that all history primers in independent India have been free of sectarian orientation, intention, and effect. Rather, the two strands, which could loosely be termed the secularnational and the sectarian-Hindu, have come to occupy different terrains.

The result is that every time the "fact" of Turkish conquest of "Hindu India" and of a homogenous and eternal Hindu community/nation asserts itself in public discourse, as has happened over the past fifteen years, this receives a predictable riposte. First, the suppositions behind the claim for homogeneity within a segmented and hierarchical Hindu society are shown to be untenable. The second and by now equally traditional response is to stress the long trend of tolerance, mutual respect, and crossings in India's national past. In an impassioned piece written in early 1993, Amartya Sen argued for this position as follows:

> The heritage of contemporary India combines Islamic influences with Hindu and other traditions. … The point is not simply that so many major contributions to Indian culture have come from Islamic writers, musicians, and painters, but also that their works are thoroughly integrated with those of the Hindus. Indeed, even Hindu religious beliefs and practices have been substantially influenced by contacts with Islamic ideas and values. The impact of Islamic Sufi thought, for example, is readily recognized in parts of contemporary Hindu literature. Even films on Hindu themes frequently rely on Muslim writers and actors.[15]

II

In representative accounts such as Sen's, the Turkish conquest of North India is either assimilated to the history of the establishment of a centralized agrarian state (the Delhi Sultanate, c. 1200) or it gets written over by the longer and gentler history of Indian syncretism. In most writings syncretism is posited as an innate characteristic of the people inhabiting the Gangetic heartland and peninsular India. A part of the "age-old moral and spiritual traditions of our people," it delineates a way of being-in-the-world, one marked by emotive floral, faunal, and cultural signifiers. Syncretism in such an understanding is not a historical process, a product of coming to terms with events: political conquest and the otherworldly challenge posed to the indigenous jogis by what must have seemed like *arriviste* Sufis. Syncretism springs, fully formed as it were, from the same "sacred land where the black gazelles graze, the *munja* grass grows and the *paan* leaf is eaten, and where the material and the spiritual are organically intermixed." I take these evocative markers of India's sacred topology from Habib's powerful address to the Indian History Congress in the immediate aftermath of Independence and Partition.[16]

But we know that the medieval Sufis, though gentle in their persona, especially in archetypal opposition to the "holy warrior," had to carve out forcefully their spiritual domain against the already existent authority of Hindu *jogis*. Hagiographies constantly harp on contests between the Sufi and the *jogi* for spiritual supremacy, contests in which the *jogi* is invariably worsted: he either converts, along with his disciples, or retires, leaving the Sufi in triumphant possession of a prior holy and tranquil spot (often by a lake). One of India's most venerable Sufis, Muinuddin Chishti of Ajmer, is said to have established his *khanqah* (hospice) only after successfully overcoming ogres and warriors attached to a preexisting site commanded by a *jogi* and his entourage.[17]

Sometimes all that remains of the prepossessing *jogi* is a wisp of a name, carrying the toponymic stigma of a "historic" defeat for all to utter. Many place names in the Gangetic heartland enshrine the memory of such holy victories and defeats, though I am far from arguing that every time a local mentions, say, the name Maunathbhanjan, he or she necessarily recollects the destruction (*bhanjan*) of the lord and master (*nath*) of Mau, a thriving manufacturing town near Banaras since the seventeenth century. In other cases the worsted spiritual master is transformed into an ogre by the sheer act of transcription from one language to another. While the Sanskrit *dev* stands for a god, or the title of a revered person, when written in Persian without this gloss the word *deo* stands for a ghost,

demon, or monster. Spiritually and linguistically mastered, the holy-harmful figure often submits before the majestic Sufi, who grants him the last wish of his subservience being recorded for posterity in terms of a trace, either in a place name or as a visible marker of a suitably monstrous sort. At the Bahraich shrine of Salar Masaud Ghazi in northeastern Uttar Pradesh, the earrings of the subdued *deo* Nirmal are the size of grindstones.

These are some of the ways in which eventful encounters between the holy men of Islam and of the Hindus get enshrined in the life histories of popular Sufi sites. And of course these shrines attract both Hindus and Muslims as devotees. Let me clarify. My point is not to deny the composite following of India's justly famous Sufi saints. All I wish to do, as I broach my argument about the warrior saint, is to create an analytic space for encounter, clash, and conquest as necessary elements of the conflictual prehistory of such cultic sites as that of Nizamuddin Auliya, medieval and modern Delhi's greatest Sufi saint. Wrathful, hypostatical, miraculous events and encounters, I am suggesting, not simply a longstanding Indian spirit of accommodation, go into the making of India's vaunted syncretism. Or, to put it sharply: accommodation is predicated necessarily on a prior clash of two opposing wills. The hermetically cloistered figures of rosary-fondling Sufis and saber-rattling *ghazis* (saints and warriors), even when yoked to the cause of good pluralistic politics, produce bad history. And I say this because, faced as we are with an insistence on the clash between Islam and Hinduism in India's medieval past, historians need to fashion newer histories of this encounter, never mind if our best Delhi Sufi turns out to be not so gentle after all.

III

The shared worship of worthies — heroes, warriors, saints — by a multireligious populace is rightly portrayed in most writings as evidence of the remarkable composite "religiosity" of the Indian masses. Muinuddin Chishti of Ajmer, Nizamuddin Auliya of Delhi, Khwaja Khizr, the patron saint of boatmen after whom the Kidderpore docks at Calcutta are named — all have received their fair share in most scholarly accounts on Indian Islam.[18] These personages continue to have their importance in the uncertain India of today. But the focus on syncretism *sans* conflict amounts to taking only half a step. And this is so because our concentration on intercommunal goodwill and harmony, though necessary, leaves the field of sectarian strife as the special preserve of sectarian and "communal" historians. Mine is a plea for essaying nonsectarian histories of conquest and conflict.

