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**Conquest and Resistance in Context:  
A Historiographical Reading of Sanskrit and Persian Battle Narratives**

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**Conquest and Resistance in Context:  
A Historiographical Reading of Sanskrit and Persian Battle Narratives**

**by**

**Michael Boris Bednar, B.A.; M.A.**

**Dissertation**

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## **Dedication**

To those who taught me,  
especially Margaret, Boris, and George

## Acknowledgements

I shall be telling this with a sigh  
Somewhere ages and ages hence:  
Two roads diverged in a wood and I—  
I took the one less traveled by,  
And that has made all the difference.

Robert Frost, "The Road Not Taken"<sup>1</sup>

As a graduate student at the University of Texas for the past decade, I have collected more than a few debts of gratitude, which I would like to acknowledge in the next few pages. My greatest debt goes to my advisor, Cynthia Talbot. A pragmatist and one of the most dedicated historians that I have met, she took on a loosely trained South Asianist and transformed him (perhaps not as much as she hoped) into a historian. Every chapter and perhaps every page bears her mark in some manner, through her calls for clarification, suggestions for alternate approaches, and demands for a better and more concise argument. If I forget the lessons that she has taught me, it is to my own detriment.

Gail Minault and Denise Spellberg introduced me to Islamic history in modern South Asia and the premodern Middle East. I am at a loss for words that describe how profoundly their seminars have informed my vision of Islamic history, but as I reflect upon their courses I am struck by how they effortlessly integrated topics generally viewed as peripheral into the study of Islamic history. Two chapters in this dissertation originated as research papers in their seminar courses. I first began to think of tropes in the *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ*, the topic of the second chapter, in a paper that I

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<sup>1</sup> This epigraph is the last stanza from Robert Frost, "The Road Not Taken," in *A Pocket Book of Robert Frost's Poems* (1946; reprint, New York: Washington Square Press, 1963), 223. The inside front cover of my copy is inscribed with the name, Miss Richards.

wrote from Professor Spellberg's course in Islamic historiography. I developed the argument that Sanskrit and Persian authors read or at least knew each other's work (focusing on the *Futūḥ al-Salaṭīn* and *Madhurāvijaya* discussed in chapters two and three) in a research paper that I wrote for Professor Minault in my first semester at the university.

As a historian who engages in a close reading of texts, I was truly fortunate to study with outstanding scholars in South Asian languages. Patrick Olivelle patiently watched as I made my first attempt to read the medieval Sanskrit *Hammīra Mahākāvya* and then agreed a year later to sit down and once again read through the verses I had translated. Most of these verses are found in chapter five of the dissertation. Yet, Professor Olivelle went beyond his role as an instructor, first when he spearheaded a drive to combine money from the Center for South Asian Studies and the Center for Middle Eastern Studies to fund my study of Persian during the summer of 1999 and then through the years of advice and fellowship that he has offered. Although Syed Akbar Hyder came in the final year of my coursework, I was fortunate enough to take his seminar course on Ghālib's Urdu *ghazals*. This course has had a phenomenal impact on my understanding of Indo-Persian poetry. Even today, I hear Professor Hyder's voice in every couplet of Amīr Khuṣrau that I read.

Over the years, I have received a number of fellowships, grants, and assistantships. I received a series of FLAS fellowships from the Center for South Asian Studies at the University of Texas from 1997 to 2000, including two summer FLAS fellowships to study Hindi in Udaipur in 1997 and another fellowship to study Persian in the summer of 1999. A Bruton fellowship and a Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad fellowship funded the bulk of my research in India and England from 2000 to 2002. This research was concluded with a Continuing Studies fellowship

awarded by the University of Texas from 2002 to 2003. The Department of History at the University of Texas provided teaching assistantships, research assistantships, and two semesters of teaching experience as an assistant instructor from 2003–2007.

A number of people in India and England provided guidance and assistance during my Fulbright fellowship. I would like to thank Subhas Chandra at the Fulbright House and Muzaffar Alam and Brajdu Lal Chattopadhyaya, who were both professors at Jawaharlal Nehru University, for establishing my institutional association and helping me navigate Indian bureaucracy. I spent most of my time in Delhi translating Amīr Khuṣrau’s Persian text, *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, under the guidance of Professor A. W. Azhar Delhvi and his doctoral candidate Sadique Hussain. I have rarely seen erudition that rivaled Professor Azhar’s knowledge of Persian and my notebooks are filled with marginalia from my conversations with him. The bulk of my translation was done with Sadique Hussain and I would like to thank him for helping me make the transition to fourteenth-century Indo-Persian.

A number of friends and near-family made India home. For well over a decade, the Krishnankuttys in Bangalore—N. K. and Chitra Krishanankutty, Deepak and Gita Krishnankutty, and Gautam Krishnankutty—have made me part of their family and they will always have my love and affection. Prem and Abha Singh opened their house to me in New Delhi and made Delhi (a city that I had previously loathed) my home. I would also like to thank the “Delhi Gang” of Lucy Chester, Helen Vallianatos, Donovan Dodrill and Kim Masteller for their diversions from the world of Indo-Persian poetics. James and Susan Callahan as well as Robert Schmidt at the U.S. Embassy repeatedly invited researchers such as myself to various functions; moreover they, allowed me to escape the summer heat, when I house sat for them from June to September. I spent the concluding months of my Fulbright fellowship in London. Richard Bingle, retired

archivist at the British Library, opened his home to me for two months and I thank him for my first introduction to London as well as the British Library.

I also owe a debt to a number of scholars. This dissertation grew from reading Richard H. Davis' book, *Lives of Indian Images*, and I was fortunate enough to receive his encouragement on this project just before I left for India. Sunil Kumar challenged me to move beyond the categories of Hindu and Muslim, presenting a number of questions and constructs that I continue to ponder. I hope that this dissertation answers part of his questions as I look forward to reading his forthcoming book. Peter Jackson made the trip from Keele University to London while I was conducting my research at the British Library. He provided encouragement at a critical juncture in my research and his book, *Delhi Sultanate: A Political and Military History*, has been a constant reference as I wrote these chapters. Sunil Sharma, who was my Hindi T.A. at the University of Chicago before I started graduate school, reappeared as I was finishing this dissertation and I would like to thank him for his fifteen years of friendship as well as his stimulating thoughts on Sultanate Persian texts.

The Department of History at the University of Texas has been my home for the past decade. Throughout this time, few people have been as supportive and helpful as Howard Miller. His enthusiasm in educating graduate students and his interest in my work was a significant factor in my decision to attend the University of Texas. The graduate advisors Howard Miller (again), Michael Stoff, and Bruce Hunt, along with Mary Helen Quinn and Marilyn Lehman cut through the bureaucracy that dominates the University and made the history department a welcoming home. I should also acknowledge the help that Anne Alexander (a former staff member in Asian Studies) and Merry Burlingham (the South Asian librarian) have give to me over the years. I was fortunate to have the opportunity to work as a teaching assistant with some amazing



lectures such as David Haney, Michael Stoff, Gwyn Morgan, Cynthia Talbot, Alison Frazier, Roger Hart, and Brian Levack. I hope that I achieve their level of instruction and scholarship in my career.

A number of friends have made my studies and especially the dissertation a bearable process. In particular, this includes Warner Belanger, Anver Emon, Christian Jennings, Robert Smale, and Russ Lohse who have provided a constant source of friendship and intellectual companionship over the years. Other friends and colleagues include Chris Hill, Aldo Garcia Guevara, Jarrod Whitaker, Peter Kvetko, Tyler Fleming, Brandon Marsh, Kyle Daun, Greg Carter and Natasha Sugiyama, Ezequil Peña, Tamara Sears, Mark Dennis, Adam and Ya-ling Pergament, Jim Blumenthal, Daniel and Lynn Hippensteel, Chris Bryant and Margo Lambert, and Chris Howk. I would also like to thank my friends (both managers and booksellers) at Barnes and Noble in the Arboretum for their support and friendship over the years.

I dated two women while I researched and then wrote this dissertation. Lesslie Beauchamp joined me in India for the last six months of my research and she knows how grateful I am for the time we had together. Jill DeWitt had a greater impact on me and on my scholarship than she will ever know.

Lastly, I would like to thank my family. My parents have always supported my decision to study South Asian history, even if they didn't fully understand why. My sister and brother have provided a constant source of support and encouragement over the years. My aunt and uncle, Pat and Dale Holtrey, have continually tried to keep in touch, even though I have been less than reciprocal. Although they may not realize it, another aunt, uncle, and their family—Hart and Claudia Millman, David and Celeste, and Ted—provided some encouragement and emotional support during the dark days of

dissertation writing. Regretfully, my Aunt Claudia passed away before I completed this dissertation.

All of these people—and many I have not named—have taught me over the years and I dedicate this dissertation to them.

## Preface

### CALENDRICAL SYSTEMS

This dissertation utilizes three dating systems: Anno Domini, Anno Hijrae, and Vikrama Saṃvat. Anno Domini (A.D.), which is increasingly being replaced by the abbreviation C.E. (for Common Era), is currently the most widely utilized dating system in both the West and South Asia. I have utilized the Anno Domini dates as the default dating system throughout this dissertation. The reader should therefore assume that any unmarked date is Anno Domini. Thus, the date in the phrase, “Aziz Ahmad surveyed medieval battle narratives in his 1963 article...” (page 9), should be read as A.D. 1963.

Muslims throughout the world utilize a calendar referred to in English as Anno Hegirae (A.H.). This calendar begins with the year (not the date) of the Prophet Muḥammad’s emigration (*hijra*) from Mecca to Medina, which corresponds to July 16, 622. Unlike the Anno Domini calendar, which is based on a solar cycle, the *hijra* follows a lunar cycle. Converting dates from A.H. to A.D. has been traditionally done using a series of tables. I have relied on Robert Harry van Gent’s “Islamic–Western Calendar Converter” available online at [http://www.phys.uu.nl/~vgent/islam/islam\\_tabcal.htm](http://www.phys.uu.nl/~vgent/islam/islam_tabcal.htm) (select the civil calendar). While I cannot verify every date, I have yet to find an incorrect date using Professor Gent’s online converter.

The Hindus have used an array of calendars, although all of the inscriptions and texts discussed in this dissertation follow the Vikrama Saṃvat (V.S.) calendar. The Vikrama Saṃvat year began 57 years after the Anno Domini calendar. Subtracting 57 from a Vikrama Saṃvat date gives a rough approximation for the Anno Domini year. I

confirmed the V.S. dates using a java applet found at the following website:  
<http://web.meson.org/calendars/> (select the Hindu Lunar calendar).

#### FONTS AND TRANSLITERATION SCHEMES

This entire dissertation was typed on a Macintosh computer using the Gentium font, an Open Source font freely available from SIL International. The font may be downloaded from <http://scripts.sil.org/Gentium> and the open font license may be viewed at <http://scripts.sil.org/OFL>. The epigraph from the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān* was scanned from Rashīd Aḥmad Sālim Anṣārī, *Diwal Rānī-yi Khaḍir Khān* (A.H. 1336/A.D. 1917; reprinted with the same pagination in *Duwal Rani Khazir Khan*, ed. Khaliq A. Nizami [Delhi: Idarah-i Adabiyal-i Delhi, 1988]), which is in the public domain. Thus, the dissertation is in full compliance with copyright laws with respect to fonts and texts.

This dissertation employs two transliteration schemes. I have followed the standard transliteration scheme for Sanskrit as found in most current academic journal articles as well as Sanskrit works such as Madhav Deshpande's *A Sanskrit Primer*. The Sanskrit alphabet, in transliteration, is: a, ā, i, ī, u, ū, ṛ, ṝ, e, ai, o, au, ka, kha, ga, gha, ṅa, ca, cha, ja, jha, ṅa, ṭa, ṭha, ḍa, ḍha, ṇa, ta, tha, da, dha, na, pa, pha, ba, bha, ma, ya, ra, la, va, śa, ṣa, sa, ha with *anusvāra* represented as ṁ, visarga as ḥ, and avagraha as ' (an apostrophe). All direct quotes retain the transliteration scheme of the quoted author.

While Sanskrit transliteration is fairly standardized today, Persian transliteration has not been standardized. I have followed a modified version of the Steingass transliteration scheme that is popular among South Asianists. I have also attempted to represent letters, especially the short vowels, according to how they were used in Classical Persian and Indo-Persian as discussed by Finn Thiesen in *A Manual of*

*Classical Persian Prosody*.<sup>2</sup> The Persian alphabet, in transliteration, is: a/i/u, ā, b, p, t, s, j, ch, ḥ, kh, d, ž, r, z, zh, s, sh, š, z, ž, z, ‘ (reverse apostrophe), gh, f, q, k, g, l, m, n, v/w/ū/ō/au. Note that I have represented the short letters and the letter *alif* by a/i/u (commonly represented in Iranian Persian as a/e/o). I have represented the letter *vāv* with five transliterated letters: the letters *v* and *w* when *vāv* is a consonant (with a preference for the letter *v*) and *ū/ō/au* when it is a long vowel (e.g., *Abū, Jālōr, Khuṣrau*). The letter *hamza* is represented by ‘ (the apostrophe) and the word *wa* is always spelled *wa* instead of *va*.

#### NONTRANSLITERATED WORDS AND SCHOLARLY TERMS

Most foreign words and all names appear in the dissertation in transliteration. Common South Asian regions, cities, and places such as Delhi, Rajasthan, and Malwa, are not transliterated, while less common places such as Nāḍol and Kōṭ–Sōlaṅkiyā are transliterated. Foreign words that have entered the English language such as Brahmin, Islam, Sufi, sultan, and the like have not been translated unless they appear in conjunction with other words (e.g., *Quwwāt al-Islām*).

A few words in this dissertation are used in distinctly scholarly ways. Following the work of Marshall Hodgson, I have differentiated between Islamic and Islamicate. During the Delhi Sultanate period, one could refer to an Islamic society (one that conformed to the religious practices of Islam) or an Islamicate society (a composite society that existed under Muslim rulers and contained both Islamic and non-Islamic aspects). South Asian scholars are increasingly using the word Indic in the same sense as Islamicate; thus, Indic languages would include Sanskrit, Prākṛit, Apabhṛāṃśa (the languages of classical Brahminical society) as well as Hindavī, tribal languages, and

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<sup>2</sup> Finn Thiesen, *A Manual of Classical Persian Prosody: With Chapters on Urdu, Karakhanidic, and Ottoman Prosody* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1982).

vernacular languages (the languages often found in non-Brahminical society during the Classical Period). Persianate is used exactly as Indic. Persianate languages includes Persian as well as Tajiki, Dari (Afghani), and Indo-Persian. The Persianate world refers to the region in and around Persia (including the northern part of the Indian subcontinent) that conformed to Persian ideologies or cultural practices.

The word *Hindūstān* (in transliteration) is used in a very specific manner in this dissertation. Even though premodern South Asian scholars—including myself—have used India to refer to the entire Indian subcontinent, the word is increasingly becoming identified with the Republic of India and excluding Pakistan. While I could use Indian subcontinent or South Asian, I found these words to be too cumbersome. I returned to Amīr Khuṣrau’s texts to determine the word he used and adopted the term, *Hindūstān*, which in the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān* and *Nuh Sipihr* refers to the Indian subcontinent (both north and south) as a whole. *Hindūstān* in this sense refers to the South Asian or Indian subcontinent from Kabul to Burma and from the Himalaya to Sri Lanka.

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Supervisor: Cynthia Talbot

In a 1963 article, “Epic and Counter-Epic in Medieval India,” Aziz Ahmad argued that two different languages, cultures, and historical attitudes developed in mutual ignorance of each other: Muslims wrote “epics of conquest” while Hindus wrote “epics of resistance.” This dissertation examines four texts identified by Aziz Ahmad: Amir Khusrau’s *Khaza’in al-Futuh* and *Deval Rani wa Khizr Khan* (epics of conquest) as well as Nayacandra Suri’s *Hammira Mahakavya* and Padmanabha’s *Kanhadade Prabandh* (epics of resistance) written during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

Aziz Ahmad’s model is based on reactions; the texts show interactions. All of the texts responded to conquest by search for authority in a reconstituted post-conquest world. Amir Khusrau reacted to the Mongols’ thirteenth-century conquest of Persia and its implications for the Muslim community. Instead of facing westwards toward Mecca and the ‘Abbasid caliphate, Muslims turned inward to the Sufi and the sultan. Yet the ultimate search for authority occurred between neither the Sufi nor the

sultan, but within the Muslim community as it forged an Indo-Muslim identity distinct from its Persianate predecessor. 'Ala' al-Din Khalji's fourteenth-century conquest of Western Hindustan (Gujarat, Rajasthan) expedited a similar search for authority among Hindus. Delhi Sultanate conquest led to a search for authority that resulted in the formation of a Rajput social identity. This Rajput identity simultaneously incorporated the ethos of the traditional *ksatriya* warrior and challenged the *ksatriya*'s birthright as warrior. Rather than a warrior class, the Rajputs became a warrior society actively promoted in the *Hammira Mahakavya* and *Kanhadade Prabandh*.

A close reading of these four texts not only refutes Ahmad's assertion that Persian, Sanskrit, and vernacular texts developed in ignorance of each other, it demonstrates an active exchange between these three distinct literary traditions. Amir Khusrau introduced Indic literary imagery into the *Duval Rani wa Khizr Khan*, which in turn aided in the establishment of an Indo-Persian literature. The *Hammira Mahakavya* and *Kanhadade Prabandh* utilized Muslims as carriers of Rajput identity. In crossing these literary boundaries, these authors and texts reveal a single social, cultural, and historical attitude that existed in a literary and cultural symbiosis.



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## Chapter 1

### Conquest in Early Medieval South Asia

As soon as I went into the garden, it was as if school had opened.  
The *bulbuls*, hearing heard my cries, became reciters of the *ghazal*.  
Ghālib, *Kullīyāt-i Ghālib*<sup>3</sup>

Scholars traditionally stated that the medieval period began with the death of Harṣa Vardhana in A.D. 647 and the collapse of the Gupta Empire's imperial power. For three centuries, the Guptas ruled the northern subcontinent and large parts of the southern subcontinent through allegiances from defeated kings. Five centuries elapsed until the next pan-Indic empire, the Delhi Sultanate, conquered and politically united such a vast area of the subcontinent. This led nineteenth-century scholars as well as some nationalist historiographers to write that the Gupta reign represented a Golden Age in Indian history, while the subsequent period reflected a Dark Age.<sup>4</sup> Scholars in

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<sup>3</sup> Translated by the author. This epigraph is a *ghazal* composed by Mirza Ghālib from the *Kullīyāt-i Ghālib (The Collected Works of Ghālib)*.

