



Conquest and Community: The Afterlife of Warrior Saint Ghazi Miyan

By Shahid Amin

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Few topics in South Asian history are as contentious as that of the Turkic conquest of the Indian subcontinent that began in the twelfth century and led to a long period of Muslim rule. How is a historian supposed to write honestly about the bloody history of the conquest without falling into communitarian traps?

Conquest and Community is Shahid Amin's answer. Covering more than eight hundred years of history, the book centers on the enduringly popular saint Ghazi Miyan, a youthful soldier of Islam whose shrines are found all over India. Amin details the warrior saint's legendary exploits, then tracks the many ways he has been commemorated in the centuries since. The intriguing stories, ballads, and proverbs that grew up around Ghazi Miyan were, Amin shows, a way of domesticating the conquest—recognizing past conflicts and differences but nevertheless bringing diverse groups together into a community of devotees. What seems at first glance to be the story of one mythical figure becomes an allegory for the history of Hindu-Muslim relations over an astonishingly long period of time, and a timely contribution to current political and historical debates.

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Editorial Review

Review

“The legendary exploits of Ghazi Miyan, the conqueror saint, and the cults of remembrance that surround his name in northern India contain layer upon layer of significance that only a master historian like Shahid Amin can reveal to us.”

(Partha Chatterjee, Columbia University)

“A bravura performance of interpretation, erudition, and rich local knowledge and a breathtaking reconstruction of five centuries of legend and cult. Never again will the figure of the *ghazi*, or holy warrior, be permitted the simplistic reductions common in the past. Amin has given us a masterpiece.”

(Sheldon Pollock, Columbia University)

“Deeply researched and wonderfully written, *Conquest and Community* shows us how composite religious culture is created and peaceful threads knit over the rupture of violence. A fascinating book with wide implications for our own troubled times.”

(Natalie Zemon Davis, emerita, Princeton University)

About the Author

Shahid Amin is former professor of history at the University of Delhi and has also been a visiting fellow at Stanford, Princeton, Columbia, and Chicago. He is the author of *Event, Metaphor, Memory: Chauri Chaura, 1922–1992*.

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