My plea for nonsectarian histories of the Turkish conquest is not an effort to produce a "historically correct" solution to the recent rise of Hindu majoritarianism in India. Rather, it is to introduce some nuance into the relationship between "facts of history," popular remembrance, and matters of belief. Only by this means can one mount a historiographic challenge to the natural-and-necessary connection between mutilated memories (of the past) and cathartic violence (in the present) made by the votaries of majoritarianism.

My argument is fairly simple, and goes as follows. If the sites of the martyrdom of Islam's holy warriors in India are equally the sites of long-lasting, syncretic, multireligious cults, then clearly this is attributable neither to popular amnesia nor to the triumph of thaumaturgy over "facts and history." The narratives of Muslim warrior saints retailed by balladeers, which bear a complicated relationship with the more standard hagiographies, are evidence of the refashioning of sagas of "religious" conflict in order to create communities in the past and in the present. To focus exclusively on the syncretism of such cults, without taking on board the narrative refashionings of conquest that these invariably entail, is to miss out on the creation of India's vaunted composite culture as a process. It is also to

hitch popular remembrance to the temporal career of superstition, while remaining impervious to the literary, cultural, and mnemonic devices through which popular assent is generated across religious divides.

IV

There are many Muslim warrior saints and saintly shrines scattered over India. Numerous place names with the prefix "Ghazi," humble shrines of "manly martyrs" (*shaheed mard*), mass graves (*ganj-i-shaheedan*), folklore, and genealogies of camp followers testify to the widespread memorialization of Ghazis and Shaheeds (warriors and martyrs) in both North and South India.[19] We are concerned here with the most popular and intriguing of such warrior saints: Syed Salar Masaud Ghazi, also known as Ghazi Miyan — the nephew of Mahmud of Ghazni, the notorious early eleventh-century despoiler of northern India.

There is little dispute that Mahmud's seventeen incursions into northern and western India resulted in widespread plunder and destruction. Writing in the train of his conquest, the great eleventh-century astronomer and savant Al Beruni also seems to have uncannily predicted the path of the memories of Mahmud Ghazni's invasions:

> Mahmud utterly ruined the prosperity of the country, and performed there wonderful exploits, by which the Hindus became like atoms of dust scattered in all directions, and like a tale of old in the mouth of the people. Their scattered remains cherish, of course, the most inveterate aversion towards all Muslims.[20]

This sentiment has been echoed in every British and consequently nationalist "History of India," beginning with Tarinicharan Chattopadhyay's *Bharatversher Itihas*, written in Bengali in 1858. "Of all the Muslims," wrote Chattopadhyay, "it was [Mahmud's] aggression which first brought devastation and disarray to India, and from that time the freedom of the Hindus has diminished and faded like the phases of the moon."[21] Mahmud is the familiar conqueror-villain of history books just as he is the idealized supreme iconoclast of Indo-Islamic Persian chronicles, panegyrics, and treatises on governance.[22]

Paradoxically, in Abdur Rahman Chishti's Persian hagiography, assiduously translated and commented upon in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries as well as in ballads sung over large stretches of the Gangetic plain, Ghazi Miyan is made to stand in place of Mahmud as the premier Muslim conqueror saint of North India. Martyred at the young age of nineteen in 1033, at Bahraich in northeastern Uttar Pradesh, bordering Nepal, Ghazi Miyan is absent from all standard chronicles and histories of the Sultan of Ghazni. Officially absent from History, Masaud Ghazi, Ghazi Miyan, Bale Miyan, or Ghazi Dulha (the Ghazi Bridegroom) nevertheless has an overwhelming popular presence. The cultic gathering of "commoners" at his tomb in Bahraich has remained an annual affair ever since the great North African traveler Ibn Battuta visited the shrine in 1341, along with the Sultan of Delhi, and found it too crowded for comfort.[23]

There is little dispute about the popularity of Ghazi Miyan over the past 650 years. Visits by the Delhi Sultans of the Tughlaq dynasty, attempts by the Lodhis in the early sixteenth century to control the free mixing of the sexes at the huge summer fair in Bahraich, anecdotes about the personal interest of the Mughal emperor Akbar in the large contingents undertaking the long 500-kilometer journey from the imperial capital Agra, near Delhi, to Bahraich are all on record.[24] The attempt by a prominent Sufi savant recognized by the Mughal court to pen an authoritative hagiography can be read, as

I shall presently argue, as an attempt to rein in and canalize the legends about the youthful warrior saint into an orthodox "Sword of Islam" story. Popular proverbs, nineteenthcentury geography primers and children's encyclopedias, census records about the religious affiliation of the humble folk, historical novels set in the eastern Uttar Pradesh countryside abutting the Hindu pilgrimage cities of Banaras and Ayodhya — all refer as a matter of course to the ubiquitous presence of Ghazi Miyan in popular consciousness.[25] Tulsidas, the great sixteenth-century Awadhi poet and "author" of the popular rendering of the Rama legend, wryly commented on the blind popular belief in the healing and redeeming powers of the shrine of Ghazi Miyan:

> *lahi aankh kab aandhre, baanjh puut kab biyaae;*
> *kab korhi kaayaa lahi, jag bahraich jaaye*
>
> [Who has seen the blind regain sight, and which barren woman has been delivered of a son; which leper has regained his limbs — yet the entire world keeps heading for Bahraich][26]

Such was the popularity of Ghazi Miyan into the twentieth century that "small Bahraichs" were created in several Uttar Pradesh towns where either the Ghazi himself or one of his lieutenants had seen action in the early eleventh century! Identical fairs were held here, spread over huge grounds dedicated for the purpose. It was rare indeed for such sites to be let out for another public use. When Gandhi reached the sprawling district of Goralchpur to address a mammoth nationalist meeting on February 8, 1921, just a year and fifteen miles away from Chauri Chaura, it was at the huge Ghazi Miyan fairground that the Mahatma was welcomed and heard.[27]