<sup>4</sup> I identify three strains of nationalist historiography. The earliest nationalist historians engaged in a nationalist competition with European civilization. These historians produced works on ancient India that sought to either equate Indian civilization with European civilization (the Mauryans equaled the Greeks, the Guptas equaled the Romans) or to demonstrate Indian civilization's superiority over European civilization. A second strain of nationalist historiography engaged in an extreme reading of the nation state into Indian history, arguing that the Indian state was established in the Vedic period and continued into the twentieth century. C. V. Vaidya, *History of Medieval Hindu India*, 3 vols. (1921-26; reprint, Jaipur: M. M. Publishers and Distributors, 1995) is a good example of this argument. The third strain of nationalist historiography, related to the second, followed a communalist interpretation and identified two nation states with two separate histories in the subcontinent: a Hindu nation/history and a Muslim nation/history. For a deeper discussion of nationalist historiography see Ronald Inden, *Imagining India* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1990) and Gyan Prakash, "Writing Post-Orientalist Histories of the Third World," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 32, no. 2 (1990): 383-408 as well as the response and counter-response to this article, Rosalind O'Hanlon and David Washbrook, "After Orientalism: Culture, Criticism, and Politics in the Third World," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 34, no. 1 (1992): 141-67 and Gyan Prakash, "Can the 'Subaltern' Ride? A Reply to O'Hanlon and Washbrook," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 34, no. 1 (1992): 168-184.

the last quarter of a century have challenged this paradigm of rise and fall and in the process have reinvigorated the study of medieval South Asia.<sup>5</sup>

### THE EARLY MEDIEVAL PERIOD

While no large, pan-Indic empires existed from the seventh to fourteenth centuries, the subcontinent did not lapse into a Dark Age as once believed. Hermann Külke and Dietmar Rothermund wrote in *A History of India* that even though empires rose and fell during these five centuries, the regions remained fairly constant.<sup>6</sup> The northern, southern, eastern, and western parts of the subcontinent existed as geographic units in which the regional empires blossomed and faded. The four largest imperial kingdoms during this period included the Gurjara-Pratīhāra (North), Pāla (East), Rāṣṭrakūṭa (West), and Cōla (South). Each of these imperial kingdoms started in small territories, expanded by conquering rival little kings within their region, and eventually fought with other imperial kingdoms to sustain their imperial ambitions. Even though these imperial kingdoms fought against each other, none of them ever chose to annex another and none developed into a pan-Indic empire.

This model of conquest followed the precedents of the Gupta Empire. The Gupta kings conquered rival rulers and then reinstated the rulers on condition that they recognized Gupta rule. The requirements of this recognition varied based on the distance from the Gupta capital and the ability (or willingness) for the Gupta monarch to enforce the terms. For the more distant conquests in central and southern India, the conquered rulers showed a nominal allegiance at best. Thus, the Gupta kings

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<sup>5</sup> The last decade, in particular, has seen a number of broader historical surveys. Some of the better general histories include Hermann Külke and Dietmar Rothermund, *A History of India*, 2d ed. (Routledge: London, 1990; [4th rev. ed, 2004]), John Keay, *India: A History*, (New York: Grove Press, 2001), Romila Thapar, *Early India: From the Origins to AD 1300*, (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002), Andre Wink, *The Making of Al-Hind*, 3 vols. (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1990–2004), Catherine Asher and Cynthia Talbot, *India before Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

<sup>6</sup> Külke and Rothermund, *A History of India*, 113.

campaigned against distant kingdoms for loot rather than for territory. The imperial dynasties of the early medieval period conquered rival kings not only to boost their dynastic claims as the paramount overlord, but also to loot rival dynastic centers for goods that funded additional campaigns.<sup>7</sup>

For example, the Cōla emperor Rājendra I began a series of campaigns from A.D. 1022/23–1025 that resulted in his army’s conquest of the Pāla kingdom in Bengal and his navy’s conquest of pirates off the coast of Sumatra. The campaigns served several functions. The army returned from the Pāla campaign with loot and riches necessary to build Rājendra’s royal temple. More importantly, the army brought water from the Ganges river that Rājendra used to consecrate his capital as “the city of the Cōla who conquered the Gāṅga,” a symbol of his conquest of the world. The naval campaigns conducted in South East Asia around 1025 secured the oceanic routes to China from a band of pirates who had interrupted trade. Rājendra probably established an outpost on the island, but no evidence exists that he colonized the island or that he attempted to integrate the island into the Cōla political sphere.

#### **GHAZNAVIDS, GHŪRIDS, AND GHULĀMS**

Rājendra’s army conquered the Pāla kingdom, captured the water of the Ganges, and brought the water back to the South to consecrate his temple and capital as “the city of the Cōla who conquered the Gāṅga” around A.D. 1022/23. Maḥmūd of Ghazna also raided cities along the Ganges in campaigns in A.D. 1017 and again in 1021. For a quarter of a century, Maḥmūd conducted a series of campaigns throughout the

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<sup>7</sup> Richard H. Davis, “Indian Art Objects as Loot,” *Journal of Asian Studies* 52, no. 1 (1993): 22–48, is an excellent article on the role Hindu–Hindu conquests, trophies of war, and the role loot played in the early medieval period. The Ghaznavid, Delhi Sultanate, and Mughal empires also selectively targeted cities and temples for loot. For an analysis of these later attacks on temples, see Richard Eaton, “Temple Desecration and Indo–Muslim States,” in *Essays on Islam and Indian History* (reprint, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2000), 94–132.

northern and western regions of Hindūstān. These campaigns followed the same model as in other early medieval kingdoms, in which an army conquered cities for loot rather than for annexation. Arabic and Persian authors marveled at the number of elephants laden with riches that returned with Maḥmūd from these campaigns. Maḥmūd's campaigns, like those of Rājendra I, funded additional military excursions, the construction of a mosque and public works in his capital, and filled his court with scholars and poets such as al-Utbī, al-Bīrūnī, al-Farrukhī, al-Gardīzī, and Firdausī.

As Richard H. Davis has shown, three differences have separated Maḥmūd from other earlier medieval rulers such as Rājendra I.<sup>8</sup> First and perhaps most obviously, Maḥmūd engaged in iconoclasm to an extent that other early medieval rulers and their armies did not. Hindu rulers and their armies looted temples and even took the door-guardian statues from temples associated with rival dynasties as a physical statement of their victory, but these rulers and armies refrained from destroying the interior images of the Hindu gods or goddesses. Maḥmūd did not follow this practice and al-Bīrūnī wrote in his description of the Somanātha temple's conquest that Maḥmūd had a portion of the *liṅga* removed and placed as a threshold to the Ghazna mosque "on which people rub their feet to clean them from dirt and wet."<sup>9</sup> Whether due to his conquests or his patronage of poets, Maḥmūd quickly entered into the literary and political imagination of later texts and writers such as the *Siyāstnāma* of Niẓām al-Mulk, the *Mantiq al-Tair* of 'Attār, the *Bustān* of Sa'dī, the *Fatāwā-yi Jahāndārī* of Baranī, the *Tārīkh-i Mubārak Shāhī* of Sirhindī, and the *Gulshan-i Ibrāhīmī* of Firishta, to name just a

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<sup>8</sup> This is a theme, I believe, found throughout Richard H. Davis, *Lives of Indian Images* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997; Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1999).

<sup>9</sup> Abū al-Raiḥān Muḥammad al-Bīrūnī's *Tahqīq mā lil-Hind* is published in English as *Alberuni's India*, 2 vols., ed. and trans. Edward C. Sachau (1910; reprint, 2 vols. in 1, Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 2001), 2:103. Archaeologists discovered a worn-down statue of Brahmā that was placed as the threshold of a doorway to the Ghazna palace. See, Umberto Scerrato, "The First Two Excavation Campaigns at Ghazni," *East and West* 10, no. 1-2 (1957-58): 39-49.

few examples.<sup>10</sup> The image of Maḥmūd changed over time, as did his position in South Asian history. Even though Muḥammad bin Qāsim established the first Islamicate dynasty in South Asia (in Sind) during the eighth century, Maḥmūd's conquests became the dividing line between a Hindu India and a Muslim India. The nationalist historiography of the early twentieth century reinforced Maḥmūd's connection to a Persianate rather than South Asian tradition.

These yearly campaigns continued throughout the rule of the Ghaznavid as well as the Ghūrid sultanates. While the Ghaznavid and Ghūrid sultans annexed some territory (most notably Lahore) in the far western parts of the subcontinent, the overall objective of these campaigns was loot rather than annexation. A confederation of 'Ismā'īlī forts to the west and the Khwārazmshāh presence to the northwest limited Ghūrid expansion in those directions and necessitated increasing the yearly campaigns in Hindūstān to a nearly constant series of conquering and looting. Around the time of the Ghūrid Sultan Mu'izz al-Dīn's death in A.H. 602/A.D. 1206,<sup>11</sup> a number of slaves conducted simultaneous campaigns in Hindūstān: Quṭb al-Dīn Aibak and Shams al-Dīn Iltutmish in Lahore and Delhi, Muḥammad bin Bakhtiyār Khaljī in Bengal, 'Izz al-Dīn 'Alī at Nāgaur, and Nāṣir al-Dīn Qubacha in Uchch. Thus, the Ghūrid sultanate at the

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<sup>10</sup> Niẓām al-Mulk's *Siyāstnāma* is published in English as *Book of Kings or Rules for Kings: Siyar al-Muluk or Siyast-nama of Nizam al Mulk*, trans. Hubert Darke (London: Routledge and Paul, 1960). Farīd al-Dīn 'Aṭṭār's *Maṅṭiq al-Ṭair* is published in English as *Conference of the Birds*, trans. Afkham Durbandi and Dick Davis (London: Penguin Press, 1984). Mushrif al-Dīn Sa'dī's *Būstān* is published in English as *Stories from the Bustan of Shaykh Sa'di*, trans. Reuben Levy (London: Chapman and Hall, 1928) and also *Morals Pointed and Tales Adorned: the Bustan of Sa'di*, trans. G. M. Wickens (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1974). Żiyā' al-Dīn Baranī's *Fatāwā-yi Jahāndārī* is published in English as *Political Theory of the Delhi Sultanate*, trans. Mohammad Habib and Afsar Umar Salim Khan (Allahabad: Kitab Mahal, 1961). Yaḥyā b. Aḥmad Sirhindī, *Tārīkh-i Mubārak Shāhī*, Gaekwad's Oriental Series, vol. 63, trans. K. K. Basu (Baroda: Oriental Institute, 1932). Muḥammad Qāsim Firishṭa's *Gulshan-i Ibrāhīmī* is published as *History of the Rise of the Mahomedan Power in India till the year A.D. 1612*, 4 vols., trans. John Briggs (1829; reprint, Calcutta: Editions Indian, 1966).

<sup>11</sup> A.H. (*Anno Hegirae*) is the dating system used by Muslims. The calendar is lunar and begins with the year that Muḥammad and Abū Bakr emigrated (*hijra*) from Mecca to Medina. The first date of the *hijra* calendar corresponds to July 15, 622 (the astronomical calendar) and July 16, 622 (the civil calendar, which is used for historical dates).



end of the twelfth century, which defeated Pṛthvīrāja Cāhamāna III and engaged in a near continuous series of military campaigns, established a regional kingdom on the northwestern frontier of the subcontinent.

Nationalist historiography portrays the Delhi Sultanate as a unified Muslim state; at best, it was a confederacy of warring generals who aspired to become the next sultan. Quṭb al-Dīn Aibak, with support Shams al-Dīn Iltutmish at a critical moment, defeated ‘Izz al-Dīn ‘Alī. After Quṭb al-Dīn’s death in 1206, Shams al-Dīn led a series of campaigns that eventually resulted in his defeated Nāṣir al-Dīn Qubacha, Muḥammad b. Bakhtiyār Khaljī (through court intrigue), and Tāj al-Dīn Yildiz to establish the Delhi Sultanate. Most of the thirteenth-century Delhi sultans, from Shams al-Dīn Iltutmish to Ghiyāṣ al-Dīn Balban, came from the slave (*ghulām*) system and scholars often refer to these sultans as the slave kings. These *ghulāms* and sultans continued the Ghūrid style of conquests and slowly stitched together an empire from garrisoned cities to conquered territories.<sup>12</sup> By the end of the thirteenth century, the Delhi Sultanate had conquered and directly ruled the northern region of Hindūstān formerly ruled by the Gujara-Pratīhāra kingdom. The Delhi Sultanate introduced many Persian and Turkish practices, such as the *ghulām* system and the division of the sultanate into ‘*iqṭā*’ (territories), yet the Delhi Sultanate also reflected the traditions of the early medieval period.

The Delhi Sultanate’s Khaljī and Tughluq dynasties changed the early medieval pattern of regional state formation and once again established a pan-Indic empire. Before becoming sultan, ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Khaljī followed the traditional Indic practice of conducting campaigns for loot, when he engaged in a number of raids from his

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<sup>12</sup> Asher and Talbot used a wonderful allusion in *India before Europe*: “... Delhi’s power [under Iltutmish] was concentrated in a series of garrisoned towns and was diffused weakly from each of these centers out into the surrounding countryside—not unlike a string of colored lights in which certain bulbs (or towns) are dimmer and/or flicker intermittently” (33).

assigned position as governor of Kara. ‘Alā’ al-Dīn led the first Sultanate raids into the Deccan, the south–central plateau of the subcontinent, which resulted in a tremendous amount of loot that ‘Alā’ al-Dīn utilized when he deposed his uncle, the Delhi Sultan Jalāl al-Dīn Khaljī, and claimed the throne for himself. In his reign of twenty years, ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Khaljī dealt with the renewed Mongol invasions from the Il–Khānids as he expanded the Delhi Sultanate and annexed the regions of Rajasthan, Gujarat, and Malwa. The Khaljī dynasty ended four years after ‘Alā’ al-Dīn’s death, due to court intrigues that killed the entire Khaljī royal family. The Tughluq dynasty that followed continued to annex territory, pushing further into the Deccan, although at the same time perhaps straining the Delhi Sultanate’s ability to exert direct control over the economics and politics of so vast a territory. Muḥammad bin Tughluq spent a large portion of his time, particularly in the last years of his life, conducting campaigns across the Delhi Sultanate against governors who had previously led campaigns for loot and now rebelled with the riches from these raids. When Tīmūr (Tamarlane) sacked Delhi in 1398, the Delhi Sultanate collapsed from a pan–Indic kingdom back to a form of regional state found in the early medieval period.

## **REGIONAL SULTANATES**

A number of sultanates or kingdoms blended Indic and sultanate practices and blossomed in the fifteenth century. The Delhi Sultanate fractured into a number of regional sultanates: the Bahmanid Sultanate in the Deccan, Gujarat Sultanate, Malwa Sultanate, Delhi Sultanate, Jaunpur Sultanate, and the Bengal Sultanate (which existed semi–autonomously since the thirteenth century). A number of Indic kingdoms also appeared that incorporated elements of sultanate culture, military, and governance. The most relevant of these kingdoms for this dissertation include the Sīsodiyā kingdom firmly established by Rāṇa Kumbha (r. 1433–68) and the Rāṭhōṛ kingdom that was

reestablished by Rāv Jodhā (r. 1438–89). The sheer number of sultanates and kingdoms in Western Hindūstān disrupted the regional model of early medieval state formation. Each sultanate or kingdom had to defend its borders from two to three rival armies and could not engage in large military campaigns for loot. This, in turn, inhibited economic expansion since a large portion of the royal treasury went to military defense rather than to building the economy of the sultanate or kingdom. Thus, a series of fractured states existed throughout the fifteenth century that followed neither the early medieval regional model nor the pan-Indic model of the Gupta or Delhi Sultanate.

As this brief history indicates, conquest played a large role throughout the medieval period. Külke noted that while conquest appeared to be endemic throughout the early medieval period, state formation usually occurred within one of four regional zones that then engaged in military campaigns against each other.<sup>13</sup> It seems that the object of these military campaigns was not state expansion or the annexation of rival kingdoms, but symbolic victories that legitimized the ruler and the kingdom as well as the collection of loot that funded additional campaigns. The Ghaznavid, Ghūrid, and Ghulām (early Delhi Sultanate) dynasties followed this pattern as well, even though modern historiography tends to view their conquests as an intrusion rather than a continuation of early medieval conquest. The Delhi Sultanate's Khaljī and Tughluq dynasties changed this pattern in the fourteenth century, when they annexed regions and once again established a pan-Indic state. This pan-Indic Delhi Sultanate, however, existed for less than a century before it disintegrated into a number of regional sultanates and kingdoms that existed until Akbar reestablished the pan-Indic Mughal empire.

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<sup>13</sup> Külke and Rothermund, *History of India*, 113.

The demise of political centers through conquest had an unexpected cultural benefit. As new dynastic centers rose within a region, the emerging ruler legitimized his position by patronizing cultural productions, including temples and ritual performances, festivals and fairs, poets and artisans.<sup>14</sup> These dynastic centers became cultural centers as well. The rise and fall of dynasties, viewed negatively by nineteenth-century scholars, spread cultural production throughout the region. This distribution of culture through shifting dynastic centers occurred in both the early medieval period and in the fifteenth century. The fragmentation of the pan-Indic Delhi Sultanate into a series of smaller sultanates and kingdoms created cultural competition between rulers as much as it created military competition between their armies. The ruler's search for legitimization through cultural production probably facilitated the spread of fifteenth-century vernacular culture through textual production as well as visual productions such as architecture, miniature paintings, and dance.<sup>15</sup> Conquest, therefore, contained a proactive component in spreading cultural production as dynasties rose and fell.

#### CONQUEST AND RESISTANCE IN MEDIEVAL LITERATURE

Kings courted poets to their dynastic centers so that they would produce poems that praised the king's accomplishments and promoted their reign. A large part of this panegyric related the ruler's conquest of rival kings and (for the larger dynasties) the king's position as a universal monarch. Given the number of battles described in the paragraphs above, it would seem that poets had an ample store of material to use in their poetry. Aziz Ahmad surveyed medieval battle narratives in his 1963 article, "Epic

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<sup>14</sup> Külke and Rothermund, *History of India*, 134.

<sup>15</sup> John Keay made this point by drawing these fifteenth-century regional kingdoms on a map and noting their approximation to modern vernacular language groups and cultural zones (*India*, 280).

and Counter-Epic in Medieval India.” He opened this article with the following paragraph:

MUSLIM IMPACT AND RULE in India generated two literary growths: a Muslim epic of conquest and a Hindu epic of resistance and of psychological rejection. The two literary growths were planted in two different cultures; in two different languages, Persian and Hindi; in two mutually exclusive religious, cultural and historical attitudes, each confronting the other in aggressive hostility. Each of these two literary growths developed in mutual ignorance of the other; and with the rare exception of eclectic intellectuals like Abu'l Fazl in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, or the 17<sup>th</sup> century Urdu Poets of the Southern courts of Bijāpūr and Golconda, their readership hardly ever converged. The Muslim and the Hindu epics of Medieval India can therefore hardly be described as ‘epic’ and ‘counter-epic’ in the context of a direct relationship of challenge and response. Yet one of them was rooted in the challenge asserting the glory of Muslim presence, and the other in the response repudiating it. In this sense one may perhaps use the term “counter-epic” for the Hindi heroic poetry of Medieval India as I have done. Also, the contrast between these two literary growths is not confined to what is classified in Western literatures as full-blown epic, but to the epic material in general.<sup>16</sup>

Ahmad tempered this introductory paragraph by using a number of ambiguous words. For example, Ahmad never claimed that the epics of conquest and resistance reflected the historical past. Ahmad instead limited their impact to a “historical attitude” that presumably existed in the author’s imagination or approach to writing, rather than a reality that existed in the past. The overall tenor, however, suggests a different reading, particularly with Ahmad’s phrase that “two literary growths were planted in two different cultures; in two different languages... in two mutually exclusive religious, cultural and historical attitudes, each confronting the other in aggressive hostility.” Ahmad clearly believed that the epics of conquest and resistance responded to two different social realities: an Islamicate society based on conquest and an Indic (Rajput) society based on resisting conquest.

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<sup>16</sup> Aziz Ahmad, “Epic and Counter-Epic in Medieval India,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 83, no. 4 (1963): 470.

Largely forgotten in the decades following its publication, Ahmad's thesis emerged once again in the last decade of the twentieth century. Richard H. Davis popularized Ahmad's thesis of conquest and resistance in the third and fourth chapters of his immensely enjoyable book, *Lives of Indian Images*. Davis modified Ahmad's categories to fit his study of material objects in art history: epics of conquest became epics of iconoclasm, while the epics of resistance became epics of reconquest. It seems to me that the conquest and iconoclasm are only a shade different in meaning and intention, since both constructs followed Muslim destruction.<sup>17</sup> The (Hindu) epic of reconquest, however, suggests that Hindus engaged in conquest when they rebelled against Sultanate rule. By recasting this epic of resistance as an epic of reconquest, Davis allowed for the possibility that medieval Indic authors might engage in a type of conquest literature that recognized the Hindu's defeat, but went on to celebrate the Hindu's eventual rise and conquest. If this type of reconquest literature existed (and I agree with Davis that it did), then the medieval period contained two types of conquest literature. Moreover, the Hindu reconquest literature did not merely react to conquest, but interacted with this literature to create a narrative of counter-conquest.

Other scholars have also utilized Ahmad's concept of conquest and resistance in their scholarship. Phillip Wagoner referred to Ahmad's thesis in his study on the founders of the Vijayanagara dynasty, although like Richard H. Davis he quickly recast the literatures of conquest and resistance as foundation myths.<sup>18</sup> This shift from epics of conquest and resistance to foundation myth also shifted the analysis from modes of

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<sup>17</sup> While I disagree with Richard H. Davis on this point, I have been strongly influenced by his conference presentations, academic articles, and his books, especially *Lives of Indian Images*. In many ways, this dissertation began when I read *Lives of Indian Images*. I was fortunate to discuss initial thoughts on my dissertation with him during his visit to the University of Texas in the spring of 2000.

<sup>18</sup> Phillip Wagoner, "Harihara, Bukka, and the Sultan: The Delhi Sultanate in the Political Imagination of Vijayanagara," in *Beyond Turk and Hindu*, ed. David Gilmartin and Bruce B. Lawrence (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2000), 312-315.

literature to modes of legitimization in state formation. A few years later, Phyllis Granoff incorporated Ahmad's categories in her study of Jain hagiography, "The Jina Bleeds: Threats to the Faith and the Rescue of the Faithful in Medieval Jain Stories."<sup>19</sup> Whereas Davis modified Ahmad's categories of conquest and resistance to fit his study of art history, Granoff adopted Ahmad's categories with little change in her study.<sup>20</sup> Aziz Ahmad made a brief appearance in Rao, Shulman, and Subrahmanyam's *Textures of Time* before it was summarily dismissed.<sup>21</sup> Lastly, Richard Eaton reprinted the essay in his book, *India's Islamic Traditions: 711-1750*, as an example of scholarly interpretation of Islamic conquest and how Ahmad's approach contrasts with current approaches.<sup>22</sup>

Aziz Ahmad's article moved outside of academic circles and into public policy at the close of the twentieth century. As I conducted research in India during the fall of 2000, news circulated through the academic community in Delhi that the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) had excavated part of Fatehpur Sikri. The Mughal Emperor Akbar constructed Fatehpur Sikri, "the city of victory," in the last quarter of the sixteenth century as his new capital city. He abandoned the site after only a decade and returned to Agra. Ignored by Akbar and subsequent Mughal rulers, Fatehpur Sikri stands today much like it did in Akbar's time. News of the excavations, therefore,

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<sup>19</sup> Phyllis Granoff, "The Jina Bleeds: Threats to the Faith and the Rescue of the Faithful in Medieval Jain Stories," in *Images, Miracles, and Authority in Asian Religious Traditions*, ed. Richard H. Davis (Boulder: Westview Press, 1998), 121-39.

<sup>20</sup> Granoff adopted Aziz Ahmad's model only for this article. She examined Jain responses to Muslim invasion in an earlier article that did not that use this approach. See Phyllis Granoff, "Tales of Broken Limbs and Bleeding Wounds: Responses to Muslim Iconoclasm in Medieval India," *East and West* 41 (1991), 189-203.

<sup>21</sup> Velcheru Narayana Rao, David Shulman, and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Textures of Time: Writing History in South India 1600-1800* (New York: Other Press, 2003), 262.

<sup>22</sup> Richard Eaton, ed., *India's Islamic Traditions: 711-1750* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2003). See Eaton's introduction (1-34) for the book's scope as well as his interpretation on how approaches and interpretations of Indian Islam have changed. Eaton made some brief comments on Aziz Ahmad's article in his preface to Part One on page 33. The article was reprinted on pages 37-49. Over a surprisingly good plate of enchiladas in Defense Colony Market, New Delhi, Richard Eaton told me that his publication of Aziz Ahmad's article was not an endorsement of Ahmad's thesis, but simply an acknowledgement of its impact on recent historiography.

raised quite a stir. The Times of India (New Delhi edition) finally reported the excavations on the Thursday, January 4, 2001.

#### ASI Damaged Palace at Fatehpur Sikri

KOLKATA: The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has irretrievably damaged part of a palace and a mound inside Fatehpur Sikri, the historic fort city built by Akbar in the 1560s, according to archaeologist Nadeem Rizvi.

According to the ASI team which undertook the excavation, they were looking for a temple under the mound and a secret cell under the palace courtyard. In doing so, the ASI team dug up works of architecture nearly 500 years old. 'Fatehpur Sikri represents Mughal architecture at its very best. I do not know what they stood to gain from unearthing a temple or a cell under the courtyard, but they have irreplaceably damaged a monument of international importance,' fumed Rizvi.

...The ASI team members, who carried out the excavations in the last two years, told regional dailies in Agra and Aligarh that certain written documents they had found indicated that the Mughal emperor had built his historic fort capital after demolishing a temple and built a secret antechamber under Anup Talao, the pool inside the main palace.

.... What makes the excavations look even more politically motivated is the so-[c]alled discovery of a pre-existing temple under the Bir Chabili mound where several graves were dug up by the ASI team. Officials later said they had found the remains of a Hindu-Jain temple, supposedly demolished by the Mughals....<sup>23</sup>

Charged with both excavation and preservation, the Archeological Survey of India embarked upon a two-year excavation of a protected UNESCO World Heritage site in search of Hindu and Jain temples. The ASI has yet to publish a report of these excavations so the exact nature of these Hindu-Jain temples remains unclear. The ASI has also failed to mention the written sources it used to justify the excavation. It seems unlikely that the ASI unearthed a destroyed temple; more likely, the archaeologists found spolia used as structural filler.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Dhiman Chattopadhyay, "ASI Damaged Palace at Fatehpur Sikri," *Times of India* (New Delhi edition), 4 January 2001, p. 9, col. 1-4.

<sup>24</sup> The use of spolia as filler for foundations or in fort walls is quite common. I have yet to see a Mughal or Rajput fort in Rajasthan that did not use spolia from Hindu-Jain structures in reconstructing the fort's ramparts.



Aziz Ahmad's observation that medieval authors composed epics of conquest and epics of resistance is not inherently wrong. Ahmad's thesis, however, requires an examination of Indic and Islamicate historiography on how medieval authors viewed conquest, how they represented conquest in their literary traditions, and whether Hindu and Muslim authors wrote of conquest in isolation from each other or with a knowledge of each other's works.

#### **PRESENTATION OF THE DISSERTATION'S ARGUMENT**

The remainder of this dissertation engages in a close reading of textual sources from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. This reading not only refutes Aziz Ahmad's assertion that Persian and Sanskrit medieval literature developed in ignorance of each other, it demonstrates that an active exchange occurred between the authors of these literary traditions. In the process, the dissertation also argues that two identities began to emerge during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries as a result of conquest. The Mongol conquest of Persia in the thirteenth century isolated Hindūstān's Muslim community from the rest of the Islamicate world. This isolation led to the formation of an Indo-Muslim identity rooted in traditional Indic culture. A similar process occurred with the Delhi Sultanate's conquest of Indic kingdoms in the fourteenth century. The Delhi Sultanate's conquest and annexation of Western Hindūstān fractured the Indic social structure. When the Delhi Sultanate collapsed at the end of the fourteenth century, a new warrior and social identity (later known as Rajput) began to emerge. The emergence of these Indo-Muslim and Rajput identities in fourteenth- and fifteenth-century texts occurred through a similar process and evolved with each other rather than in response to each other.

The second chapter examines Amīr Khuṣrau's *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ*. Completed around 1311, the *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ* remains the only contemporary account of the Delhi

Sultan ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Khaljī’s conquest of Western Hindūstān. The *Khazā’in al-Futūḥ* probably conforms to Aziz Ahmad’s epic of conquest more than any other Persian text. I argue, however, that it only conforms to Ahmad’s epic of conquest when read in a piecemeal fashion. Read as a whole, the *Khazā’in al-Futūḥ* fits into the *fatḥnāma* (letter of victory) textual tradition. Little is known about the *fatḥnāma* tradition in South Asia, but comparisons with other texts elucidate a set of tropes that Amīr Khuṣrau employed in the text. Amīr Khuṣrau used one set of tropes when he discussed conquests against the Mongols and a different set of tropes when he discussed conquests against the Hindus. Interestingly, Khuṣrau applied the same tropes used in describing conquests over the Hindus when he described the Quwwāt al-Islām mosque and the Muslim city of Delhi. This suggests that the tropes meant something different than they mean today—a meaning that is most likely lost to today’s modern reader—which challenges the modern reader’s understanding of this text.

The Delhi Sultanate existed on the frontier of the Islamic world until the Mongol conquest of Persia in the thirteenth century transformed the Delhi Sultanate from a frontier of Islam to an island of Islam. This transformation led to what Sunil Kumar, building on the work of Simon Digby, termed the search for authority.<sup>25</sup> Digby and Kumar both argued that the Sufis and sultans, as well as the poets who advanced their claims, actively competed with each other to be recognized as the paramount authority of the Muslim community. Amīr Khuṣrau belonged to both camps and praised both Sufi and sultan in his work. I argue that Amīr Khuṣrau identified a third source of authority, the Indic traditions of the Muslim community itself. In the *Deval*

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<sup>25</sup> The term “search for authority” comes from Sunil Kumar, “Assertions of Authority: A Study of the Discursive Statements of Two Sultans of Delhi,” in *The Making of Indo-Persian Culture: Indian and French Studies*, ed. Muzaffar Alam, Françoise ‘Nalini’ Delvoye, and Marc Gabourieau (New Delhi: Manohar), 37–65, Simon Digby “The Sufi Shaykh as a Source of Authority in Medieval India,” *Puruṣārtha, Islam and Society in South Asia* 9 (1986): 57–77, and “The Sufi Shaykh and the Sultan: A Conflict of Claims to Authority in Medieval India,” *Iran* 28 (1990): 71–81.

*Rānī wa Khizr Khān* and the *Nuh Sipīhr*, two texts that Aziz Ahmad labeled as epics of conquest, Amīr Khuṣrau praised Indic culture and learning—both Hindu and Muslim—and in the process helped lay the groundwork for an emerging Indo-Muslim identity.

The (Hindu) Rajput social and warrior identity also formed in response to conquest and the fourth chapter frames the study of Rajput identity. Scholars have based their conception of the premodern Rajput identity largely on early modern Mughal texts. I argue that the Rajput identity found in Mughal and modern texts from the sixteenth century and later was latent in the eleventh to fourteenth centuries. Inscriptions from this period in Mewar, Marwar, Gujarat, and Rajashtan generally lacked references to this Rajput identity. Only two inscriptions of a regnal dynasty, the Guhila dynasty of the thirteenth century, contained imagery that was later associated with the Rajput identity. Scholars have argued that the Rajput is found in these inscriptions under various synonyms or near equivalent terms such as *rājaputra*, *rāuta*, and *ṭhakkura*. I have analyzed over a hundred inscriptions and I present a close reading of the major inscriptions in this chapter; nevertheless, I am unable to definitively state whether the terms *rājaputra*, *rāuta*, and *ṭhakkura* carried a connotation of Rajput identity. These inscriptions, however, suggest that these three status titles reflected the traditional political and social system of classical India more than the Rajput identity found after the fifteenth century.

I believe that the Rajput social and warrior identity was first expressed in two fifteenth-century texts, Nayacandra Sūri's *Hammīra Mahākāvya* and Padmanābha's *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh*. I engage in a close reading of these texts in the fifth chapter. Aziz Ahmad labeled the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* as an epic of conquest, and although he never mentioned the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh*, the plot of this text also conforms to Aziz Ahmad's epic of resistance. A close reading of this text, however, reveals Muslims engaged in

some surprising Hindu roles. In the *Hammīra Mahākāvya*, for example, a Mongol Muslim by the name of Mahimāsāhi not only becomes a Rajput, but he competes with Hammīra as the text's protagonist. The *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* similarly contains a lengthy episode at the end of the text in which Fīrūza, the daughter of the Delhi Sultan 'Alā' al-Dīn Khaljī, recognizes her previous existence as a Hindu married to Kāṇhaḍ De's brother and commits *satī* (the Hindu practice of the widow's immolation in the funeral pyre) with her husband's body. I argue that these fifteenth-century texts, written at a time when multiple regional sultanates existed, utilized Muslims as a carrier to promote an emerging Rajput identity. The authors of these two texts transformed the Muslims into the paragon of Rajput identity, while they simultaneously praised and celebrated the protagonist. Through a sleight of hand, the poets advocated that the audience act like the Hindu protagonist, who in turn acted like the (imagined) Muslim paragon of Rajput identity.

## Chapter 2

### Trope and Tradition in the *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ*

The incomparable Amir Khusrau stands unequalled for the volume of his writings and the originality of his ideas; for, while other great masters of prose and verse have excelled in one or two branches, Amir Khusrau was distinguished in every department of letters. A man with such mastery over all the forms of poetry has never existed in the past and may, perhaps, not come into being till the Day of Judgment.<sup>26</sup>

Žiyā' al-Dīn Baranī, *Tārikh-i Fīrūz Shāhī*

The previous chapter introduced Aziz Ahmad's division of medieval Indian literature into two categories: Persian (Muslim) epics of conquest and Indic (Hindu) epics of counter-resistance. Aziz Ahmad correctly identified two separate and distinct literary traditions of medieval India.<sup>27</sup> Although Aziz Ahmad used the term "epics of conquest," he clearly viewed this as a literature of conquest. The battle narratives in these texts formed a literary field that included identifiable sets of motifs based on the literary traditions of their respective languages. Ahmad, however, went beyond the realm of literature and asserted that these Persian and Indic literary traditions correlated to two separate and distinct religious, cultural, and social traditions from medieval history—a correlation he stated but never analyzed or justified.<sup>28</sup> If

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<sup>26</sup> Epigraph taken from Mohammad Habib, *Hazrat Amir Khusrau of Delhi* (1927; reprint, Lahore: Islamic Book Service, 1979), 1.

<sup>27</sup> In fact, there were actually three literary traditions in medieval India. A Sanskrit literary tradition extended to the fifteenth century. This Sanskrit literary tradition became increasingly formalized and closed during the early modern period. A vernacular literary tradition (Prākṛit, Apabhṛāṃśa) paralleled and intersected with this Sanskrit literary tradition. This vernacular literary tradition eventually developed into the medieval and early modern vernacular languages. A third literary tradition in Persian also existed and flourished during the medieval and early modern period.

<sup>28</sup> This is, in fact, a reading of the Two-Nation Theory back into medieval historiography. The possibility that Aziz Ahmad's article, published in 1963, reflected nationalist historiography and the effect of 1947's Partition should not be overlooked.

historiography is the intersection of history and literature,<sup>29</sup> then a historiographical reading of these texts should elucidate both the literary conventions of conquest as well as the role that conquest played within the Islamicate historical tradition.

Amīr Khuṣrau’s *Khazā’in al-Futūḥ* provides an excellent starting point for such a historiographical investigation. Amīr Khuṣrau composed the *Khazā’in al-Futūḥ* in A.H. 711/A.D. 1311–12 to praise ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Khiljī’s military victories throughout most of the subcontinent. Khuṣrau was a court poet and not a secretary; hence, the *Khazā’in al-Futūḥ*, while written in prose, reflected panegyric more than history. Time has made the *Khazā’in al-Futūḥ* a historical text. Today, the *Khazā’in al-Futūḥ* is the sole contemporary account of these events. All other accounts of Khiljī conquests, in both Persian and Indic languages, were written decades or centuries later. The *Khazā’in al-Futūḥ* is important for this historiographical study for two reasons: it demonstrates the epic of conquest style through its “thematic emphasis on the glorification of the Turk against the Hindu” and it acts as “an unconscious rival of [the epic of resistance].”<sup>30</sup>

#### THE EARLY LIFE OF AMĪR KHUṢRAU

Amīr Khuṣrau’s father, Saif al-Dīn Maḥmūd, like many other Central Asians fled his homeland when the Mongols invaded during the thirteenth century.<sup>31</sup> He entered into service with the Delhi Sultanate. Amīr Khuṣrau included a short autobiography in the introduction to his third collection of poetry, the *Ghurrat al-Kamāl (The Prime of Perfection)* where he referred to his father as *Saif-i Shamsī* (lit., Saif of the Shamsid [family]). This title implied that Saif al-Dīn entered into military service under Shams

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<sup>29</sup> Gabriel Spiegel, *Romancing the Past: The Rise of Vernacular Prose Historiography in Thirteenth-Century France* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 9.

<sup>30</sup> Aziz Ahmad, “Epic and Counter-Epic,” 470 and 471 respectively.

<sup>31</sup> For a discussion on the location of Saif al-Dīn’s homeland see Mohammad Wahid Mirza, *The Life and Works of Amir Khusrau: Thesis Submitted for the Ph.D. Degree of the London University in 1929* (1935; reprint, Lahore: Punjab University Press, 1962), 6–13; Habib, *Hazrat Amir Khusrau*, 6–8; Sunil Sharma, *Amir Khusrau: The Poet of Sufis and Sultans* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2005), 13–14.

al-Dīn Iltutmish (d. A.H. 633/A.D. 1236) or perhaps a descendent of Iltutmish (i.e., the Shamsid dynasty). If he entered under the service of Raḡiya, the daughter of Iltutmish and the Sultan of Delhi from A.H. 634–637/A.D. 1236–1240, it might explain Khuṣrau’s high regard for her in his poetry. Amīr Khuṣrau mentioned that his father governed over the village of Patiyāli and referred to him as an *amīr* (noble), but never mentioned his exact title or position within the Delhi Sultanate court hierarchy. Such omission normally suggested a lower rank; however, Saif al-Dīn married the daughter of ‘Imād al-Mulk, Balban’s *‘arīz-i rāwat* (master of the soldiers/cavalry) or *‘arīz-i mamālik* (master of the realm) who supervised the cavalry, the *‘iqṭādārs*,<sup>32</sup> and to a large extent the administration of the Delhi Sultanate. The marriage to the daughter of such a high official would suggest that Saif al-Dīn held a fairly high rank. If not, he certainly increased his status through marriage.

The *Ghurrat al-Kamāl* also provided a brief account of Amīr Khuṣrau’s childhood and family.<sup>33</sup> Saif al-Dīn held the village of Patiyāli on the banks of the Ganges, but he spent most of his time in Delhi or on various military campaigns and it seems likely that Amīr Khuṣrau was raised in Delhi. Saif al-Dīn had three sons and although Amīr Khuṣrau does not mention the birthdates or order of their birth, it is generally accepted that Yamīn al-Dīn Abu’l-Ḥasan Khuṣrau was born in A.H. 651/A.D. 1253, the second of these sons. Khuṣrau mentioned that his (elder) brother, ‘Izz al-Dīn ‘Ali Shāh, was a scholar of Arabic and Persian. A bit more is known about Amīr Khuṣrau’s younger brother, Ḥusām al-Dīn Qutlugh. Qutlugh, like his father, was a soldier in the Delhi Sultanate army and died in a military campaign. Amīr Khuṣrau noted his brother’s and

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<sup>32</sup> An *‘iqṭādār* was a man who held an *iqṭā’*, an impermanent grant of a village and surrounding lands from which the holder received income for himself as well as his position. Although the *iqṭā’* is perhaps closest to the European concept of the fief, it differed from fiefs in that the *iqṭā’* was not always hereditary.