My argument is not dependent on establishing a proven thaumaturgy, an authentic genealogy, or a credible chronology for Syed Salar Masaud Ghazi; it is the construction of his figure as India's premier Muslim warrior saint that concerns us here.[28] The central text is Abdur Rahman Chishti's *Mirat-i-Masaudi* (c. 1611), which retails the military exploits of this *Sultan-us Shuhda* (King or prince of martyrs) in the cause of Islam in northern, western, and northeastern India, ending with his untimely death at Bahraich in A.D. 1033.[29]

In this Persian hagiography, written by a prolific Sufi savant of central Uttar Pradesh, Salar Masaud appears as the nephew of Mahmud of Ghazni. Conceived in the holy city of Ajmer, Masaud grows up as a youthful holy figure with a Jesus-like countenance, destined to "take possession of a country which has not fallen into the hands of any Musalman." He "excelled in all the arts" at a very young age, was "pure of body and mind," and had a preference for chewing the betel nut, something particular to India:

> He was constantly performing ablutions, though if he had prayed without bathing, so pure was he in body and mind, it would not have been wrong. He had clean carpets spread where he was wont to sit, he wore pure garments and delighted in fragrant essences and eating betel nut.[30]

While Masaud Ghazi is pious and virtuous, the Hindu rajas he subdues are treacherous. The raja of Rawal tries to poison him with all manner of food. Masaud spurns the raja's offer to "eat the food he had prepared for his party" with a retort: "The Prophets never ate food prepared in the house of a Hindu, nor will I!" Satgun, the raja, then entreats him to "take sugar, rice and all things necessary, and have his food prepared by his own cooks," thereby maintaining both his own Islamic as well as Hindu notions of purity, but even this offer is turned down. Satgun then brings huge quantities of sweets — which are commonly acceptable across caste barriers — but Masaud "with divine percep-

tion suspects the truth" and offers them to some dogs, who instantly die. Masaud turns back and attacks the raja in the town of Rawal: "unable to withstand ... the brave youths" led by the twelve-year old Masaud, "the unbelievers ... were routed, and the Faithful scattered their heads in every street."[31]

Masaud's forays into the foothills of Nepal are in the nature of hunting expeditions during which he encounters a famous sun temple and a holy tank where "every Sunday the heathen of Bahraich and its environs, male and female, used to assemble in thousands to rub their heads" under the stone image of Bala Rukh "and do it reverence as an object of peculiar sanctity." It was Masaud's wish to "destroy that mine of unbelief, and set up a chamber for the worship of the Nourisher of the Universe in its place, rooting out unbelief from those parts." The local chiefs of the country around Bahraich present him with an ultimatum: "You come from the Upper Country [*mulk-i-bala dast*], and know nothing of these parts. This is the land of nobles; never shall the inhabitants of the Upper Country remain here. Think more wisely of this matter."[32] Masaud confers, gauges the strength of the enemy, and prepares for battle. Several engagements ensue. Masaud issues orders "to bring the bodies of the Faithful slain and cast them into the Suraj-kund [the sun-god tank], in the hope that through the odor of their martyrdom the darkness of unbelief might be dispelled from that spot."[33] Masaud now has a premonition of his martyrdom: before the final engagement he distributes all the money and property he has to those around him and tells them to spend it quickly, saying, "Jesus found no use for even his woolen cap and needle, what good shall I get from all this wealth." "He then dismissed the people ... [and] retreated to occupy himself with religious exercises: from that time he abjured food and water, eating a large quantity of betel nut and rubbing himself with perfumes."[34]

In the final engagement, on Sunday, the 14th of the month Rajab in the year 424 Hijri (June 15, 1033), Sahar Deo and Har Deo, with several other chiefs, "seeing that the army of Islam was reduced to nothing, unitedly attacked the bodyguard of the Prince [of Martyrs]."

> As the time of evening prayers came on … a chance arrow pierced the main artery in the arm of the Prince of the Faithful. His sunlike countenance became pale as the new moon. Repeating the text in praise of martyrdom, he dismounted. Sikandar Diwana, and the other servants of the loved-one of God, carried him to the shade of the mahua tree [by the Suraj kund, a favorite resting spot of Masauds], and laid him down upon a couch. Sikandar Diwana, taking his honored head upon his lap, sat looking towards Mecca, weeping bitterly. The Prince of Martyrs opened his eyes but once, then drew a sigh, and committed his soul to God. …
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> A sound of woe and lamentation broke from the people; they wept aloud, and brandishing their swords, rushed upon the enemy of the unbelievers, and gave up their lives. … By the time of the evening prayers not one was left. All the servants of Masaud lay scattered like stars.[35]

The story told here is clearly an elaboration of the "Sword of Islam" motif in India, with its characteristic hyperbole, for the language of medieval conquest and warfare is necessarily one of excess: here we are centuries before today's "smart bombs" and clinical descriptions of "collateral damage." The comparisons with Jesus are intriguing, but the character of the Islamic hero is built within Indian referents: restrictions on the acceptance of cooked food, the chewing of betel nut (and perhaps the betel leaf), etc. It is the centrality of Indian tropes that opens up the possibilities of telling an Islamic tale to a wider audience of "unbelievers."