<sup>33</sup> The *Ghurrat al-Kamāl* (*The Prime of Perfection*) was Amīr Khuṣrau’s third collection of poetry, compiled in A.H. 693/A.D. 1294.

mother's passing within a week of each other, and wrote a eulogy to them in the *Majnūn wa Layla*.<sup>34</sup>

Amīr Khuṣrau's father died in a military campaign when Khuṣrau was eight years old. The family moved into the house of his maternal grandfather, 'Imād al-Mulk. Amīr Khuṣrau mentioned that even though his father was illiterate, he was determined that his sons would receive a formal education.<sup>35</sup> Given 'Imād al-Mulk's status, Amīr Khuṣrau's education must have continued and probably increased due to his grandfather's position. Khuṣrau's education occurred not only in the various schools of Delhi, but also in the gatherings of officials in his grandfather's house. Habib wrote that a young Sufi by the name of Niẓām al-Dīn resided for two years in the house of 'Imād al-Mulk. This must have occurred sometime between A.H. 664–671/A.D. 1265–1272,<sup>36</sup> with a preference closer to A.H. 671/A.D. 1272.<sup>37</sup>

'Imād al-Mulk died in A.H. 671/A.D. 1272 and Amīr Khuṣrau earned a series of appointments as a court poet. He first joined the court of Malik Chajjū 'Alā' al-Dīn Kishli Khān, the nephew of the reigning sultan Ghiyāṣ al-Dīn Balban. Amīr Khuṣrau

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<sup>34</sup> The identification of Ḥusām al-Dīn Qutlugh as the youngest son comes from the terms of affection Amīr Khuṣrau used when he wrote an elegy on Qutlugh's death in the *Shīrīn wa Khusrow*. See Wahid Mirza, *Life and Works of Amir Khusrau*, 17 nn, 2, 5; Habib, *Hazrat Amir Khusrau*, 24; Sharma, *Amir Khusraw*, 32–33. Sunil Sharma translated a portion of Khuṣrau's elegy for his mother in *Amir Khusraw*, 32–33. He also noted that Amīr Khuṣrau mentioned in passing some of his sons and daughters, including Mastūra and Khizr in the *Khamsa*, 'Afīfa in *Hast Bihist*, and Muḥammad, Ḥājjī, and Malik Aḥmad (33).

<sup>35</sup> Wahid Mirza, *Life and Times of Amir Khusrau*, 20–22.

<sup>36</sup> Habib mentioned the following story in *Hazrat Amir Khusrau* (29): When Niẓām al-Dīn first entered Delhi, he stayed in the house of 'Imād al-Mulk as he wrestled with the idea of where to settle. He stayed as a guest for two years until 'Imād al-Mulk's sons returned and threw him out of the house. That night he spent asleep in a mosque as 'Imād al-Mulk's house burned down. Habib did not cite a source for this story, nor did it appear in Khaliq Nizami, *Life and Times of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya* (Delhi: Idarah-i Adabyat-i Delli, 1991). The story certainly rings with hagiography; however, Nizami did note that Ziyā' al-Dīn, a clerk for 'Imād al-Mulk, constructed the first *khānqāh* (monastic residence) for Niẓām al-Dīn out of brick and mortar (*ibid.*, 57). If Niẓām al-Dīn stayed in the house of 'Imād al-Mulk it must have occurred between A.H. 664/A.D. 1265 when Nizam al-Dīn's master Farīd al-Dīn died (shortly after Niẓām al-Dīn left for Delhi) and A.H. 671/A.D. 1272 when 'Imād al-Mulk died.

<sup>37</sup> Wahid Mirza stated that Amīr Khuṣrau became a disciple in A.H. 671/A.D. 1272 in *Life and Works of Amir Khusrau*, 112.



wrote his first collection of poetry, *Tuḥfat al-Ṣiḡhar* (*The Gift of Youth*) when he served Malik Chajjū. Amīr Khuṣrau’s tenure in Chajjū’s court ended when Chajjū’s cousin, Bughrā Khān who was the son of Sultan Balban, visited and in the course of wine and poetry offered Khuṣrau a dish of silver coins.<sup>38</sup> Having insulted his patron beyond any hope of reconciliation, Amīr Khuṣrau left the court of Malik Chajjū for Bughrā Khān. Khuṣrau did not stay in the court of Bughrā Khān for long. A rebellion occurred in Lakhnautī (in present-day Bengal) and Balban sent for Bughrā Khān and his officers to accompany him on the campaign. When Balban finally suppressed the rebellion, he made Bughrā Khān the governor of Bengal. Amīr Khuṣrau found the environment to his dislike and quickly returned to Delhi.

Back in Delhi, Amīr Khuṣrau attended a celebration given by the designated heir to the throne, Muḥammad (the Martyr Prince),<sup>39</sup> and entered his court. Balban assigned Muḥammad the task of governing Multan, one of the more prestigious assignments as well as the most important since the governor of Multan had to defend the region from yearly Mongol raids. Muḥammad the Martyr Prince filled his court with intellectuals and his court in Multan included both Amīr Khuṣrau and Amīr Ḥasan Sijzī Dehlavī.<sup>40</sup> The Martyr Prince died on the last day of the year A.H. 683 (March 8,

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<sup>38</sup> For a retelling of the story with translated verses from Amīr Khuṣrau, see Wahid Mirza, *Life and Works of Amir Khusrau*, 39–40.

<sup>39</sup> Several names are given for Muḥammad. He is called Muḥammad Qā’ān in the *Encyclopedia of Islam* (“Amīr Khusraw”, *Encyclopedia of Islam*, ed. H. A. R. Gibb et. al., 1: 444). Wahid Mirza referred to him as Prince Muḥammad in *Life and Works of Amir Khusrau* (45–55), and Peter Jackson used “the Martyr Prince” (*Khān-i shahīd*) in place of his name probably to differentiate him the numerous people named Muḥammad. I have chosen to append this title to his name. Thus, I interpret his name as Muḥammad Khān-i Shahīd and refer to him as Muḥammad the Martyr Prince. This is consistent with other identifying epithets such as Kamāl al-Dīn Gurg which I translate as Kamāl al-Dīn the Wolf. Persian scholars may note that *Khān-i Shahīd* literally means the Martyr Khān. The Delhi sultans often gave the title *Khān* to princes, members of the royal family, and nobility. The title here clearly referred to Muḥammad’s status as the designated heir to the throne.

<sup>40</sup> Amīr Ḥasan Sijzī Dehlavī was known for his *ghazal* poetry and even earned the moniker “the Sa’dī of India.” The two poets were friends as well as friendly rivals. They were both born in the same year, both served the court of ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Khaljī, both became disciples of the sufi Nizam al-Dīn ‘Auliya’, and both wrote compilations of the Sufi’s sayings.

1285) in a Mongol attack. The Mongols captured Amīr Khuṣrau, an event he frequently recalled in his poetry,<sup>41</sup> although he managed to escape when his Mongol captor and horse drank water from a stream—apparently unfiltered and unboiled—and subsequently died. On their return to Delhi Amīr Khuṣrau and Amīr Ḥasan both composed elegies to Muḥammad, who earned the epithet *Khān-i Shahīd* (The Martyr Khān), and Amīr Khuṣrau assembled his second collection of poetry, *Waṣṭ al-Ḥayāt* (*The Middle of Life*), which contained two elegies to the Martyr Prince.<sup>42</sup>

Balban's death triggered a series of court intrigues. With Muḥammad the Martyr Prince dead, Balban passed over Bughrā Khān and designated Muḥammad's son Kaikhuṣrau as the heir. All parties appeared content with Kaikhuṣrau inheriting the throne. Fakhr al-Dīn, the *kotwāl* (deputy) of Delhi, was charged with crowning the new sultan. Fakhr al-Dīn, however, passed over Kaikhuṣrau and crowned Bughrā Khān's son, Mu'izz al-Dīn Kaiqubād, as the new Delhi Sultan. Kaikhuṣrau was quickly killed and Bughrā Khān, who proclaimed himself the legitimate sultan, amassed an army and marched toward Delhi. Amīr Khuṣrau, who had connections to both parties as the former court poet to Kaikhuṣrau's father (the Martyr Prince) and to Bughrā Khān, managed to keep out of this intrigue completely by finding a new patron in Malik 'Amīr 'Alī Sarjāndār. As Bughrā Khān approached the city of Delhi, Kaiqubād assembled his army, which included Malik Sarjāndār. Malik Sarjāndār, who apparently dreaded the upcoming battle as much as Khuṣrau, brought the poet along for a diversion. When the armies of Bughrā Khān and Kaiqubād met, however, father and son reconciled and civil war was averted. Bughrā Khān received ceremonial robes of honor and sovereign rule

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<sup>41</sup> He described his capture by the Mongols in the *Gharrat al-Kamāl* (his third collection of poetry), as well as the *Miftah al-Futūḥ* and the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*.

<sup>42</sup> For a description of the *Waṣṭ al-Ḥayāt*, see Wahid Mirza, *Life and Works of Amir Khusrau*, 155–59. According to Peter Jackson's *Delhi Sultanate* (50), Amīr Khuṣrau may have only finished editing the work around A.H. 690/A.D. 1294.

of Bengal, while Kaiqubād received a lecture on the proper conduct for a sultan. Amīr Khuṣrau, who was in neither man’s court, did not witness this reconciliation, but certainly heard the stories from his friends and acquaintances in both courts.

Amīr Khuṣrau finally entered the royal court after these events, an act that elevated his prestige as a poet and one that fundamentally affected his poetry. As Kaiqubād led the Sultanate army back to Delhi, he appointed Malik Sarjāndār to administer a province in Avadh (Oudh). Just as with Bughrā Khān when he was appointed the governor of Bengal, Amīr Khuṣrau left Malik Sarjāndār’s patronage and returned to Delhi. He was only in Delhi “two days”<sup>43</sup> when Kaiqubād invited him to join the royal court. With the court intrigues settled, Amīr Khuṣrau finally joined the court and composed the *Qirān al-Sa’dain* (*Conjunction of the Planets*) in Shawwal A.H. 688/A.D. 1289. The *Qirān al-Sa’dain* described the political and military standoff and the reconciliation between Kaiqubād and his father, Bughrā Khān. Persian poets often wrote shorter panegyric poems such as the *qaṣīda* to living patrons. Khuṣrau broke with this tradition when he wrote the *Qirān al-Sa’dain* in the *maṣnavī* style and wrote about historical events in which his living patron participated. Khuṣrau may be the first Persian poet to compose this type of historical *maṣnavī*.<sup>44</sup> Amīr Khuṣrau continued to compose shorter panegyric poems that he later included in his collection of poetry (*dīvān*), but composing *maṣnavī* was a greater challenge that resulted in greater fame and that increasingly occupied the poet’s time.

Amīr Khuṣrau continued to write various types of poetry in spite of the uneasy political situation that was to come. Kaiqubād eliminated many of his political

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<sup>43</sup> Habib, *Hazrat Amir Khusrau*, 20.

<sup>44</sup> The *maṣnavī* style and two of Khuṣrau’s major *maṣnavī* poems will be discussed in the next chapter. Azhar Dehlavi, Professor of Persian at Jawaharlal Nehru University, noted that Amīr Khuṣrau was the first poet to compose entire texts about a living patron during a Persian conference held at the University of Delhi in January 2001.

opponents, an act that earned him quite a few enemies. Historians in the following centuries disagreed on who killed Kaiqbād or how, but he was dethroned and soon died on 19 Muḥarram 689/February 1, 1290.<sup>45</sup> As usual, court intrigue followed the death of the sultan. Jalāl al-Dīn Khaljī ascended the throne in A.H. 689/A.D. 1290 and established the Khaljī dynasty. Amīr Khuṣrau, who had negotiated the court intrigues twenty years, retained his position within the royal court. Jalāl al-Dīn Khaljī, in fact, possessed many of the attributes of Muḥammad the Martyr Prince and Balban. Nevertheless Amīr Khuṣrau remained silent when Jalāl al-Dīn’s nephew, ‘Alā’ al-Dīn, orchestrated his assassination on 16 Ramaḥān 695/July 18, 1296. Much to the chagrin of modern historians, Khuṣrau praised ‘Alā’ al-Dīn with a newly composed poem when he reached Delhi to become the next sultan. Khuṣrau, however, simply followed his role as a court poet who composed panegyric irrespective of his personal feelings. As he noted in a *qaṣīda*:

Composing panegyric kills the heart,  
 Even if the poetry is fresh and eloquent.  
 A lamp is extinguished by a breath,  
 Even if it is the breath of Jesus.<sup>46</sup>

Amīr Khuṣrau may have felt loyalty to his previous patron, but his position as a poet in the court and his function to produce panegyric for the ruling sultan trumped his allegiances to friends and patrons.<sup>47</sup>

Amīr Khuṣrau changed as a poet during his tenure in the royal court of the Delhi Sultanate. He continued to compose short poems of panegyric and completed three

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<sup>45</sup> For a discussion of Kaiqbād’s death and the date of his death, see Jackson, *Delhi Sultanate*, 53–54.

<sup>46</sup> Sharma, *Amīr Khusraw*, 18. Jesus, in Islam, is a prophet known for his power to heal the sick and to resurrect the dead.

<sup>47</sup> An excellent example of this is the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān* discussed in the next chapter. Amīr Khuṣrau completed this text for his friend and much-loved crown prince Khizr Khān. Khuṣrau appended 319 verses to the end of the text describing Khizr Khān’s blinding and his eventual execution by his half-brother Sultan Quṭb al-Dīn Mubārak Shāh. He appended these verses, however, only after Quṭb al-Dīn Mubārak Shāh died and the Tughluq dynasty replaced the Khaljī dynasty.

more collections of poetry in the next thirty years; yet, Amīr Khuṣrau’s poetry matured as he matured and he increasingly composed longer works. The *Ghurraṭ al-Kamāl* (*The Prime of Perfection*), Khuṣrau’s third collection of poetry compiled in A.H. 693/A.D. 1294, contained praises for Jalāl al-Dīn Khaljī as well as an elegy on the death of Khuṣrau’s son.<sup>48</sup> The *Ghurraṭ al-Kamāl* also contained Amīr Khuṣrau’s second historical *maṣnavī*, the *Miftāḥ al-Futūḥ* (*The Initial Victories*), which described Jalāl al-Dīn Khaljī’s military campaigns and his conquest of Jhāin.

From A.H. 698–701/A.D. 1298–1300, Amīr Khuṣrau rewrote all five of the *maṣnavī* in Niẓāmī Ganjavī’s *Khamsa*.<sup>49</sup> Niẓāmī (A.H. 535–40 to 613?/A.D. 1141–46 to 1209?) was and still remains one of the greatest Persian poets. He composed the *Khamsa*, a quintet of five *maṣnavī* poems that included *Layla and Majnūn* as well as *Shīrīn and Khusrow*. In rewriting Niẓāmī’s *Khamsa*, Amīr Khuṣrau accomplished what his panegyric *qaṣīda* and *maṣnavī* could not: he engaged the established Persian literary canon and secured his place within Persian literature. As the Persian poet Jāmī wrote more than a century after Khuṣrau’s death:

Two great masters of the realm of poetry  
have composed the story with all its finesses and admiration.  
One of them scattered his gems from Ganja  
and the other sang like a sweet parrot in India.<sup>50</sup>

The Persian poet Ḥāfiẓ, known for his *ghazal* compositions, copied Amīr Khuṣrau’s *Khamsa* with his own hand. Amīr Khuṣrau was one of the few poets of Hindūstān whose verses influenced the poets of Persia including Ḥāfiẓ (A.H. 726–91/A.D. 1326–89), ‘Ubaid

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<sup>48</sup> For the date see Wahid Mirza, *Life and Works of Amir Khusrau*, 159; Jackson, *Delhi Sultanate*, 50. Wahid Mirza also wrote a lengthy description of this work in *Life and Works of Amir Khusrau*, 159–66.

<sup>49</sup> Habib gives the dates as A.H. 698–700/A.D. 1298–1300 (*Hazrat Amīr Khuṣrau of Delhi*, 24). Wahid Mirza has the dates as A.H. 698–701 (*Life and Works*, 190–203).

<sup>50</sup> Quoted from Ziauddin Sajjadi, “Khuṣrau—From Iranian Angle,” in *Memorial Volume Amir Khusrau* (New Delhi: Publications Division of the Government of India, 1975), 199. Sajjadi provided the Persian verses, but translated the passage in prose. I have placed his prose translation back into verse. The *Tūṭī-ye Hind* (*Parrot of India*) was a moniker that referred to Amīr Khuṣrau.

Zākānī (A.H. 699–773/A.D. 1300–1371), and Nūr al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Raḥman Jāmī (A.H. 817–898/A.D. 1414–1492).<sup>51</sup> Amīr Khuṣrau closed the thirteenth century as arguably the greatest living poet of Persian. He would not produce another major work for a decade.

#### THE GENEALOGY OF CONQUEST

Amīr Khuṣrau completed the *Khazā’in al-Futūḥ* (*The Treasury of Victories*) in A.H. 711/A.D. 1311–12. The *Khazā’in al-Futūḥ*, Amīr Khuṣrau’s only prose panegyric, presented a complexity equaled only by the poet’s genius. Scholars have approached this text in a piecemeal fashion, examining only the episodes relevant to their particular project: ‘Alā al-Dīn Khaljī’s building projects, social and economic reforms in Delhi; his sack of the Somanātha temple and the Rajasthan campaigns; the conquest of Warangal in the Deccan. Such an approach has obscured the continuities within the text, reducing the *Khazā’in al-Futūḥ* from a treasury of victories to a storehouse of military exploit. The difficulty with approaches that have attempted to understand the continuities of the text as a whole have arisen from the clash between literature and

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<sup>51</sup> For Ḥāfiẓ: Sharma, *Amir Khusraw*, 59; Zākānī: Shamsur Rahman Faruqi, “Stranger in the City: The Poetics of *Sabk-i Hindi*,” *Annals of Urdu Studies* 19 (2004), 69–70 and Wahid Mirza, *Life and Works of Amir Khusrau*, 191; For Jāmī: Wahid Mirza, *Life and Works*, 192 n. 4, 195 and Ziauddin Sajjadi, “Khusrau—From Iranian Angle,” 198–99. The fact that Ḥāfiẓ read Amīr Khuṣrau’s *Khamsa* is a settled matter. The link between Ḥāfiẓ and Khuṣrau will be discussed further in the next chapter. On the question of manuscripts, S. A. H. Abidi wrote, “It is said that three masnawis of Amir Khusrau were transcribed by Hafiz, the greatest ghazal-writer in Persian literature, and they are to be found in the Tashkent library of the U.S.S.R. But some Iranian scholars have declined to identify the scribe of these manuscripts with the well known poet of Shiraz” (“A Persian Poet Par Excellence,” in *Memorial Volume Amir Khusrau*, [New Delhi: Publications Division of the Government of India, 1975], 69). Abidi did not name the *maṣnavī* and they may all be from the *Khamsa*. Numerous South Asian poets within the Mughal Dynasty have composed verses that praise Khuṣrau, but Amīr Khuṣrau’s influence on the poets of Persia remains more speculative. Sharma has noted that the number of Amīr Khuṣrau’s manuscripts found in libraries throughout the Middle East—many of which are the oldest known copies of the poet’s work—indicates that his poetry was widely read and distributed. The exception, of course, is the Persian poet ‘Ubaid Zākānī who criticized Khuṣrau’s *Khamsa* with the following couplet:

Because of rawness, Khusrau fell into error:  
He cooked his broth in Nizāmī’s pot.

First noted by Wahid Mirza, *Life and Works*, 191 but translated in full by Shamsur Rahman Faruqi, “A Stranger In The City,” 69–70. For a discussion of *sabk-i Hind* and its differences with Iranian Persian, see Faruqi’s article and Mohamad Tavakoli-Targhi, *Refashioning Iran: Orientalism, Occidentalism, and Historiography* (New York: Palgrave, 2001).

history within the text—Amīr Khuṣrau’s hyper-metaphorical plotting of narrative according to stated allusion (a literary project) and his commemoration/celebration of Sultanate victories (a historical project).