V

A detailed analysis of the structure of this hagiography must await another occasion. For the moment I wish to draw attention to the way the hagiography is authenticated (a difficult task in every case)

with reference to two very different "histories" that predate the literary endeavors of a *mauteqid* — one who has a firm belief in the larger-than-life deeds of a warrior saint. Abdur Rahman Chishti claimed to have based the *Mirat-i-Masaudi* on an early Ghaznavid history, which "seems to have been written to satisfy popular curiosity about Salar Masaud at a later date." The fact that this *Twarikh* is not mentioned by any writer before or after the writing of the *Mirat* has not exactly endeared Abdur Rahman Chishti to the professional historians of the early Ghaznavids.[36] But apart from maintaining that his efforts had been materially assisted by the helping hand of his long-deceased hero (almost a hallmark of hagiographies), Sheikh Abdur Rahman took care to maintain that "his history had been corroborated by a learned Hindu Brahman of Bahraich from his own Sanskrit sources." It was thus that Abdur Rahman Chishti literally "believed his work to be an authentic history of Salar Masaud."[37]

Urdu translations of the *Mirat* with poetical embellishments were printed routinely in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and these form the core of the chapbook literature that is sold at the shrine in Bahraich today.[38] A more open-ended crafting of the exploits of Masaud Ghazi takes place in the accounts of the Muslim balladeers (*dafalis*). It is difficult to establish when these ballads first came into existence, though it is equally difficult to conceive of devotees covering the long distance from Agra to Bahraich, as testified by the Emperor Akbar himself, with no songs or stories to accompany them. A large collection made by colonial ethnographers in the late nineteenth century is not markedly different from my own field recordings done in the 1990s.[39] The story of Ghazi Miyan is here recounted in several episodes, but the one that is common to most locations in North India is about the marriage of the warrior saint. In this ballad Ghazi Miyan is being ritually bathed preparatory to his marriage when Jaso Rani (Queen Jashoda, also the name of Krishna's foster-mother) arrives, not with the customary gift of milk products but with pails brimming with the blood of Nand (her husband) and his cowherd subjects, who have lost their cows and their lives to the treacherous Raja Sohal Deo. Ghazi Miyan (here Ghazi Dulha, or the young bridegroom) responds to this Gau Guhar — "Save the kine" — cry, gets up from his wedding, and is martyred in the cause of cows/Islam. The poignancy of his martyrdom lies in the tragic reversal of marriage as death, and in a Turkish warrior, born and bred in India, responding with the last drop of his blood to a "Hindu" cry of "Save the cows!" from the treacherous assault of a local king.

Devotees form marriage parties and converge on Bahraich every May/June (*Jeth*) to complete the important ceremony that got interrupted that fateful first Sunday of Jeth in A.D. 1033, corresponding to Sunday the 14th of the month Rajab in the year A.H. 424. Because of some untoward occurrence (*pachkha*) — a blizzard, a drizzle, thunder — the marriage will not take place. This is, as it were, written into the script. On Sunday, May 12, 1996, an usually strong wind was read as the sign that stymied the proceedings. So the unfulfilled desire to get Bale Dulha, or the young bridegroom (Ghazi Miyan), married is pushed to the first Sunday of the month of *Jeth* in the next agricultural year, "when the first mangoes expectedly ripen." And so it has gone on at least since the great medieval traveler Ibn Battuta's visit to the shrine in 1341.

In a society such as India's, where segmentation and division into castes and subcastes are girdled by marriage rules, to be a part of the wedding procession (*barat*) of Ghazi Miyan is to subvert the normal barriers in the creation of community. And this joyous community of the devotees of Bale Dulha becomes possible because popular narratives transform the Islamic notion of *Shahadat*, martyrdom, in the very telling of the story. In principle, the story of a jihad such as Bale Dulha undertakes cannot be communicated to a "nonbeliever" outside the context of the exercise and acknowledgment of just force. Shahadat involves both witnessing "truth" and martyrdom, and is to be anticipated and welcomed, as indeed Salar Masaud did on 14th Rajab A.H. 424. But even in the *Mirat-i-Masaudi*, a thoroughly Islamic hagiography of a shaheed, the martyrdom of Salar Masaud is in fact precipitated by a "Save the kine" cry, which invades the text so imperceptibly as to go almost unnoticed.

Let us go back to the story of the encounter with the confederacy of rajas at Bahraich. Salar Masaud has received the ultimatum to vacate his hunting ground and retire to the Upper Country (*mulk-i-bala dast*). The Prince of Martyrs confers with his commanders and it is "agreed to take the offensive rather 114 Shahid Amin than allow the unbelievers to attack them ... so that with God's help they might hope to conquer."

> The next day they were preparing, when news arrived that the enemy were driving off the cattle. The Prince sprang like an angry lion, and beat to arms; buckling on his armor and mounting his horse, he himself put his troops into battle array, and advanced to the attack.[40]

It seems likely that this uncharacteristic passage in the *Mirat* is a measure of Abdur Rahman's inability to absorb the popular cow trope on its own terms. The marked category "cow" (which would have placed it within a specific cultural universe) is replaced by the unmarked category "cattle" in the seventeenth-century Persian text. In terms of the logic of the hagiography it would seem all the more odd that Masaud's local opponents would gird themselves for the final attack on the Prince of Martyr's contingent by making a dash for (presumably) Masaud's or his cowherds' cattle. To make the popular "save the cow" trope derivative of the *Mirat* is to privilege an awkward seventeenth-century construction over a rooted, unhistoricized folklore. Instead of taking the early-seventeenth-century *Mirat* as the originary text, with the ballads as oral variants, we should entertain the other historical possibility: that between the fourteenth and the early seventeenth centuries there were extant a clutch of popular lores and legends about Ghazi Miyan, and that the *Mirat-i-Masaudi* of Abdur Rahman Chishti was an attempt by a learned local Sufi to bleach popular memory and thereby tame this historically recalcitrant figure. When Abdur Rahman sat down in the 1610s to write the life of his warrior hero, he did so in order to fill a narrative gap. In his writing the Sufi hagiographer was neither able to engross the cow-protector motif nor, given its popularity, to discard it totally.

In folklore and local histories Ghazi Miyan appears as the protector of "his innumerable" cows and cowherds. As Zainullah Dafali of Gonda District recounted in May 1996:

> [Ghazi Miyan] had 1,600 Ahir-cowherds and 125,000 cows. He had given his cowherds the freedom to do as they pleased, what he expected of them was the present (*shagun*) of milk every eighth day. Raja Sohal Deo got annoyed at this. He said: "A Turuk like him takes the shagun of milk, and I a Kshatriya am ignored!"[41]

Sohal Deo prohibits the giving of such gifts to the Turkish interloper, but the wives of the cowherds disregard him. They take the gift of milk for the marriage of Ghazi Miyan, whereupon Nand, the cowherd chief and his followers, are attacked by Sohal Deo, and Rani Jaso rushes to Ghazi Miyan with the cry of "Save the cows!" In a late-nineteenth-century rendition, Ghazi Miyan begs his mother's pardon for so abruptly disrupting the marriage festivities in order to respond to the killing of his Gwala cowherds:

> "O hear me, mother mine," he said,
> "Great Wrong the king [Sohal] had wrought.
> He hath our kine as plunder seized
> And all our Gwalas killed:
> Jaso hath come to me: the air
> With cries for blood is filled.
> O hearken, Saifuddin; the tale
> To me hath Jaso told; Who kills my Gwalas and steals my kine
> A traitor King I hold."[42]

Another eponymous ballad called "Jaso" or "Jaswa," still extant, begins with Nand turning out his *banjhin* (infertile) wife. Jaso, an inauspicious, unproductive woman (paired off initially to reproduce another lineage), is unacceptable even to her mother. Forsaken and forlorn, she seeks shelter in the desolate shrine of Ghazi Miyan, in the middle of the Bahraich jungle. The saint intercedes and Nand is prevented in the nick of time from taking another wife. Ghazi Miyan ends Jaso's travails by uniting her with her husband and blessing her with a son — Kishan Kanahaiya, Krishna himself. In fact Ghazi Miyan's own mother in the ballads is herself a barren woman, a *banjh* — the ultimate ignominy for a married woman — and is blessed with a child after she agrees to an impossible condition set by a powerful Sufi saint. Other ballads rework familiar episodes from the *Ramayana* into the exploits of the young warrior saint. There is the story of Amina Sati, modeled on Rama's wife Sita after her return from captivity in Lanka, who is turned out by her husband because she serves food to a Mussalman — Ghazi Miyan, whom she regards as a welcome guest from her distant natal home.

Let us not gloss over a major transformation that is taking place here. The archetypal outsider, the lascivious Turuk conqueror who repeatedly penetrates a prostrate "India," is here being domesticated and made a part of common womanly sorrows and concerns about marriage: alienation from the natal home, and the demeaning state that comes with inadequate fecundity, the *raison d'être* of a married woman. The Hindu body politic of history books, repeatedly vanquished by the Turks, and the forsaken, forlorn, and empty body of the Hindu woman-sans-male child until filled with the grace of the Ghazi, are here worlds apart. Understandably, the object of the ire of the anti-Ghazi Miyan tracts of the 1920s were these very Hindu women who were thronging the Bahraich shrine, praying that the Ghazi, himself born to a barren woman, grant them their desire to be delivered of a male offspring.

Along with married women, Ahir cowherds are central to the story, and this suggests that we have here the establishment of a relationship between Turkish horsemen and local pastoralists at the moment of conquest and before the setting up of an agrarian Turkish state, the Delhi Sultanate. Ahirs and other middle- and low-caste Hindus form the majority of Ghazi Miyan's followers, and this despite the repeated attempts by Hindu publicists (especially the Arya Samaj, from the early twentieth century) to tell "the real history" of this "vile" Muslim conqueror and thereby wean "ignorant" Hindus away from the cult of the warrior saint and its charlatan *dafali* officiants.[43]

But the "ignorance" argument does not work. It is implausible for so many to have been ignorant for such an incredibly long time; and there are, besides, enough markers to make it virtually impossible for the non-Islamic follower not to give assent to one or the other aspect of the jihadi career of Ghazi Miyan. Even if one does not know what a *ghazi* is, one knows he is a Mussalman, that *dafalis* are not Hindu religious officiants, that the shrine at Bahraich is not a temple. And so the story is told and appreciated from the point of view of difference. Ghazi Miyan *is* a Muslim conqueror, yet in effect if not in fact, as the first conqueror of the Gangetic north he is unlike other Muslim conquerors — who are yet to be or are supposed to be, or indeed were! He is the opposite of the stereotypical Muslim conqueror in Bhartendu's cry, "You Muslim-foreigners! You have robbed us [Hindus] of our dharma, women, and wealth!"

He is also unlike the "Turuka" of the popular imagination. Hindu kings who conceive of his character as the debased Turuka are shown to be debased themselves. Thus, in a ballad about Ghazi Miyan's conquest of the holy city of Banaras, the chief blood-demanding idol of the city is made to drink milk, while reciting an acceptance of the Islamic creed. Certain astrologers, when consulted by Raja Banar (the eponymous ruler of the city) on how to halt the *ghazi*'s advance, suggest to him that the Mussalman hero is "protected by Khuda himself" The ballad recounts how the "shameless kafirs," in order to distract and thwart Ghazi Miyan, then parade their women before him and his compani-

ons. The virginal saint is forced to act drastically to avert his eyes from this pornographic parade: "*jab aurat par pari nazar, sar kaat aapan jeb mein dhaya*" — he cuts his head off, pockets it, defeats the raja's forces while headless, and only subsequently puts his head back on. Unlike the stereotypical lascivious Turk, the first popular Muslim conqueror of North India dies an unwed virgin.