The *Khazā’in al-Futūḥ* described the Sultanate victories during ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Khaljī’s reign. Khuṣrau analyzed these victories in four parts: 1) a description of ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Khaljī’s construction of public works, fortification of cities against Mongol raids, and economic reforms; 2) the victorious campaigns against the Mongols; 3) the conquest and annexation of Western Hindūstān (Gujarat, Rajasthan, Malwa); 4) the conquest and annexation of the Deccan (a plateau in the central and southern part of the subcontinent). These campaigns occurred during the first decade of the fourteenth century and ‘Alā’ al-Dīn personally led the siege against the forts of Ranthambhor and Siwāna. Given Khuṣrau’s participation in military campaigns as an *amīr* (noble) in the courts of the noblemen described above, he certainly accompanied the sultan on these two campaigns and may have accompanied other court officials on some of the other campaigns. His participation in these campaigns would explain the ten-year gap between the *Khamsa* and the *Khazā’in al-Futūḥ*.

Amīr Khuṣrau’s *Khazā’in al-Futūḥ* is the only contemporary account of ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Khaljī’s campaigns that exists today. Elliot and Dowson made the first partial English translation in their multivolume work, *The History of India as Told by its Own Historians*, published between 1867 and 1877.<sup>52</sup> Muhammad Habib published a translation in 1931 under the title *The Campaigns of ‘Alā’u’-d-Din Khilji being the Khaza’inul Futuh (Treasures of Victory)*, followed by Mohammad Wahid Mirza’s complete translation

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<sup>52</sup> H. M. Elliot and John Dowson’s *The History of India as Told by its Own Historians: Muhammadan Period*, 8 vols. (1867–77; reprint, New York: AMS Press, 1966) contains numerous errors and must be read in conjunction with S. H. Hodivala’s *Studies in Indo-Muslim History: A Critical Commentary on Elliot and Dowson’s History of India as told by its own historians*, 2 vols. (1939–57; reprint, Lahore: Islamic Book Service, 1979).

of the *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ* in 1975.<sup>53</sup> No historian has systematically analyzed the *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ* and its place in medieval Arabic and Persian intellectual traditions.<sup>54</sup> Yet, such an analysis is critical to understanding the text as a whole.

### Conquest in the Arabic Literature

In a pioneering work on conquest and early Islamic historiography, *The Early Arabic Historical Tradition*, Albrecht Noth identified a number of themes, topoi and schemata in Arabic literature in the decades that immediately followed the Prophet Muḥammad's death. The primary themes in this literature reflected the topics that concerned the early Arabic authors most: *ridda* (apostasy), *futūḥ* (conquest), *fitna* (civil war), administration, the position of the caliph, and genealogy.<sup>55</sup> Each of these primary themes developed a set of standardized topoi or schemata that are found within the text or even within texts of different authors. For example, Noth noticed a recurring series of motifs in early Islamicate *futūḥ* texts that described Muslim conquest of such dispersed cities as Damascus, Alexandria and Cordoba.

Certain motifs recur constantly in different combinations: the traitor who, with or without an *aman* (safe-conduct), points out a weak spot in the city's fortifications to the Muslim besiegers; a celebration in the city which diverts the attention of the besieged; then a few assault troops who scale the walls, often with a ladder; a shout of *Allāhu akbar!* "God is great!" from the assault troops as a

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<sup>53</sup> For translations of Amīr Khuṣrau's *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ*, see *The Campaigns of 'Alā'u'd-Din Khilji being the Khazā'inul Futuh (Treasures of Victory)*, ed. Mohammad Habib, (Madras: Diocesan Press, 1931); *Khazain-ul-Futuh*, ed. Mohammad Wahid Mirza, (Lahore: National Committee for 700<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Amir Khuṣrau, 1975). Mohammad Wahid Mirza also wrote a helpful English introduction to *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ Ḥazrat Amīr Khuṣrau Dehlawī*, by Amīr Khuṣrau, Bibliotheca Indica, no. 275 (Calcutta: Asiatic Society, 1953), 1–29.

<sup>54</sup> Peter Hardy evaluated the *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ* as a historical work according to the standard of modern history and its adherence or deviance to Collingwood's *Idea of History* in *Historians of Medieval India: Studies in Indo-Muslim Historical Writing* (1960; reprint, New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1997). His chapter on Amīr Khuṣrau placed the *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ* in context with Khuṣrau's other works. Khaliq Nizami examined Arabic and Persian historical traditions, although he did not include Amīr Khuṣrau as a proper historian. See, Khaliq Ahmad Nizami, *On History and Historians of Medieval India* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1983).

<sup>55</sup> Albrecht Noth and Lawrence I. Conrad, *Early Arabic Historical Tradition: A Source-Critical Study*, trans. Michael Bonner (Princeton, Darwin Press, 1994), 27–37.



sign that they have entered the town; the opening of one of the gates from the inside, and the onslaught of the entire army.... [These motifs] represent not the reporting of history, but rather the deployment of literary stereotypes.<sup>56</sup>

Noth also mentioned several secondary themes that occurred in conjunction with the primary themes: *ghārāt* (raids), dating according to the *hijra*, annalistic style, arrangement according to the caliphates, law and administration, cities, court and central government, and [pseudo- ] causal links.<sup>57</sup>

The Muslims composed the earliest *futūḥ* tracts orally and they were not written until the ninth or tenth centuries.<sup>58</sup> Two of the earlier texts that incorporated *futūḥ* include the *Futūḥ al-Buldān* (*Conquest of the Lands*) of al-Balādhurī (d. A.H. 297/A.D. 892)

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<sup>56</sup> Noth and Conrad, *Early Arabic Historical Tradition*, 19. The use of literary devices such as topoi and schemata, of course, was not limited to early Islamic texts or traditions. Tarini Chattopadhyay noticed a similar set of topoi in modern Indian historical texts, and complained that the Hindu texts always described the loss of a battle in the same way: the Hindus were on the verge of victory when a missile, landing near the king's elephant, scared the creature and it flees from the battleground; seeing the king's departure, the Hindu army fell into disarray and was quickly routed (Tarini Chattopadhyay, quoted in Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories* [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993], 102). Chattopadhyay successfully identified topoi of lost battles and other historians have located several more in Sanskrit texts. The presence of these literary topoi in the historical literature eventually led British historians of the nineteenth century to dismiss the "Hindu texts" as ahistorical. As a result of this dismissal, historians increasingly relied on medieval Persian texts with a historiographical tradition that resembled European historiography.

<sup>57</sup> Fred M. Donner, *Narratives of Islamic Origins: The Beginnings of Islamic Historical Writing* (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1998). Donner refers to Noth's primary themes as "an exercise in legitimation" (125) and identifies three other themes in works such as al-Ṭabarī (142-143, small caps in the original): 1) THEMES OF THE ARCHÉ (or themes of INCEPTION) "include events that define the community temporally and to some extent in terms of essential identity or ideology... accounts that narrated Islam's original distinctness from both Arabian paganism and from Judaism, Christianity, and other monotheisms—in particular, accounts about the Prophet Muhammad. 2) PREPARATORY THEMES that "embrace events that are seen as anticipations of the *arché*... accounts about the 'Old testament' prophets mentioned in the Qur'an..." and 3) BOUNDARY THEMES "compromise events that define the community or group in relation to others" either between two communities, subsections of the same community, or changes in ideological conceptions that affect the community. Donner's three themes privileged the study of Islam's origin, an unsurprising observation given the title of his book. Donner viewed the preparatory and boundary themes as concepts that supported the *arché*. I view these themes as well as the four basic issues/themes [termed issues on page 144 and themes in the subsequent chapter headings]—prophecy, community, hegemony, and leadership—as themes of development. The overarching issue in these universal histories, as stated above, is the development of Islam from its pre-Islamic predecessors, through its organization of the *umma* [Muslim community] under Muḥammad and the four Rightly Guided Caliphs, and into the Umayyad and 'Abbāsīd caliphates. While this may be a minor point of difference in terms of a single text, it places al-Ṭabarī and the universal histories in a much broader framework of Arabic, Persian, and Indo-Persian historiography.

<sup>58</sup> Noth and Conrad, *Early Arabic Historical Tradition*, 31–33.

and the *Ta'riḫ al-Rusul wa'l-Mulūk* (*History of the Prophet and Kings*) of Muḥammad bin Jarīr al-Ṭabarī (A.H. 224-5-310/A.D. 839-923).<sup>59</sup> Both authors utilized the *isnād* tradition that transmitted information through a chain of identified transmitters.<sup>60</sup> Al-Balādhurī's passages on Khaybar showed a number of *isnād* that contrasted and even contradicted each other. Al-Balādhurī did not organize the passages chronologically and the narrative jumped back and forth between the Prophet Muḥammad and the second Rightly Guided Caliph 'Umar. Al-Ṭabarī utilized the *isnād* tradition like al-Balādhurī yet included two incidents not mentioned by al-Balādhurī: the Prophet Muḥammad's placement of his cloak on Ṣafiyyah that marked her for marriage (a matter subsequently debated by Islamic legalists) and 'Alī's conquest of Khaybar and his supernatural feat of using the door (fortress gate) as a shield. Even though al-Balādhurī and al-Ṭabarī both utilized *isnād*, they organized the *isnād* in different ways.

Al-Ṭabarī, much more than al-Balādhurī, incorporated what Noth termed primary and secondary themes into the *Ta'riḫ al-Rusul wa'l-Mulūk* (*History of the Prophet and Kings*). Unlike al-Balādhurī, Al-Ṭabarī organized his *isnād* sources according to an annalistic theme and even appended the *isnād* that did not fit within his theme at the end of the section. Yet, al-Ṭabarī's duty to repeat rather than interpret also forced him to include numerous descriptions of battles that were part of the *isnād*. These battles often followed the *futūḥ* tropes identified by Noth. The descriptions of the battles at

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<sup>59</sup> Ahmad ibn Yaḥya al-Balādhurī's *Futūḥ al-Buldān*, published as *The Origins of the Islamic State*, translated by Philip Khuri Hitti (New York: Columbia University, 1916). Muḥammad bin Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, *The History of al-Ṭabarī (Ta'riḫ al-Rusul wa'l-Mulūk)*, Bibliotheca Persica, 38 vols., ed. Ehsan Yar-Shater (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1985-98).

<sup>60</sup> More information on the *isnād* may be found in R. Stephen Humphreys, *Islamic History: A Framework for Inquiry* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991) and in 'Abd al-'Aziz Duri, *The Rise of Historical Writing among Arabs*, trans. Lawrence I. Conrad (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983). For an example of how Arabic authors utilized *isnād*, see of al-Ṭabarī's *Ta'riḫ al-Rusul wa'l-Mulūk* (e.g., the citations in the next footnote).

Tustar in A.H. 17/A.D. 638 and Nihāwand in A.H. 21/A.D. 642 provide a good example.<sup>61</sup> Both battles included traitors who gave entrance (through the city sluice), refused to fight, or revealed treasures in exchange for immunity. Both battles mentioned the shouts of “God is Great” to signal the troops to attack and in a variation of the Nihāwand battle the signal is given, three times, with the waving of a flag accompanied by “God is Great.” Al-Balādhurī and al-Ṭabarī described the battles of Khaybar, Tustrar, and Nihāwand, but they focused on larger issues than the battle.

Al-Ṭabarī stated his objective to repeat the *isnād* or—as historians today would say—“to let the sources speak for themselves.”

Let him who studies this book of ours know that in everything I say about the subjects which I have decided to recount there, I rely only on what I transmit from explicitly identified reports (*akhbār*) and from accounts (*āthār*) which I ascribe by name to their transmitters. I do not achieve understanding through rational proofs nor do I make discoveries by intuition (*fakr al-nufūs*), save to a very limited degree. For knowledge about the men of the past and current news about men of the present cannot be obtained by one who has not himself witnessed these men or whose lifetime does not reach back to theirs. [In the latter situation knowledge can be obtained] by the statements of reporters and transmitters, not by rational deduction of intuitive inference.<sup>62</sup>

Rational deduction and intuitive inference may have been illegitimate approaches, but editing was not. Al-Ṭabarī organized his *isnād* sources into an annalistic account and focused on the actions and sayings of the Prophet Muḥammad, the institution of the caliph, the legal precedents they established (e.g., the granting of immunity), and the administration of empire. A cursory reading of the *Ta’rīkh al-Rusul wa’l-Mulūk* shows that al-Ṭabarī focused on the actions and office of the caliph more than the conquests of the Muslim army.

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<sup>61</sup> Al-Ṭabarī, *Conquest of Iraq, Southwestern Persia, and Egypt*, vol. 13 of *The History of al-Ṭabarī (Ta’rīkh al-Rusul wa’l-Mulūk)*, trans. Gautier H. A. Juynboll (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997), 123–25 (Conquest of Tustrar) and 179–217 (Conquest of Nihāwand).

<sup>62</sup> Humphreys, *Islamic History*, 73–74.

Noth and Donner both noted a fundamental change that occurred between the first/seventh and fourth/tenth centuries and by the tenth century a new historiography, the *adab* tradition, dominated Islamicate intellectual circles. *Adab*, often translated as “belles letters,” was closer to the liberal arts education of today.<sup>63</sup> Unlike the previous *isnād* traditions that drew their sources and methodology from the recitation/verification of a chain of transmission, the *adab* tradition emerged from the cosmopolitanism of the ‘Abbāsīd caliphate. The *adīb* (learned man) did not rely on a single source, methodology, or even discipline like al-Balādhurī and al-Ṭabarī; rather, he learned, combined, and then synthesized multiple sources and disciplines into a single work. The *adab* tradition directly opposed the *isnād* tradition of the previous centuries as demonstrated by Ibn Qutayba (d. A.H. 276/A.D. 889), an early *adīb*, who said, “He who wishes to become a scholars (*‘alim*), let him pursue one subject (*fann*). But he who wishes to become an *adīb*, let him seek breadth in learning (*yattasi’ fi al-‘ulum*).”<sup>64</sup> The *adīb* of the fourth/tenth and fifth/eleventh century would have studied and utilized various sources including comparative exegesis,<sup>65</sup> geography,<sup>66</sup> science,<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> The discussion of the *adab* tradition in Muslim historiography is based upon the following works: Tarif Khalidi, *Arabic Historical Thought in the Classical Period* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); ‘Abd al-‘Aziz Duri, *The Rise of Historical Writing Among the Arabs* [although Duri stopped his analysis with al-Ṭabarī just prior to the rise of the *adab* historiography]; Chase F. Robinson, *Islamic Historiography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), and the entry on “*adab*” in the *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 1: 175–76.

<sup>64</sup> Translated by Khalidi, *Arabic Historical Thought*, 100.

<sup>65</sup> Steven M. Wasserstrom argued for a comparative exegesis in “Islamicate History of Religions?” *History of Religions* 27, no. 4 (1988): 405–411 and *Between Muslim and Jew: The Problem of Symbiosis under Early Islam* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), especially chapter four. He mentioned in *Between Muslim and Jew* that al-Bīrūnī (A.H. 362–440 or 442/A.D. 973–1048 or 1050) and Abū Faṭḥ Muḥammad al-Shahrastānī (d. A.D. 1153) were two examples of this comparative exegesis, who drew from the Islamic and Judaic exegesis and then engaged in the exegesis of other religions such as Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, and Hinduism. The commentary to al-Shahrastānī’s *al-Mīlāl wa’l-Niḥāl* includes references to al-Bīrūnī’s *Kitāb al-Āthār al-Bāqīya ‘an al-Qurūn al-Khāliya* composed around A.H. 390/A.D. 1000 and to his *Ta’rīkh al-Hind* (an alternate title for *Taḥqīq mā lil-Hind*). For Al-Shahrastānī’s reference in the *al-Mīlāl wa’l-Niḥāl* to al-Bīrūnī, see *Shahrastani on Indian Religions*, trans. Bruce L. Lawrence (Hague: Mouton, 1976), 25. Al-Bīrūnī’s *Kitāb al-Asār al-Bāqīya al-Bāqīya ‘an al-Qurūn al-Khāliya* was published as *The Chronology of Ancient Nations: An English Version of the Arabic Text of the Athar-ul-Bakiya of Albiruni, or “Vestiges of the Past,”*

'ajā'ib (wonder, marvel) tales,<sup>68</sup> and *akhbār* (historical accounts). The use of the varied sources required the *adīb* to judge his sources and to incorporate relevant sections

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trans. Edward C. Sachau (London, W. H. Allen and Co., 1879). Sachau translated the *Tahqīq mā lil-Hind* as *Alberuni's India*.

<sup>66</sup> For an overview of Islamicate geography, see John Brian Harley and David Woodward, ed. *Cartography in the Traditional Islamic and South Asian Societies*, vol. 2, bk. 1 of *History of Cartography* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992). Khurdājbih (d. ca. A.D. 912) wrote the *al-Masālik wa'l-Mamālik* in which he claimed to have traveled to Gujarat. He listed six castes: *al-shākthariya* (the highest caste and the caste to which the kings belong), *al-barāhima* (who “do not drink wine or any of the fermented liquors”), *al-ksatriya* (“they drink up to three bowls [of wine] only”), *al-shūdarīya* (“They are cultivators of land.”), *al-bayshīya* (“They are the artisans and the craftsman.”), *al-sandāliya* (“They are the entertainers and musicians. Their womenfolk are beautiful.”), *al-junbīya* (“They are story-tellers and entertainers and play musical instruments and games (acrobatics).” For a translation of the relevant sections on India, see *Arabic Classical Accounts of India and China*, trans. S. Maqbul Ahmad (Shimla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study, 1989), 3-30. Another early account occurs in Al-Nadīm's *Kitāb al-Fihrist li-al-Nadīm* (*The Catalog of al-Nadīm*), translated in English as *The Fihrist of al-Nadīm: A Tenth-Century Survey of Muslim Culture*, trans. Bayard Dodge, 2 vols. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970), 2: 826–842. The sections on South Asia from Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī al-Ma'sūdī's *al-Masālik wa'l-Mamālik* (Roads and Realms) were translated as *Religion & Society in the India of the 10<sup>th</sup> Century as Described by the Arab Scholar Al-Mas'udi*, trans. Mahmudul Hasan (Patna: Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Public Library, 1994). Al-Iṣṭakhrī (fl. 10th century) wrote a highly regarded *al-Masālik wa'l-Mamālik* that is now lost. His student, Ibn Ḥauqal incorporated large sections of al-Iṣṭakhrī's text (with corrections) in his own *Kitāb al-Masālik wa'l-Mamālik*. Michael Jan de Goeje edited two versions of this text, Ibn Ḥauqal's version (Leiden, 1883) and Khurdājbih's version (Leiden, 1889), although the authenticity of the Khurdājbih version is contested. An English translation was published as *The Oriental Geography of Ebn Haukal: Arabian Traveler of the Tenth Century*, trans. William Ouseley (London: Oriental Press, 1800). The astute reader will notice that three authors in or around the tenth century wrote works titled *al-Masālik wa'l-Mamālik*.

<sup>67</sup> Al-Bīrūnī, *Al-Bīrūnī on Transits: A Study of an Arabic Treatise Entitled Tamhid al-Mustaqarr li-Tahqīq ma'na al-Mamarr* by Abu al-Rayhan Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Biruni, trans. Mohammad Saffouri and Adnan Ifram (Beirut: American University of Beirut, 1959) and *A Commentary upon Bīrūnī's Kitāb Taḥdīd al-Amākin*, trans. Edward Stewart Kennedy (Beirut: American University of Beirut, 1973).

<sup>68</sup> The definition and classification of what constitutes the 'ajā'ib tale remains fairly loose. The ship-captain Buzurg ibn Shahrīyār wrote his *Kitāb 'Ajā'ib al-Hind* between 900 and 953 A.D. (with preference given to the latter date). It was published as *The Book of the Wonders of India*, trans. G.S.P. Freeman-Grenville (London: East-West Publications, 1981). As book of sailor's stories and fisherman's tales, complete with sea-monsters, it certainly belonged to the 'ajā'ib tradition. I would also include the *Alf Layla wa-Layla* (*Thousand and One Nights*), which probably circulated during the ninth/tenth centuries even though the oldest text is dated to the fourteenth century (*Encyclopedia of Islam* and Haddawy's introduction). For select translation as found in the older manuscripts, see *Arabian Nights*, trans. Husain Haddawy (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1990) and *Arabian Nights II*, trans. Husain Haddawy (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1995). The transmission of folk tales between India, Central Asia, the Middle East, and Europe remains largely unexamined. G. Macqueen analyzed the transmission and transformation of one Buddha legend from India through the Middle East and into Europe in “Changing Master Narratives in Midstream: Barlaam and Josaphat and the Growth of Religious Intolerance in the Buddha legend's Westward Journey,” *Journal of Buddhist Ethics* 5 (1998): 144–166. Just as tales travel into the 'ajā'ib literature, I would also include traveler's tales as an 'ajā'ib tale. Ibn Fadlān recalled the strange customs and fantastical monsters in his travels to the North in his *Risala*, partially translated by Robert Blake and Richard Frye in “Notes on the *Risala* of Ibn Fadlan,” *Byzantina Metabyzantina* 1 (1949): 7–47 with a complete translation in “The *Risalah* of Ibn Fadlan: An Annotated Translation with Introduction,” trans.

within his argument. As Ibn al-Muqaffa' (d. ca. A.H. 139/A.D. 756), an early proponent of the *adab* education, cautioned:

Next, examine reports of marvels (*al-akhbar al-ra'i'a*) and treat them with caution, for human nature covets tales, especially marvels. Most men narrate what they hear but care not from whom they heard it. This perverts truth and belittles reason. If you can report nothing except what you believe in, and your belief is bolstered with proof, do so. Do not repeat what fools say: I merely report what I heard. For most of what you hear is false and most reporters are fools. If you come to apprehend and transmit reports (*ahadith*), what you apprehend and transmit from common men will exceed by far what any fabricator (*mukhtari'*) can fabricate.<sup>69</sup>

The admonition made by Ibn al-Muqaffa' to not repeat what fools say with the justification, "I merely report what is heard," was a direct challenge to Al-Ṭabarī's type of scholarship in which he merely reported what he heard.

The *adab* historiography culminated in *Al-Kāmil fi'l-Ta'rīkh* (*The Complete History*) of 'Izz al-Dīn ibn al-Aṣīr (d. A.H. 630/A.D. 1232).<sup>70</sup> Ibn al-Aṣīr, writing from Mosul, narrated the history of the Islamicate world from Adam up to the recent Mongol invasions. He discussed at length the conquests and political intrigues of the Ghaznavids and Ghūrīds, the conquests of the Third Crusade in Palestine, and the earliest Mongol incursions in Persia. Ibn al-Aṣīr's discussion on Hindūstān followed Noth's secondary themes with a strict chronology that followed a year-by-year discussion of battles, the heroes who fought or were martyred in them (genealogy),

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James McKeithen (Ph.D. diss, Indiana University, 1979). The *'ajā'ib* literary convention even appeared in the *Rehla* of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, when the author traveled to Sri Lanka and witnessed a monkey sultanate (complete with a monkey royal court) and flying leeches. See *The Travels of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa*, 5 vols., trans. H. A. R. Gibb (Cambridge: Hakluyut Society, 1958–2000), 851–855.

<sup>69</sup> Translated from the *al-Adab al-Kabir* of Ibn al-Muqaffa' by Khalidi in *Arabic Historical Thought*, 95.

<sup>70</sup> According to Khalidi, al-Aṣīr belonged to the *siyāsa* tradition of historical writing rather than the *adab* tradition. Historians in the *siyāsa* tradition, according to Khalidi, viewed the historical past as a culmination in the events of their day; thus, the universal history of al-Aṣīr culminated with the Mongol conquests. As Julie Meisami has noted, the contrast between *adab* and *siyāsa* was not a clear-cut as Khalidi asserts and that medieval historians may have blended various traditions to create their own historical approach (review of *Arabic Historical Thought in the Classical Period*, by Tarif Khalidi, *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 166, no. 2, (1996): 312–13.

political changes, and dynastic succession. Ibn al-Aṣīr almost certainly relied on *akhbār* accounts on the defeat of Rāī Pithōrā (Pṛthvīrāja III of the Cāhamāna clan). The *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ*, surprisingly, seems to follow this Arabic *adab* tradition.

#### THE *KHAZĀ'IN AL-FUTŪḤ* AND THE *ADAB* TRADITION

The title *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ* (*Treasury of Victories*) would suggest the text belonged to Aziz Ahmad's category as an epic of conquest; yet, the era of *futūḥ* literature passed five centuries before Khuṣrau lived. The historiography that preceded Khuṣrau's era certainly incorporated *futūḥ* as a theme, but viewed *futūḥ* as a single facet in a much larger historiographical process that focused on larger themes. The *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ* has suffered from a piecemeal approach to the text: economic historians have read the beginning of the text where Amīr Khuṣrau discussed 'Alā' al-Dīn's market reforms while military historians have focused on Khuṣrau's description of 'Alā' al-Dīn Khaljī's military victories. Placing the *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ* in the larger context of Islamicate *adab* historiography connects these seemingly disparate sections.

Amīr Khuṣrau began the *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ* with descriptions of 'Alā' al-Dīn Khaljī's construction of public works, his fortification of Delhi, and his social and economic reforms. Amīr Khuṣrau clearly declared that the *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ* reflected actual events.

Behold an allusion to the mirror, replete with reflections

If one were to describe all the administrative measures of the Second Alexander, they would not be contained in the azure mirror of the skies not to mention the rusty mirror of this slave's mind. But I would present here as best as possible, through my own imagination, some of those things which I have observed, so that if the fault-finders have any doubt about the ideas of this slave, it may be removed.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> Translated by M. Wahid Mirza from Amīr Khuṣrau, *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ*, 3.

While the *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ* reflected actual events, a statement that Amīr Khuṣrau also made in some of his more historical *maṣnavī*, this did not preclude Khuṣrau from creating a narrative that portrayed past events in the best light for his patron. Unlike previous Persian poets, Amīr Khuṣrau composed works for living patrons on topics from their life. The fact that Amīr Khuṣrau recast events to favor his patron led Peter Hardy to dismiss Amīr Khuṣrau as a historian, yet writing on current events also restricted Khuṣrau from including fictitious episodes that would be immediately recognized as such by others within the court.

With the introductory verses completed Amīr Khuṣrau turned his attention to the reforms 'Alā' al-Dīn began. Khuṣrau mentioned market reforms in two separate sections. 'Alā' al-Dīn reformed the weights and measures used within the market, an act that had significant economic repercussions, which Amīr Khuṣrau described in a passage virtually free of allusion

Allusion to rulers and trades people.

Thereafter for the benefit of the common people he exempted the dear-selling trades people from the taxes levied upon them previously and appointed an honest superintendent over them who may talk to the bragging shop keepers with the tongue of the whip of justice and may encourage the dumb ones to speak against them. Wise investigators with all their might looked into the affair of weights and dishonoured every black-hearted merchant who employed counterfeit weights in his dealings by having him whipped. They used such force and firmness that all weights became of iron and they stamped them justly so whoever weighted less, that iron may become the chain of his neck, and if he proved insolent even with that chain on, the chain turned into the sword and inflicted on his head the due punishment. When the trades people saw that strictness, they no longer disregarded the iron balance; they rather considered it to be the iron rampart of their lives and regarded that stamp to be the amulet of their minds, so that one would think that the stamp in general was not laid on iron but on their steely hearts. The mark of the emperor's justice on such hearts appeared like the mark on wax and remained like that on iron.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Translated by M. Wahid Mirza from Amīr Khuṣrau, *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ*, 9.



Amīr Khuṣrau finished this passage with an allusion in which the sultan stamped not only weights but also the hearts of the people with justice. ‘Alā’ al-Dīn’s legal and social reforms were repeatedly mentioned and Khuṣrau portrayed ‘Alā’ al-Dīn’s reign as a return to normalcy not experienced since the death of Balban. Justice, social improvement, and economic gains in Delhi are repeatedly mentioned in this section of the text.

Khuṣrau also noted ‘Alā’ al-Dīn’s expansion of the Quwwāt al-Islām and Quṭb Minār, arguably the most important monument of the Delhi Sultanate. Quṭb al-Dīn Aibak, who ruled under the name of the Ghūrid sultan, designed and the constructed the Quwwāt al-Islām in what Blair and Bloom referred to as the “best surviving example of a Ghūrid Friday mosque.”<sup>73</sup> The monument symbolically established the Delhi Sultanate and Quṭb al-Dīn Aibak chose to construct this within Lāl Koṭ, the fortified city of the previous Hindu king.<sup>74</sup> Shams al-Dīn Iltutmish (r. A.H. 607-33/A.D. 1210-36), the first ruler to claim the title of sultan and hence credited as the first ruler of the Delhi Sultanate, expanded the complex nearly threefold (from 31,866 sq. ft. to 75,900 sq. ft.) and increased the size of the *minār* (minaret). ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Khaljī followed in Iltutmish’s footsteps and expanded the complex fivefold to 344,078 square feet.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> Sheila Blair and Jonathan Bloom, “Early Empires of the East: Ghaznavid and Ghurids,” in *Islam: Art and Architecture*, ed. Markus Hattstein and Peter Delius ([Cologne]: Könemann, [2000]), 340-41.

<sup>74</sup> The extent to which Lāl Koṭ extends is unknown. Not much archaeological study of this site has been published, although some remains still exist. See buildings F246-F249 and Map F-M1, for a scale representation of the locations in relationship to the Quṭb Minār complex in Rattish Chandra Narayani Gupta, and O. P. Jain, *Delhi: The Built Heritage*, 2 vols, (New Delhi: Indian National Trust for Art and Culture, 1999), 2:234-35. Quṭb al-Dīn Aibak based the Quṭb Minār, like the Quwwāt al-Islām mosque, on the Ghūrid minaret at Jam. Blair and Bloom note that while people may commonly refer to these towers as victory towers, their location in Ghaznavid and Ghūrid domains “may have been political statements, erected to proclaim the power of a new ruler, for they often bear the name of the patron” (Blair and Bloom, “Early Empires,” 337).

<sup>75</sup> For a discussion of this site as well as architectural drawing from which the square footage was determined, see James Alfred Page, *Historical Memoir on the Quṭb, Delhi*, Archaeological Survey of India Memoirs, no. 22 (1926; reprint, New Delhi: Lakshmi Book Store, 1970). The place of the Quwwāt al-Islām and Quṭb Minār within Sultanate architecture is discussed in Surendra Sahai, *Indian Architecture: Islamic*

## Allusion to the mosque and the minaret

When by divine guidance he [‘Alā’ al-Dīn Khaljī] had renewed the damaged structures of the various mosques so that, even like the venerated Ka’ba, they became safe from decay and ruin, his high ambition prompted him that he might build a replica of the lofty minaret of the mosque (Qutub Minar) which is unique in the world and might impart thereby a loftiness to the dome of the sky which could not be surpassed. He first ordered that the courtyard of the mosque be enlarged as far as possible so that the throng of the Muslims which by the grace of God cannot be accommodated in the whole world may find a new world within the world. He further ordered that the circumference of the minaret, for the stability of the building, be made twice as large as that of the first one, so that its minaret be proportionately high and the top of the old minaret may look like the cupola in the center of the new one. At a single gesture from the king all the wagons of the planets which were yoked to the two heavenly bullocks, started their work, Jupiter busied itself in buying stone and iron and the moon acquired honour by driving the bull. Yes, where it is a matter of building the house of god why should the stars not carry stones on their heads, and if they do not come down from their stations: “The minaret itself would run up there and strike their heads with stones.”<sup>76</sup>

The expansion of the mosque and *minār* symbolically linked ‘Alā’ al-Dīn to Quṭb al-Dīn and Shams al-Dīn, the founders of the Delhi Sultanate. If popular legend is correct and ‘Alā’ al-Dīn was buried in the so-called *madrassa* located adjacent to the Quwwāt al-Islām mosque, this would further link him to Shams al-Dīn Iltutmish who was also buried in a tomb adjacent to the Quwwāt al-Islām.

Historians have largely ignored why Amīr Khuṣrau included a chapter on ‘Alā’ al-Dīn’s administration in the beginning of a text that focused on victories.<sup>77</sup> Habib and Nizami offered an indirect explanation that these reforms were in response to rebellions within the Delhi Sultanate and in preparation for increased Mongol attacks.<sup>78</sup>

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*Period, 1192-1857* (New Delhi: Prakash Books, 2004) and Elizabeth Schotten Merklinger, *Sultanate Architecture of Pre-Mughal India* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 2005).

<sup>76</sup> Translated by M. Wahid Mirza from Amīr Khuṣrau, *Khazā’in al-Futūḥ*, 13–14.

<sup>77</sup> Habib’s translator’s preface and Aiyangar’s introduction to *Campaigns of ‘Alā’u’-d-Dīn Khaljī* provide only a passing mention of these reforms. Wahid Mirza’s introduction to the *Khazā’in al-Futūḥ* simply lists the reforms.

<sup>78</sup> For a discussion see, Mohammad Habib and Khaliq Ahmad Nizami, ed. *The Delhi Sultanate*, vol. 5 of *A Comprehensive History of India* (Delhi: People’s Publishing House, 1970), 349–66. This is indirect because

These reforms certainly consolidated ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Khaljī’s authority within the Delhi Sultanate and facilitated his campaigns across Hindūstān. This observation, however, failed to address the place of these reforms within the *Khazā’in al-Futūḥ*. Amīr Khuṣrau’s inclusion of these economic reforms, administrative practices (enforcement of laws, collection of taxes), and public projects (fortification of Delhi, expansion of the Quwwāt al-Islām and Quṭb Minār) apparently stemmed from the *adab* tradition.

Amīr Khuṣrau’s *Khazā’in al-Futūḥ* was not an *adab* text nor did it follow the tradition outright; rather, it incorporated Islamicate intellectual traditions within the text. If the *Khazā’in al-Futūḥ* followed the *adab* tradition, one would expect Amīr Khuṣrau to follow the secondary themes outlined by Noth: *ghārāt* (raids), dating according to the *hijra*, annalistic style, arrangement according to the caliphates, law and administration, cities, court and central government, and [pseudo-] causal links. Amīr Khuṣrau included *ghārāt* (‘Alā’ al-Dīn’s raid on Dēōgīr), annalistic style, law and administration, cities and courts in this section, but the *Khazā’in al-Futūḥ* as a whole focused not on these secondary themes but on ‘Alā’ al-Dīn’s military victories (*futūḥ*) within Hindūstān. While Khuṣrau’s model for the *Khazā’in al-Futūḥ* derived from the *adab* tradition, it followed the conquest literature of Delhi Sultanate written in the previous (twelfth) century.

### Conquest in Early Delhi Sultanate Literature

Baranī named ‘Awfī, Jūzjānī, Kabīr al-Dīn, and Ḥasan Niẓāmī as the “four most reliable historians” in his *Tārīkh-i Fīrūz Shāh* (A.H. 758/A.D. 1357) and these historians certainly influenced Amīr Khuṣrau as well.<sup>79</sup> Kabīr al-Dīn’s history was lost and most

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Habib and Nizami broached this topic through Baranī’s accounts of economic reforms and utilized the *Khazā’in al-Futūḥ* to confirm what Baranī wrote. These reforms have also been discussed by Peter Jackson, *Delhi Sultanate*, 238–54, and by Kishori Saran Lal, *History of the Khaljis*, rev. ed. (1967; reprint, New Delhi: Munshriam Manoharlal, 1980), 153–225.

<sup>79</sup> Nizami, *On History and Historians*, 57.

likely expunged by the Mughals. The other three authors Baranī mentioned, like Khuṣrau’s father, all lived in Central Asia and fled the Mongol invasion to begin a new life in Hindūstān. ‘Awfī, Jūzjānī, and Ḥasan Niẓāmī all received a classical *adab* education and they all flourished in the first half of the thirteenth century. Amīr Khuṣrau, who was a poet more than an author of prose, referred only to Persian poets in his works and listed no author, model, or style for his composition of the prose *Khazā’in al-Futūḥ*. The circumstances would suggest at least a passing familiarity with all of these authors.

Sadīd al-Dīn Muḥammad Bukhārā ‘Awfī (d. ca. A.H. 628/A.D. 1230–31) certainly incorporated and attempted to preserve the *adab* traditions in his scholarship. Born in Bukhara, ‘Awfī like most Muslim intellectuals traveled extensively and obtained a traditional *adab* education. He studied the *Qur’ān*, the sayings/traditions of the Prophet, Islamic law, geometry, philosophy, and literature with a variety of scholars in the Islamicate world. ‘Awfī’s search for knowledge and the Mongol conquests led him to Hindūstān. The collapse of the Ghūrīds in 602/1206 and the death of Quṭb al-Dīn Aibak in A.H. 607/A.D. 1210-11 divided Hindūstān into three territories.<sup>80</sup> ‘Awfī became a *qāzī* (judge) in Khambhat (Cambay) where he compiled verses of Central Asian poets into an anthology of poetry he titled *Lubāb al-Albāb*.<sup>81</sup> Shortly after this work he entered the court of Nāṣir al-Dīn Qubacha in Multan. ‘Awfī followed traditional Islamicate learning when he wrote the four-volume *Jawāmi’ al-Ḥikāyāt* (*Collection of Anecdotes and Brilliant Tales*) describing the early history of Islam, traditions of the Sufis, history of Muslim dynasties, tales of India, and descriptions of South Asian roads and

<sup>80</sup> For a history of these events, see Habib and Nizami, *Delhi Sultanate* [*Comprehensive History of India*], 191–231, and Peter Jackson, *Delhi Sultanate*, 24–43.

<sup>81</sup> Iqtidar H. Siddiqui, “Lubab-ul-Albab and Jawami-‘ul-Hikayat of Sadid-ud-din Muhammad Awfi,” in *Perso-Arabic Sources of Information on the Life and Conditions in the Sultnate of Delhi* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1992), 1–26. Siddiqui made the argument that the *Lubāb al-Albāb* was an anthology more than biographical dictionary of poets on page 5.

geography.<sup>82</sup> ‘Awfī wrote the *Jawāmi‘ al-Ḥikāyāt* while he served the court of Nāṣir al-Dīn Qubacha in Multan in the same city and perhaps even the same building that Muḥammad the Martyr Prince and his poet Amīr Khuṣrau occupied at the end of the century. Shortly after ‘Awfī composed the *Jawāmi‘ al-Ḥikāyāt*, he entered Iltutmish’s Delhi court in A.H. 620/A.D. 1223.

Minhāj al-Dīn Sirāj al-Dīn Jūzjānī (b. A.H. 589/A.D. 1193, d. after A.H. 658/A.D. 1260) also followed this annalistic style in his *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī* (*Generations of the Defenders [of the Faith]*).<sup>83</sup> Jūzjānī, like Ibn al-Aṣīr, began his work with Adam and narrated the history of Muslim conquests up to the mid-twelfth century focusing on the eastern Islamicate frontier of the Ghūrīds and especially the Muslim conquests therein. Jūzjānī included a lengthy narration on Mongol conquests at the end of his work, but may have never read al-Aṣīr’s *Al-Kāmil fi’l-Ta’rīkh* (*The Universal History*). Khaliq Nizami did not include *Al-Kāmil fi’l-Ta’rīkh* in a list of texts Jūzjānī recorded in the *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī*, nor did Ibn al-Aṣīr or the *Al-Kāmil fi’l-Ta’rīkh* appear in the name index of Ḥabībī’s printed edition.<sup>84</sup> Ibn al-Aṣīr’s *Al-Kāmil fi’l-Ta’rīkh* probably did not reach the Indian subcontinent before the mid-twelfth century when Jūzjānī composed his *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī*. If the *Al-Kāmil fi’l-Ta’rīkh* did reach the Indian subcontinent, it seems almost certain that Jūzjānī would have incorporated the work into his text.<sup>85</sup> This testifies to

<sup>82</sup> Two volumes of this four-volume work were published under the auspices of the Shah of Iran, a project that was cancelled following the Islamic Revolution.