VI

To recapitulate: there is little doubt that the narrative of Ghazi Miyan is about the Sword of Islam. But its denouement — the Ghazi's martyrdom — is played out in terms of an enduring, nonexploitative relationship between Hindu herdsmen and women and a Muslim protector of their cows. The martyrdom of the conqueror then transforms the Sword of Islam motif by creating a third possibility external to itself: it is not the usual harsh choice between conversion or death. Protected by a *ghazi* in the wilds of the Nepal foothills, herdsmen do not become converts to Islam or even subjects of a new "Islamic state": they become ardent follower-devotees. In effect they give assent to the life of a young *ghazi-shaheed* which has been well lived on two very different registers: the call of Islam and the call to save cows.

This is a bald summary of an insufficiently told story, but I hope it raises issues similar to the ones I started with. The person Ghazi Miyan and his martyrdom at Bahraich in 1033 are unchronicled. Yet his exploits, as recounted in ballads and in a seventeenth-century Persian hagiography, relate to a history — that of the Turkish conquest of North India. Historically dubious, these retellings nonetheless articulate aspects of a verifiable past conflict, in the process creating communities in the present — communities based in part on a memorialized recognition of difference and conquest.

To write about Ghazi Miyan in the present involves grappling with more than a narrative understanding of the warrior saint as a just conqueror. It also involves being faced with fresher "fabrications" of the story of this virgin Muslim warrior in unexpected quarters. This then opens up possibilities of creating a new and unfamiliar — and defamiliarizing — historical narrative of the "Sword of Islam" in India. To overlook the story of Ghazi Miyan's life as recounted in the early-seventeenth-century hagiography and in extant ballads, and to concentrate instead on the well-established syncretic and thaumaturgic aspects of the cult, is in other words to forgo the opportunity of penning an alternative history of the Turkish conquest of northern India: neither Turkiana (the Sword of Islam) nor Sufiana (the gentle ways of the Islamic mystics), to borrow the polarity of Suniti Kumar Chatterjee,[44] but rather a history that focuses attention upon this recalcitrant and popular figure of North India's premier warrior saint.

The alternative history that I am advocating is not a rewriting of privileged textbook events, which might in this instance involve a reworking and contextualizing of the facticities of Mahmud Ghazni's raids.[45] Rather, I am putting forward the case for alternative histories of submerged, abbreviated, straitjacketed events — recalcitrant events and *recalcitrant lives* — whose very telling by historians is made possible by calling into question the terms in which the "Big Story" (as the popular idiom of modern times would call it) or the Master Narrative (as we understand it) is told and assented to both in the profession and within the nation.[46] Alternative histories are not local histories; they are not alternatives *to* history; alternative histories are histories written from within the profession. Ideally they are accessible also to those outside the profession, i.e., they ought to become, one day, the Big Story.

VII

It serves little purpose to lay down the conditions for the possibility of such histories in advance of the actual writing. With Ghazi Miyan, it will clearly require making narrative and historical sense of the hagiographic, sectarian, demotic, and performative literature about this "Prince of Martyrs" that have been refused entry into Clio's estate on the grounds of "evidential inadmissibility." Beyond the question of evidence, such a history would require a critique of the ways in which difference, conflict, and conquest are elided in the quest for the Indian-national. In writing such a history one would face a creative tension with important implications for historiography. It is now widely accepted that the political community of Indian nationals contains differences that it would be unhealthy for the nation-state to brush aside: regional, linguistic, caste, gender, and community affirmations are here to stay. The question is: if one can find traces of these differences and conflicts in our history, how may one relate these to the present life of the community of Indian nationals? This is a radical and serious issue to which Indian historiography must address itself if it is to reach out from the family of like-minded historians to, so to say, the persons-incommunities who are struggling against the homogenizing currents that are constantly and dangerously seeking merely to define the "New Indian National."

I realize that I have been unable to sew a proper pouch in which to ensconce my warrior saint for posterity and history. I am still struggling with some of the questions thrown up by the long afterlife of the intractable Ghazi Miyan. Historians' history usually relates to one form of a community — the national community. Memories, hagiographies, and ballads, on the other hand, relate to very different kinds of communities. Modern history invokes the idea of a people as historically constituted, and this together with the idea of a people as sovereign is constitutive of most national histories. The triumph of the idea of self-determination in the twentieth century has meant that all conquest has come to be regarded as unjust. In that case, how can historians' history meaningfully tackle the issue of conquest? And yet, in the overbearing majoritarian India of today, practicing historians can ill afford to throw up their hands in collective positivist despair at their inability to pen alternative, non-sectarian histories of precolonial conquest. A new kind of history is required to counter effectively the challenges posed by the majoritarian constructions of the past, the Indian past, any past.

Shahid Amin. Sagas of Victory, Memories of Defeat? The Long Afterlife of an Indo-Muslim Warrior Saint, 1033-2000 In: Okwui Enwezor, Carlos Basualdo, Ute Meta Bauer, Susanne Ghez, Sarat Maharaj, Mark Nash, Octavio Zaya (ed.): Experiments with Truth. Documenta11_Platform2. Hatje Cantz Verlag, Ostfildern-Ruit. 2002, pp. 97-119.

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2 See Gyanendra Pandey, "The New Hindu History," in After Ayodhya, special issue of South Asia, 17 (1994): 97-112.

3 Mannan Prasad Dwivedi, Muslamani Rajya ka Itihas, pahila bhag, ed. Shyam Sundar Das (Varanasi: Kashi Nagari Pracharini Sabha, 1920), pp. 1-2.

4 Partha Chatterjee, The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1993), p. 102.

5 Ibid., p. 99.

6 Bhartendu Harishchandra, quoted in Sudhir Chandra, The Oppressive Present: Literature and Social Consciousness in Colonial India (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 123.

7 For an important statement of this idea, see Romila Thapar, Harbans Mukhia, and Bipan Chandra, Communalism and the Writing of Indian History (New Delhi: People's Publishing House, 1969).

8 See Mohammad Habib, Politics and Society during the Early Medieval Period: Collected Works of Professor Mohammad Habib, ed. K. A. Nizami (New Delhi: People's Publishing House, 1974), 1:3-122.

9 Ibid., pp. 21, 116, and 22-23 respectively.

10 Ibid., p. 23.

11 Ibid., p.22.

12 Ibid.

13 Ibid., p. 12. I have broken this long passage into smaller paragraphs. Emphasis in original.

14 See K. M. Munshi, "Foreword," in R. C. Majumdar, ed., The History and Culture of the Indian People, vol. V: The Struggle for Empire (Bombay: Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan, 1957), pp. vii—xxix.

15 Amartya Sen, "Threats to Indian Secularism," The New York Review of Books, April 8, 1993, p. 30.

16 Habib, "Presidential Address to the Indian History Congress," Bombay, December 1947, in Politics and Society during the Early Medieval Period, 1:113-14.

17 The best discussions of the theme of the jogi-Sufi contest appear in the writings of Simon Digby. For an overview see Digby, "Sufi Shaykh as a Source of Authority in Delhi Sultanat," Purushartha 9 (1986): 57-77; for detailed treatments see Digby, "Encounters with Jogis in Indian Sufi Hagiography," SOAS, University of London, unpublished paper, January 27, 1970, and "Jogis and Sufis," unpublished ms. I am grateful to Digby for allowing me to read this work in manuscript.

18 See Garcin de Tassy, Mémoire sur des particularités de la religion musulmane dans l'Inde d'après les ouvrages hindoustani (Paris, 1831), Eng. trans. and ed. M. Waseem as Muslim Festivals in India and Other Essays (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1995); William Crooke, The Popular Religion and Folklore of Northern India (2nd ed. London, 1896, reprint ed. New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1978); and Mohammad Mujeeb, Indian Muslims (London: Allen & Unwin, 1967), chapter I.

19 For a recent overview see Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "Before the Leviathan: Sectarian Violence and State in Precolonial India," in Kaushik Basu and Subrahmanyam, eds., Unravelling the Nation: Sectarian Conflict and India's Secular Identity (New Delhi: Penguin Books, 1996).

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22 See Richard H. Davis, Lives of Indian Images (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1997), chapter 3.

23 See The Rehla of Ibn Battuta, trans. and ed. Mehdi Husain (Baroda: Gaekwad Oriental Series, 1953), pp. 109-11; M. Hedayet Hosain, "Ghazi Miyan," Encyclopaedia of Islam (Old Series, 1927), 2:152; Nizami, "Ghazi Miyan," Encyclopaedia of Islam (New Series, 1991), 3:1047-48, and Digby, "Mas'ud," Encyclopaedia of Islam (New Series, 1991), 7:783-84; Kerrin Schwerin, "Saint Worship in Indian Islam: The Legend of the Martyr Salar Masud Ghazi," in Imitiaz Ahmad, ed., Ritual and Religion among Muslims in India (New Delhi: Manohar, 1981), pp. 143-61; and Tahir Mahmood, "The Dragah of Sayyid Salar Masud Ghazi in Bahraich: Legend, Tradition and Reality," in Christian W. Troll, ed., Muslim Shrines in India: Their Character, History, Significance (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1989), pp. 44-43. For a detailed consideration of the cult of Ghazi Miyan in Nepal and in North India generally, see the following writings by Marc Gaborieau: "Légende et culte du saint musulman Ghazi Miyan au Nepal Occidental et en Inde du Nord," Objets et Mode 15, no. 3 (1975): 289-312; "The Cult of Saints among the Muslims in Nepal and Northern India," in S. Wilson, ed., Saints and Their Cults: Studies in Religious Sociology, Folklore and History (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983,) pp. 291-308; and "Les Saints, les eaux et les récoltes en Inde," in Mohammad Ali Amir Moezzi, ed., Lieux d'Islam. Cultes et cultures de l'Afrique à Java (Paris: Autrement, 1996), pp. 239-54.

24 See Iqtidar Husain Siddiqui, "A Note on the Dargah of Salar Masaud in Bahraich in the Light of Standard Historical Sources," in Troll, ed., Muslim Shrines in India, pp. 44-47.

25 See entry for ghazi in S. W. Fallon, A New Hindustani Dictionary, 1879 (reprint ed. Lucknow: Uttar Pradesh Urdu Akedmi, 1986); Mannan Dwivedi Gajpuri, Ram Lal: grameen jeevan ka ek ssmajik upanyas (Prayag: Indian Press, 1917), pp. 15-16; Qurratulain Hyder, Chandni Begam, Hindi trans. Wahajuddin Ahmed (Nai Dilli: Bhartiya Gyanpeeth Prakashan, 1997), p. 201; Awadh Deshiya Bhugol, jismein awadh desh ki prithvi aur sthan aadi ke vritant nutan anveshan ke anusar atyant sugam bhasha mein chote-chote vidyarthiyon ke liye sanyukt hain, Urdu original by Shiv Narain, ultha (translation) in Hindi bhasha by Pandit Magan Lal (Lucknow: Naval Kishore Press, 1872), p. 37; Shishubodh (Lucknow, 1878), a children's encyclopedia — published under the authority of the Director of Public Instruction, Awadh — containing fifty-eight lessons ranging from Pronouns to the British Museum, from Galileo to Newton Sahib, and describing Bahraich in lesson thirty, an account of the Province of Awadh; Census of North Western Provinces & Oudh Report, 1891, pp. 216-18; Census of North Western Provinces & Oudh Report, 1901, part III: Provincial Tables and Appendices, table VI, cols. 8 and 9 (worshippers of Panchon Pir); and Araish-i-Mahfil, Being a History, in the Hindoostanee Language of the Hindoo Princes of Dihlee from Joodishtur to Pithoura. Compiled from Khoolasut-ool-Hind and Other Authorities by Meer Sher Ulee Ufsos, Head Moonshee in the Hindustanee Department of the College (Calcutta: Hindoostanee Press, 1808), pp. 97-98.