<sup>83</sup> For the dates of Jūzjānī and his works see David Morgan, “Persian Historians and the Mongols,” in *Medieval Historical Writing in the Christian and Islamic Worlds* (London: School of Oriental and African Studies and University of London, 1982), 109–24, as well as Nizami, *On History and Historians*, 76–80 and Peter Jackson, *Delhi Sultanate*, 7. The year of Minhāj al-Dīn’s death is unknown, although obviously after he finished the *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī* in A.H. 658/1260.

<sup>84</sup> Nizami, *On History and Historians*, 79; Index to Minhāj al-Dīn Sirāj al-Dīn Jūzjānī, *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī*, 2 vols., ed. ‘Abd al-Ḥayy Ḥabībī, (1963–64; reprint, 2 vols. in 1, Tehran: Duniyā-yi Kitāb, A.H. 1363).

<sup>85</sup> The justification for this statement is threefold. First, Ibn al-Aṣīr was the *vazīr* (minister) of Malik al-Afzal, whom Jūzjānī mentioned in the *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī: A General History of the Muḥammadan Dynasties of Asia* 2 volumes, trans. H. G. Raverty, (1872–81; reprint, 2 vols., Calcutta: Asiatic Society, 1995), 222–223 and 223 n. 2. Secondly, Ibn al-Aṣīr’s history of the Ghaznavids and Ghūrīds, while similar to the *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī*, also differs in certain details that Minhāj al-Dīn would certainly have addressed or clarified, most notably

the impact the *adab* tradition made in South Asia: Jūzjānī followed a tradition rather than a single text. Jūzjānī, a Sufi and scholar, died in Delhi and Amīr Khuṣrau would have had ready access to his text.

‘Awfī and Jūzjānī both followed the *adab* tradition in their texts; yet, this was only one source for Persian battle narratives. A second source, most likely one that the *adab* authors utilized in the composition of their histories, was the *fathnāma* (letter of victory). Khaliq Nizami wrote the following description of the *fathnāma*.

Rhetorical exuberance and hyperbole, without which no *Fath Nama* could be drafted, form the essence of this work. The purpose of a *Fath Nama* was not to record facts of history but to impress a reader with the achievements of a monarch and to elicit the applause of the gallery. The greater the literary embellishment of a *Fath Nama*—flaming colour and echoing sound—the higher its value and greater its impact.<sup>86</sup>

These *fathnāma* certainly existed. Ziyā’ al-Dīn Baranī referred to a series of *fathnāma* as well as a work titled *Ta’rīkh-i ‘Alā’ī* (*The History of ‘Alā’ al-Dīn*) composed by Kabīr al-Dīn.<sup>87</sup> Kabīr al-Dīn, who was apparently a secretary in the Khaljī court, composed the official record of the Khaljī conquests.<sup>88</sup> According to Baranī, Kabīr al-Dīn’s *fathnāma* and *Ta’rīkh-i ‘Alā’ī* spanned several volumes and were personally overseen by ‘Alā’ al-Dīn

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on the rule of Tāj al-Dīn al-Duzz and his relationship or rivalry with Quṭb al-Dīn Aibak and Shams al-Dīn iltutmish. All three were *mamlūk* (slaves) under the last of the Ghūrid rulers until Quṭb al-Dīn Aibak and Shams al-Dīn iltutmish killed Tāj al-Dīn al-Duzz and began to establish the Delhi Sultanate. Thirdly, Ibn al-Aṣīr was one of the first Muslim authors to write about the Mongol invasions in Persia during the thirteenth century. Minhāj al-Dīn probably would have found this discussion interesting since he witnessed the Mongol invasions firsthand.

<sup>86</sup> Nizami, *On History and Historians*, 69–70.

<sup>87</sup> The text is lost and the nature of its contents is unclear. This may be a second text written by Kabīr al-Dīn, it may be an alternate title for his *fathnāma*, or the name may be the title given to a collected and edited series of *fathnāma*.

<sup>88</sup> The role of these secretaries in the royal court and the type of work they produced can be seen in Abū al-Faḍl Muḥammad Baihaqī’s *Ta’rīkh-i Mas’ūdī* analyzed in Marilyn Robinson Waldman, *Toward a Theory of Historical Narrative: A Case Study in Perso-Islamicate Historiography* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1980).

Khaljī.<sup>89</sup> As already mentioned, the text was lost and most likely destroyed during the Mughal period.

Scholars have argued that Amīr Khuṣrau modeled his *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ* on this *fathnāma* of Kabīr al-Dīn. Habib first advanced this argument and stated that Amīr Khuṣrau either attempted to surpass Kabīr al-Dīn's *fathnāma* out of professional rivalry or imitated Kabīr al-Dīn to complete his work. Habib speculated that Kabīr al-Dīn died before Malik Kāfūr completed the Deccan campaigns of A.H. 709–711/A.D. 1310–1311 and that Amīr Khuṣrau discussed these later campaigns in greater detail (comprising two-thirds of the *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ*) to finish Kabīr al-Dīn's work.<sup>90</sup> Neither Baranī nor any subsequent historian referred to Kabīr al-Dīn's work as incomplete, nor did they mention that Amīr Khuṣrau completed this work. Habib's thesis that Amīr Khuṣrau modeled his text on the *fathnāma* of Kabīr al-Dīn, while speculative, may have some degree of merit. Peter Jackson recently noted that Amīr Khuṣrau referred to the *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ* as a *fathnāma* and some manuscripts have the *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ* titled as the *Tārīkh-i 'Alā'ī*, which is the same title Baranī gave for Kabīr al-Dīn's text.<sup>91</sup> The connection between Kabīr al-Dīn and Amīr Khuṣrau can be neither confirmed nor denied.

Indeed, much depends on the reading of a certain passage from Amīr Khuṣrau's *Rasā'il al-I'jāz* (*Miraculous Treatises*), a collection of the poet's letters and some *farmān* (royal court decrees) that he composed. The *Rasā'il al-I'jāz* was meant to show Khuṣrau's erudition in prose composition as well as to instruct others on prose style. According to Nizami, the *Rasā'il al-I'jāz* contained “perhaps the only available *Fath Nama*

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<sup>89</sup> Peter Jackson, *Delhi Sultanate*, 152–153; Habib, *Hazrat Amir Khusrau*, 100–102.

<sup>90</sup> Habib's discussion of Kabīr al-Dīn can be found in *Hazrat Amir Khusrau*, 101–03.

<sup>91</sup> Peter Jackson, *Delhi Sultanate*, 153. In footnote 11 on the same page, Jackson cites the textual source as the *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ*, ed. Wahid Mirza, 170

of the medieval period.”<sup>92</sup> The *fathnāma* Nizami references appears to be “a proclamation issued by Ghiyāṣ al-Dīn Balban after the conquest of Lakhnautī; composed in [A.H.] 680.”<sup>93</sup> Nizami referred to this tract of text as a *fathnāma* while Wahid Mirza termed it a proclamation, which could be either a *fathnāma* or a *farmān*. This proclamation occurred in the fifth treatise of the *Rasā’il al-I’jāz* which Amīr Khuṣrau added in A.H. 719/A.D. 1319–20 as an apparent afterthought. The other four treatises were composed by A.H. 682/A.D. 1283–84 and it seems quite plausible that this proclamation, even though it appeared later in the fifth treatise, was composed in A.H. 680/A.D. 1281–82. Wahid Mirza in his description of the *Khazā’in al-Futūḥ* wrote, “Khusrau has utilized in it all the various artifices he has outlined in the [*Rasā’il al-I’jāz*], the most striking being the division of the narrative into paragraphs of unequal length, each composed of analogies derived from a particular thing—stars, water, fire, and so on.”<sup>94</sup>

Indirect evidence suggests Delhi Sultanate poets composed the *fathnāma* (letter of victory) as a type of panegyric battle narrative.<sup>95</sup> Khaliq Nizami’s statement that the *fathnāma* contained “rhetorical exuberance and hyperbole” is substantiated, in part, by Amīr Khuṣrau’s *Rasā’il al-I’jāz*. This argument hinges on accepting that Amīr Khuṣrau composed a *fathnāma* (letter of victory) on Balban’s victory in Lakhnautī upon his return to Delhi and prior to his service in the court of Balban’s son Muḥammad the

<sup>92</sup> Quote from Nizami, *On History and Historians*, 70. Nizami identified the *fathnāma* as the *Rasā’il al-I’jāz*, Treatise IV, pages 4–13.

<sup>93</sup> According to Wahid Mirza’s description of the *Rasā’il al-I’jāz* (216–21), the passage occurred on the fifth page of the fifth *risāla*. Mirza did not mention a *fathnāma* in his synopsis of the fourth *risāla*. Nizami’s reference may be a typographical error. If so, Nizami’s reference would coincide with Wahid Mirza’s description on page 219.

<sup>94</sup> Wahid Mirza, *Life and Works*, 223.

<sup>95</sup> The *fathnāma* may, in fact, have emerged from the panegyric verses of the *qaṣīda*. Mas’ūd Sa’d Salmān referred to his verses as *fathnāma*. See Sunil Sharma, *Persian Poetry at the Indian Frontier: Mas’ūd Sa’d Salmān of Lahore* (New Delhi: Permanent Black, 2000), 11–13, 44. I would like to thank Sunil Sharma for mentioning this passage over lunch on September 15, 2006 and for stimulating my ideas about the *fathnāma* literature.



Martyr Prince. Given that Amīr Khuṣrau compiled prose works and reproduced them in the *Rasā'il al-I'jāz* in an attempt to offer a guide on Persian literary style, it would be natural to include a *fathnāma* in a text probably meant for secretaries in the Khaljī court. Yet if this *fathnāma* occurred in the *Rasā'il al-I'jāz*, it would also indicate that the *fathnāma* was an example of correct literary style. That is, the *fathnāma* would include literary allusions, metaphors, similes and other literary flourishes advocated by Amīr Khuṣrau as exemplary prose composition. Amīr Khuṣrau composed his Lakhnautī *fathnāma* in A.H. 680/A.D. 1281–82 and four treatises of the *Rasā'il al-I'jāz* before A.H. 682/A.D. 1283–84; yet he still noted in his second collection of poetry, *Waṣṭ al-Ḥayāt* (*The Middle of Life*) completed in A.H. 683/A.D. 1285, that he followed the Persian masters in composition. It therefore seems almost certain that Amīr Khuṣrau did not invent the *fathnāma* style but followed the style composed by other Persian authors.

Amīr Khuṣrau may have modeled the *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ* on Tāj al-Dīn Ḥasan Niẓāmī's *Tāj al-Ma'āṣir* (*Crown of Glorious Deeds*), the fourth of the “four most reliable historians” Ziyā' al-Dīn Baranī mentioned in the *Tārikh-i Firūz Shāhī*. Tāj al-Dīn composed the *Tāj al-Ma'āṣir* sometime after A.H. 614/A.D. 1217 or A.H. 626/A.D. 1229,<sup>96</sup> the earliest historical text of the Delhi Sultanate. The *Tāj al-Ma'āṣir* like the *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ*, which Amīr Khuṣrau labeled as a *fathnāma*, utilized a highly florid literary style often woven around allusion or metaphor. For example, in a passage on the conquest

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<sup>96</sup> Most manuscripts of the *Tāj al-Ma'āṣir* recorded events up to A.H. 614/A.D. 1217; however, Elliot and Dowson utilized a manuscript, now lost, that narrated events to A.H. 626/A.D. 1229. The oldest manuscript was transcribed in A.H. 694/A.D. 1295. Nizami, *On History and Historians*, 59–60 and Peter Jackson, *Delhi Sultanate*, 7–8 both argued for these dates. Hoḍivālā viewed the latter manuscript as a fake and mentioned that Ḥasan Niẓāmī may have died before A.H. 624/A.D. 1226 (*Studies in Indo-Muslim History*, 2: 47). While Peter Jackson's *Delhi Sultanate* was literally in press, Bhagwat Saroop published his translation of the *Tāj al-Ma'āṣir*. Saroop wrote in the introduction that events after A.H. 626/A.D. 1229 recorded in Elliot and Dowson's manuscript were added later. See Tāj al-Dīn Ḥasan Niẓāmī, *Taj ul Ma'athir* (*The Crown of Glorious Deeds*), trans. Bhagwat Saroop (Delhi: Saud Ahmad Dehlavi, 1998), xxxi.

of the Kol fort (present-day Aligarh), Ḥasan Niẓāmī included descriptions of swords, lances, and lassos.

#### Description of the Lasso

The **loop** of the lasso became a **collar** in the neck of the rebels and a **girdle** round the waist of the warriors. Its **ring** which was the **snare for catching the bird** of the soul became a **hook** [i.e., noose] **for hanging the heads** of the Rajas. The angel of death had inverted the cap and cloak of their lives. The cap (*kulah*) when its letters were reversed became *halik* (dead) and *qaba* (cloak) when its characters were reversed became 'abiḳ (one who has fled). The troops of the enemy were either dead or they fled.<sup>97</sup>

Ḥasan Niẓāmī provided a stated allusion in this passage. Other passages, however, included unidentified allusions. Quṭb al-Dīn Aibak's conquest of Gwalior, for example, contained an unidentified allusion to snakes.

#### An account of how the infidels were routed

**Scared** by the **tongue like spear** the Raja **twisted and turned** in agony like the **tongue of a serpent**. **Terror-stricken** by the **arrow-head** as sharp as the **scales of a fish**, he was in deep anguish like a fish thrown on the land.

Afraid of the shaft he dropped his chain armour as the **snake casts its slough**. **Terrified** by the royal army as **awe-inspiring as a serpent**, he was seeking shelter in the eye of an ant. Demoralized by the sight of hordes as numerous as ants, he had grown wings to fly in the manner of ants.<sup>98</sup>

As the above example shows, Ḥasan Niẓāmī introduced a metaphor for a description, but only used these metaphors for a sentence or two. Amīr Khuṣrau advocated using allusions such as these in the *Rasā'il al-I'jāz* (and possibly the *fathnāma* contained therein) and then utilized this style of composition through allusion in the *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ*.

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<sup>97</sup> Translated by Saroop from Ḥasan Niẓāmī, *Tāj al-Ma'āṣir*, 163. The *Tāj al-Ma'āṣir*, while an important source for Delhi Sultanate history, is written in an incredibly complex Persian style. All references to the text come from Bhagwat Saroop's translation.

<sup>98</sup> Translated by Saroop from Ḥasan Niẓāmī, *Tāj al-Ma'āṣir*, 89–90.

## CONQUEST IN THE *KHAZĀ'IN AL-FUTŪḤ*

Amīr Khuṣrau combined the Arabic and Persian intellectual and literary traditions in the composition of the *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ*.<sup>99</sup> The first section of the *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ* described 'Alā' al-Dīn Khaljī's social and economic reforms as well as his fortification and construction of public works within Delhi. This section followed the adab tradition found in Arabic and Persian works. The remainder of the *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ* narrated Delhi Sultanate victories (*futūḥ*) throughout the subcontinent. Amīr Khuṣrau followed the adab tradition once again when he narrated these victories in an annalistic format. The victories are first parsed into categories (Mongols, Western Hindūstān, Southern Hindūstān) and then discussed *chronologically*.<sup>100</sup> The victories Amīr Khuṣrau described are listed in Table 1. Amīr Khuṣrau followed the Persian tradition of the prose *fathnāma* by narrating all of these battles according to a series of stated allusions similar to the metaphors that Ḥasan Nizāmī used when he composed the *Tāj al-Ma'āṣir*.

The entire *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ* consisted of a series of *nasabat* (allusions). Unlike the *Tāj al-Ma'āṣir* where allusions are brief and often not identified, Khuṣrau began each section (generally a paragraph in length) with an identified *nasabat* (allusion) around which he crafts his narrative. For example, Khuṣrau described the Khaljī victory over the Mongols with an allusion to chess.

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<sup>99</sup> Khuṣrau had access to the Arabic and Persian works mentioned above. Khuṣrau also noted in the *Gharrat al-Kamāl* that his older brother was an accomplished scholar in both Arabic and Persian, which would increase Khuṣrau's access to these works. Although Khuṣrau composed his major works in Persian, he also understood Arabic and occasionally composed a couplet or hemistich in Arabic. For the Arabic verses of Amīr Khuṣrau, see Zahur Ahmed Azhar, "Arabic Poetry and Prose of Amir Khusrau" in *Amir Khusrau: Critical Studies* (Lahore; National Committee for the 700th Anniversary of Amir Khusrau, 1975), 49–78.

<sup>100</sup> Peter Hardy stated in *Historians of Medieval India* (79) that Amīr Khuṣrau did not follow a chronology in the *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ*. Table 1 clearly shows such a chronology.

Rabī' II, 695/February 1296	'Alā' al-Dīn's conquest of Dēōgīr (Devagīr) under the Delhi Sultan Jalāl al-Dīn Khaljī
22 Rabī' II 697/February 6, 1298	Ulugh Khān defeat Mongols
12 Jumāda II 705/December 30, 1305	Defeat of Mongols 'Alī Bēg and Targhī
Winter 705/ [Early 1306?]	Defeat of the Mongol Kabak
20 Jumāda I, 698/February 12, 1299	Campaign in Gujarat
3 Żū'l Qa'da 700/July 10, 1301	Conquest of Ranthambhor, renamed Dār al-Islam
11 Muḥarram 703/August 25, 1303	Conquest of Chittaur, renamed Khizrābād
5 Jumāda II 705/November 23, 1305	Conquest of Malwa
19 Ramaẓān 706/24 March 1307	Expedition against Dēōgīr
23 Rabī' I 708/September 10, 1308	Conquest of Siwāna
Ramaẓān 709/February, 1310	Conquest of Tilang (Deccan)
24 Jumāda II, 710/November 18, 1310	Army left Delhi for conquest of Ma'bar
4 Jumāda II, 711/November 7, 1311	Return of the Sultanate army; end of conquests

Table 1: Campaigns mentioned in the *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ*.<sup>101</sup>

Behold here an illusion to chess

The battle-field, thanks to the bones of the **elephant**-bodied Mongols looked like a **chessboard**. The face of each one of them had been cut into two halves by the sword strokes and their bodies had become **like the board of chess** due to the impact of the maces; the killed lay right and left like the '**killed**' **chessmen**, and the **horses** which moved from one square to another, were either wounded and **lay prostrate, or had been captured**. The **horsemen**, who like the **pawns** did not move backward, became pedestrians, ran forward and got wise, that is **put their heads on the ground**, and Ali Beg and Turtaq who with their big bones were like unto two **chess kings**, were **checkmated** by Malik Akhur Beg, the strong adversary who faced them. He decided to take both of them to the righteous king "who if he so ordered, might spare their lives, or let both of them be trampled upon by elephants."<sup>102</sup>

Here Khuṣrau wove numerous images of chess into this description of battle. The allusion included chess pieces such as elephants (rooks), horses (knights), pawns, and kings as well as images found in the game such as the captured pieces lying on the side

<sup>101</sup> Wahid Mirza, Introduction to *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ*, 15–29

<sup>102</sup> Translated by M. Wahid Mirza from Amīr Khuṣrau, *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ*, 21–22.

of the chessboard and the toppling of a chess piece (here in prostration) as an act of submission to checkmate. One might have expected an allusion to chess in a description of battle, but Amīr Khuṣrau often chose non-martial allusions such as seasons, astrological configurations, brides and grooms, stars and skies.