26 Tulsidas, Dohavali, quoted in Abdul Bismillah, Madhyakalin Hindi Kavya mein Sanskritik Samanvaya (Allahabad: Hindustani Akedmi, 1985), p. 59. For a contemporary echo of this couplet see Hyder, Chandni Begam, p. 185.

27 Shahid Amin, "Gandhi as Mahatma: Gorakhpur District, Eastern Uttar Pradesh, 1921-22," in Ranajit Guha, ed., Subaltern Studies (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1984), 3:1.

28 Commenting on the historicity of these claims, Subrahmanyam has observed, "Historians today largely reject any connection between Masaud and Sultan Mahmud, arguing that at the date given for his death in the hagiographies (A.D.1033), Muslim warriors simply could not have penetrated as far as the Bahraich region. Such arguments ... must be treated with a little caution, since stray expeditions over even several hundred kilometers are not totally out of the realm of possibility." See Basu and Subrahmanyam, eds., Unravelling the Nation, p. 68. See also Siddiqui, "A Note on the Dargah of Salar Masaud in Bahraich," pp. 44-47. Nizami seems to imply that Salar Masaud may have made his raid into the Nepal foothills from one of the pockets of Muslim settlement that existed outside the fortified Gangetic valley towns in the eleventh to twelfth centuries. See Nizami, Some Aspects of Religion and Politics in India during the Thirteenth Century (Aligarh: Department of History, Muslim University, 1951), pp. 76-77.

29 I have used the English translation of Mirat-i-Masaudi in The History of India as Told by Its Own Historians: Posthumous Papers of the Late H. M Elliot, 1896 (reprint ed. Calcutta: Sushil Gupta, 1953), 2:103-45, and the slightly fuller English manuscript translation by R. B. Chapman, Additional Manuscript, no. 30776, British Library, London.

30 Mirat-i-Masaudi, Chapman trans., pp. 3, 5.

31 Mirat-i-Masaudi, Elliot volume, pp. 113-15.

32 Ibid., p. 133.

33 Ibid., p. 141.

34 Mirat-i-Masaudi, Chapman trans., p. 29.

35 Mirat-i-Masaudi, Elliot volume, pp. 113-15.

36 Thus Muhammad Nazim: The Mirat-i-Masaudi "is a history mixed with a liberal supply of pious fiction. The author claims to have based his work on a history by Mulla Muhammad-i-Ghaznawi who is alleged to have been attached to the court of Sultan Mahmud, but this so-called contemporary history is not mentioned by any previous writer." See his The Life and Times of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazna (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1931; 2nd ed. New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1971), p. 14. Habib, in his iconoclastic study of the "great conqueror" composed during the 1924 communal riots in Lucknow, inter alia, "to give expression to th[e] longing for humanity, justice, tolerance and secularism," does not refer to Abdur Rahman Chishti's remarkable hagiography. See Politics and Society during the Early Medieval Period, 2:36-104, 389-92.

37 See the incisive discussion in Saiyid Athar Abbas Rizvi, A History of Sufism in India, 1975 (2nd ed. New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1997), 1:311-14. I quote from pp. 312, 313, 314. I have tried to discuss the structure of the Mirat-i-Masaudi in somewhat greater detail in "The Long Life of a

Seventeenth-Century Indo-Muslim Hagiography" (working paper, Center for Early Modern History, College of Liberal Arts, University of Minnesota, October 2000).

38 For example Akbar Ali ibn Mohammad Baksh, Khulsah-i-Drikh-i-Masaudi (Lucknow, 1876), and Ghazee-namah-i-Masaud (Kanpur, 1876). See also Mansur Ali Khadim, Hazrat Sipah Salar Masaud Ghazi (Bahraich, n.d.), and Aina-i -Masaudi (Bahraich, n. d).

39 See R. C. Temple, The Legends of Punjab, 1884 (reprint ed. Patiala: Language Dept, Punjab, 1988), 1:98-120.

40 Mirat-i-Masaudi, Elliot volume, p. 138.

41 Zainullah Dafali, interview with the author, Chittaura, near Bahraich, May 9, 1996.

42 "The Marriage of Ghazi Miyan," ballad, Eng. trans. William Hoey.

43 Some of these pamphlets attacking the popular devotion of Ghazi Miyan among low-caste men and especially women are discussed in Charu Gupta, "Hindu Women, Muslim Men: Cleavages in Shared Spaces of Everyday Life, United Provinces, c. 1890-1930," Indian Economic & Social History Review 37, no. 2 (April—June 2000): 140-48. For an incisive contrary reading of the Mirat-i-Masaudi from a "Hindu" point of view and an impassioned plea to Hindus to desist from worshipping the jihadi warrior saint, see Swami Vicharanandji's article on Ghazi Miyan and the Hindu community, and a companion piece on how worshipping Ghazi Miyan is improper, both in Swadesh (Gorakhpur), April 26, 1928.

44 Suniti Kumar Chatterjee, "Daraf Khan Ghazi," first published in Vishva-Bharati Patrika (1354 B. s.), reprinted in Sanskriti, vol. 1 (1368 B. S.). I am grateful to Gautam Bhadra for drawing my attention to this text and translating from it.

45 Romila Thapar, "Somnath: Narratives of a History," Seminar (New Delhi), no. 479 (March 1999): 15 — 22.

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