### **Campaigns Against the Mongols**

Amīr Khuṣrau began his description of Khaljī victories with a description of ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Khaljī’s successful defense against the Mongols. Throughout the thirteenth century and most of the fourteenth century, the Delhi Sultanate withstood invasions from Mongols out of Persia. As noted above, this had a tremendous impact on the Muslim psyche especially after the Mongols sacked Baghdad and executed the last ‘Abbāsīd caliph in A.D. 656/A.H. 1258.

See here an allusion to fighting and killing

The Mongols talked boastfully from across the river’s banks as long as the victorious troops had not advanced from the bank. Now when the wave of the army of Islam reached the middle of the river, they, unable to face the force of the sword, turned away in hot haste, and although they were numerous as the ants and the locusts, they were trampled upon like a row of ants by the horse-men and wished to go beneath the earth. The water of the sword flowed on the river’s bank in such a way that blood coursed on the surface of the river like a “surkhab,” and the Bahadurs who without winking their eyes, could split the eyelashes with their infallible arrows, had some of them their stony eyes pierced by the arrows like diamond beads, while in the case of some others the steel darts went straight into the covering of their heads as the key goes into the lock. “A breast, the lock of which does not open due to excess of rust, the only suitable key for opening it is this.”<sup>103</sup>

The tone of celebration in this passage is palpable, but more interesting is Amīr Khuṣrau’s imagery. When Amīr Khuṣrau described the battles with the Mongols, he generally chose imagery that involved movement.

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<sup>103</sup> Translated by M. Wahid Mirza from Amīr Khuṣrau, *Khazā’in al-Futūḥ*, 19.

Mongol military tactics were based on the swift movements of the cavalry. The Mongol army consisted of archers on horseback who shot arrows while galloping at their enemies, then quickly turned to ride out of range of melee and archery counter-attacks. The Mongol recurve bow had a range and force that outshot and overpowered any bow used in Asia. This enabled the Mongols to remain outside of the enemy's ranged attack and forced the enemy to pursue the Mongols on horseback. If pursued the Mongols feigned a retreat, gradually leading their mounted opponents away from the enemy vanguard, until they were a safe distance away at which time they would circle and quickly kill their opponents. The Mongols, in short, were a military on the move and their battle tactics differed from the Hindu use of fortified towns and garrisons.

The Delhi Sultanate met the Mongol challenge by incorporating a vast array of soldiers. The army obviously included Muslims born and raised in Hindūstān. The Muslim population in Hindūstān, however, was far too small at this time to field and replenish enough soldiers for simultaneous campaigns against the Mongols and parts of Hindūstān. Therefore, the Sultanate armies also included Hindu soldiers,<sup>104</sup> Turkish émigrés or mercenaries familiar with the Central Asian tactics of Mongol warfare, and Mongol mercenaries who resided within the Delhi Sultanate. The inclusion of Central Asians (whether Turks or Mongols) enabled the Delhi Sultanate to counter the Mongol military tactics with soldiers who engaged in a similar Central Asian type of mounted warfare.

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<sup>104</sup> Modern conceptions have divided the world map into regions (South Asia, Central Asia, Middle East) or nation states (India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Turkistan, Iran) that rarely reflect the realities of the premodern world. Hindus not only served in Maḥmūd's army, but also served as part of his royal guard. For a discussion of Maḥmūd's multi-ethnic army, see Clifford Edmund Bosworth, *The Ghaznavids: Their Empire in Afghanistan and Eastern India, 994-1040* (1963; reprint, New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1992), 107-114.

Behold an allusion to water as fluent as water

A wave of the Muslims like that of a river in flood, reached the river Aliwahan and the accursed Kapak fell into the swift waters of the sword; he began struggling and the water of the sword was about to pass over his head when the kind-hearted believers ran from right and left and captured him, so that they might take him, together with other rebels, to the exalted court of the king... Another army led by the ill-starred Iqbal and the equally unfortunate Taybu, who thirsted for the blood of the Muslims and had got fed up with their own, came behind. Suddenly the flood of the blood of the slain unbelievers advanced towards them and since that flood was familiar to them they all went down deep into it. They were still struggling to get out of this bloody flood which spoke of the keen edged swords, when they were overwhelmed by a big wave of blood and however hard they struggled, they could find no foothold and in the meantime the vanguard of the Islamic army reached upon their heads like a storm of wind and rain...<sup>105</sup>

As stated earlier, the Mongols captured Amīr Khuṣrau in a skirmish of A.H. 683/A.D. 1285 during which Muḥammad the Martyr Prince lost his life. Amīr Khuṣrau often referred to this experience and knew both the Mongol and Sultanate military tactics. In this passage, Amīr Khuṣrau used the metaphors of movement for the Sultanate army, implying that the Delhi Sultanate used military tactics similar to the Mongols.

### Campaigns in Western Hindūstān

The Sultanate conquests of Western India began in A.H. 698/A.D. 1299 when Sultan ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Khaljī dispatched his general and brother, Ulugh Khān, to raid the Somanātha temple in Gujarat. Amīr Khuṣrau described the raid of the Somanātha temple in the following passage (allusions to circle and center are in bold type):

Behold an allusion to the circle and its center

Then from **sphere** the great Khan led his army to the **encircling ocean** and arranged his army in a **circle** around the idol-house of Somnat which is the **centre** of the Hindus’ worship, and pitched his **khatti lance in that center** at such height that the **collar** of the **sky** was nearly rent by the **point of its spearhead**, and the Islamic flag was raised up right at the **edge of the**

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<sup>105</sup> Translated by M. Wahid Mirza from Amīr Khuṣrau, *Khazā’in al-Futūh*, 23.

**equator**. So heavy was the pressure of the army that the **imaginary line** in the **earth's orb** became bent, and **the bows** formed by the **two parts of the army circle** shot their straight arrows right through the **cores** of the infidels **hearts**, “and these **points** were split into two by the **straight arrow** like a **circle** which is **divided into two parts by the diameter**.”<sup>106</sup>

The allusions in this passage included obvious references to circles and centers (encircling oceans, spheres, equators, diameters) as well as less obvious words that carried connotations of circle or center such as the lance (a radius), the edge of the equator (circumference), bows (arcs and semicircles), arrows (bisecting the center of circles and arcs), and the heart (*qalb*) that also meant the center (heart) of something like an army (e.g., *qalb-i lakshar*). This passage also contained a number of tropes, such as the ‘trope of loftiness,’ in which the spear and flag extend to the heavens. This trope appeared repeatedly in the *Khazā'in al-Futūh* with references to flags and banners, forts and encampments, as the passages below indicate.

Amīr Khuṣrau's description of the Somanātha raid also contained some interesting narrative depictions. Picking up where the previous paragraph ended, Amīr Khuṣrau wrote perhaps the most quoted passage of the entire *Khazā'in al-Futūh*.

See an allusion to the Ka'ba and Khalil

Then they made the idol-house of Somnat prostrate itself towards the exalted Ka'ba, and when they cast the reflection of the upturned idol-house in the sea it seemed as if that idol-house first offered its prayers and then took a bath. But they sent one idol which was the largest to the royal presence, so that it may be renewed the tradition of Khalil by breaking the idols which had lodged themselves at half the way to the House of Khalil and used to waylay the misguided ones. But they sent one idol which was the largest to the royal presence, so that it may relate to the idol worshipping Hindus the destruction of these helpless gods hoping that they would say that the tongue of the royal sword interpreted clearly this verse: “He broke them up into pieces expect this big one so that they may return to it.” An abode of unbelief like that which was the qibla of the gabrs now became the city of Islam and instead of the Brahmin

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<sup>106</sup> Translated by M. Wahid Mirza from Amīr Khuṣrau, *Khazā'in al-Futūh*, 27.



peshwas the followers of Abraham became peshwas, and the staunch Sunni Muslims broke it with all their might wherever they saw an idol-house.

On every side was heard the takbir and shahadat of fighting and the idols also pronounced shahadat (evidence) of their own destruction.

Behold an allusion to mosque and khutba

In that old land of infidelity the call to prayers sounded so loudly, that it was heard in Baghdad and Medina and the musical recital of the Alai Khutba was so prolonged that it reached the Qubba-I Khalil and the well of Zamzam.<sup>107</sup>

The section that described the Gujarat raid ended with following description on the sacking of the port city Cambay and the capital Nahrwāla (Aṇahilapāṭaka or modern-day Patan).

Behold an allusion to the sea, like the sea itself

The city of Nahrwāla which lies on another sea in that land, and the city of Khambhyata by washing the feet of which the sea gains honour, and so also other cities in the neighbourhood of those coasts, although the sea-tide reaches there in great strength, the wave of the Muslim army did not pay any heed to the sea for washing away the filth of unbelief, but washed clean the dust of that land with the storm of the blood of those impure ones. Although blood is not pure and no purifier, still as the water of the sword, which is a purifier, dominated it, that blood also has become pure. The object really from this is not blood, but: “that land became purified by the sword of Islam just as the dust becomes purified by the sun.”<sup>108</sup>

Amīr Khuṣrau’s description of the Somānatha campaign demonstrates how the prescribed allusions permeated the text.

Yet it also appears that these figurative exaggerations were not always easy to identify, and so at the end of the Gujarat campaign, Khuṣrau wrote:

... [the Muslims] washed clean the dust of that land with the storm of the blood of those impure ones. Although blood is not pure and no purifier, still as the water of the sword, which is a purifier, dominated it, that blood also has become

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<sup>107</sup> Translated by M. Wahid Mirza from Amīr Khuṣrau, *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ*, 26.

<sup>108</sup> Translated by M. Wahid Mirza from Amīr Khuṣrau, *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ*, 27.

pure. *The object really from this is not blood, but: “that land became purified by the sword of Islam just as the dust becomes purified by the sun.”*<sup>109</sup>

In the emphasized passage at the end of the above quotation, Amīr Khuṣrau took the highly unusual step of explaining that the infidel’s blood was a trope rather than actual blood. This suggests that Amīr Khuṣrau worried that his audience would take the allusion or figurative portrayal of the Hindu’s bloodshed literally. The allusions in the *Khazā’in al-Futūḥ*, like other literary works, must be taken as a literary embellishment rather than historical fact.

Amīr Khuṣrau described two sieges in the *Khazā’in al-Futūḥ* that have particular relevance to the Gujarat raid and this dissertation. Persian sources related that following the Gujarat campaign, Ulugh Khān led the army northwards past the city of Jālōr in the southern part of Rajasthan. At this time, according to the Persian sources, officers within the Sultanate army began to collect the sultan’s share of the booty. Four Mongols, who had recently converted to Islam, rebelled briefly causing Ulugh Khān to flee before regrouping his officers and reestablishing his command over the army. The four Mongol Muslims fled and eventually sought refuge in the Ranthambhor fort. Upon returning to Delhi and learning of this rebellion, Sultan ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Khaljī sought to punish the four Mongols as well as the Hindu rulers who protected them. Chapter five of this dissertation focuses on a Sanskrit description of the Ranthambhor siege and a Hindavī description of the sieges in Siwāna. The campaigns against Ranthambhor and Siwāna are quoted at some length for two reasons: first, the campaigns incorporated allusions and tropes found elsewhere in the *Khazā’in al-Futūḥ*; second, some of the earliest epics of resistance identified by Aziz Ahmad responded to these conquests.

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<sup>109</sup> Ibid.

The Ranthambhor campaign began in A.D. 1301. The Ranthambhor fort provided refuge for the four Mongol (“new Muslim”) converts, but also occupied a strategic position at the tip of the Aravalli Range, in proximity to the city of Delhi. Amīr Khuṣrau began his description of the Ranthambhor campaign similar to his description of the sacking of the Somanātha temple:

Story of the conquest of Ranthambhor when after a single battle an abode of unbelief like it became the abode of Islam by divine decree

Allusion to the sun and planets

When the canopy of the shadow of God which rubs against the sky overshadowed the mountain of Ranthambhor, the conqueror of the horizons like the sun was seen standing over the heads of the woe-begone people of that land with zealous fervour making the days of their lives decline. That lofty fort the tongue of whose turrets talked insolently to the Zabana, was encircled in the circles of the army. The Saturnian Hindus, who have affinity to Saturn, beholding the ill omen of the fighting lit up a fire in each of the ten towers, turning the dusty towers into fiery ones.<sup>110</sup>

This trope of loftiness has appeared again at the beginning of a battle narrative. In this instance, the canopy of the shadow of God (‘Alā’ al-Dīn Khaljī) and the Ranthambhor turrets both touched the heavens.

See here an allusion to stars

A few neo-Muslims from among the ill-starred Mongols who had turned away their faces from the sun of Islam joined with those Saturnians, and all of these Martians had stationed themselves with their bows in the fiery towers. Although they had kindled fire in these towers and the fiery triangle had become a reality in that towered sky, yet the arrow in one tower was entangled in the clutches of the bow, it that went towards the fire and was burnt. From the honoured month of Rajab up to the exalted month of Dhul-Qa’da, the victorious army lay encamped beneath the fort. The lofty fires brought forth smoke from the water-shedding canopy of the clouds, and each day the auspicious soldiers of Islam gathered below the escalade and fought bravely. The brave ones with the prowess of Bharam went like scaffolding into a fire from which the lion of the sky fled away in terror, and the dexterous payaks

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<sup>110</sup> Translated by M. Wahid Mirza from Amīr Khuṣrau, *Khazā’in al-Futūh*, 27.

danced on the fire to the tune of the arrow's music. Since even a bird could not fly above that fiery zone, the hawks of the royal army had no means to go across that fiery zone which extended up to the "athir."<sup>111</sup>

As this passage indicates, the Ranthambhor siege lasted for months. The allusions to fire may refer to the "Greek fire" used with medieval siege catapults (*maghribī*) or it could refer to the destruction of the Sultanate siege engines.<sup>112</sup> At one point the Delhi Sultanate army attempted to fill the moat with sandbags to attack either through an escalade or a siege tower. This failed and the Sultanate army turned to siege mining. This also failed when Hammīra Cāhamāna discovered the mines and burned them as well as the siege engineers. The Sultanate army next turned to siege weapons (catapults) and blockades.

See an allusion to foodgrains and rainfall

The stones from the outside catapults rising up into the air continued to batter the rampart ceaselessly, the lightening flashing out of them. Each big stone fell on the heads of those inside the rampart like the hail-stones [such that] that they were hit and turned cold. Yes, they had no more foodstuffs left and so ate stones. The hardship inside the fort had reached to an extent that they would have purchased one grain of rice with ten grains of gold but did not get it and due to the fire of hunger the grains of their hearts in their clay breasts became roasted so that they decided "to draw them out and to place them beneath their teeth." Creatures can bear every pain but they cannot bear the emptiness of their stomachs.<sup>113</sup>

Here Amīr Khuṣrau incorporated a bit of 'ajā'ib (wonderful, marvelous) tale as the besieged (Hindus) ate stones and their own baked hearts! The message Amīr Khuṣrau intended to relay, of course, was that the blockade succeeded and the provisions dropped to a point in which starvation became unavoidable.

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<sup>111</sup> Translated by M. Wahid Mirza from Amīr Khuṣrau, *Khazā'in al-Futūh*, 27–28.

<sup>112</sup> This reference to fire did not refer to the use of gunpowder weaponry as recently argued by Iqtidar Alam Khan, *Gunpowder and Firearms: Warfare in Medieval India* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2004), 20–22.

<sup>113</sup> Translated by M. Wahid Mirza from Amīr Khuṣrau, *Khazā'in al-Futūh*, 28.

The lack of provisions within the fort led to the final battle, described in the *Khazā'in al-Futūh* with the following passage:

See an allusion to the season of Nauruz

When the sun of the celestial abode—may the stages of his glory rise up to the sky—set to celebrate the festival of Nauruz, he scattered so many gold coins on the face of the earth that the world became like a rose-garden. After the Nauruz that sun of justice rose upon the fort with all his heat, increasing his heat and sharpness every day, till a pleasant fort like that which eclipsed even the azure sky in its splendour became a thorny wilderness due to lack of water and sustenance, and the world became narrower than a bud for the Rai. One night due to his distress his gall-bladder was about to crack, and so he lit up on the mountain a fire like the mountain poppies and threw into it the pomegranate-breasted rose-checked ladies who had been brought up under his care, so that a wail came forth even from the fire. When he had dispatched to hell in his own presence all those paradise-like beauties, he came upon the escalade with one or two other infidels and wanted to give away his life honourably. Although the morning breeze was blowing, but the narcissus like the eyes of the sentinels had not been closed in sleep yet. When the Rai reached near them a nightingale-voiced musician, who was with him, chanted a sweet song, upon which all the men lying in ambush drawing out their violet-like swords leapt up, attacked, and cut asunder the head of the insolent Rai wreathed in roses. “Yes, when there is a twistedness in the head of the infidel, this is the fit punishment for him. He had become deaf by constantly hearing of the Hindi “harnay,” he opened his ears wide on hearing the call to prayers, and in a place where the Believers became filled with such joyous sound at hearing the khutba of the king. It is so hoped.” That thereafter too whenever the royal army would go not a single arrow would miss its mark and that wherever the Khutba of the king would raise up its voice it would resound in the heights of the sky.<sup>114</sup>

Khuṣrau provided the first historical account of *jauhar* in this description. The fourth chapter of this dissertation examines the practice of *jauhar* in the Sanskrit *Hammīra Mahākāvya* and the Hindavī *Kānhaḍade Prabandh*. The practice becomes a hallmark of Rajput identity during the medieval and early modern periods. As the besieged soldiers prepared for a certain death on the battlefield, the women immolated themselves in a communal pyre. This practice of *jauhar* inverted the practice of *satī*, which occurred on

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<sup>114</sup> Translated by M. Wahid Mirza from Amīr Khuṣrau, *Khazā'in al-Futūh*, 28–29.

the husband's funeral pyre, by having the women immolate themselves prior to their husbands' death.

The account of the Ranthambhor campaign contained a number of interesting elements: the possibly '*ajā'ib*' occurrence of the besieged (Hindus) who ate the stones and their own hearts, the practice of *jauhar* among the besieged fort's inhabitants, and the ambush of the Hindu king Hammīra. These descriptions lacked, however, the triumph of conquest that Aziz Ahmad ascribed to them.<sup>115</sup> Medieval Indian literature at this time contained numerous tropes and literary motifs for depicting the battleground such as rivers of blood or the blood-soaked ground effusing the enemy's blood as the warrior trod upon it.<sup>116</sup> Amīr Khuṣrau used these images sparingly, usually when he exalt the triumph of the Khaljī victories. The only instance in the *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ* in which Amīr Khuṣrau utilized the vividly grotesque medieval battle imagery occurred in his descriptions of Delhi Sultanate victories over the Mongols. It is significant that Amīr Khuṣrau only utilized this imagery in the description of the Mongols, an ethnic group outside of South Asia, and never used this imagery in his description of Delhi Sultanate conquests over the people of Hindūstān. The reason for this is quite simple: Amīr Khuṣrau identified himself as an inhabitant of Hindūstān.<sup>117</sup> In a text that overemphasized allusions, Amīr Khuṣrau underemphasized conquest.

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<sup>115</sup> That is, that the *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ* contained a "thematic emphasis on the glorification of the Turk against the Hindu" quoted from Aziz, "Epic and Counter Epic," 470.

<sup>116</sup> These images are found in 'Iṣāmī's *Futūḥ al-Salaṭīn*, written in Persian in A.H. 751/A.D. 1350, as well as Gaṅgadevī's *Madhurāvijaya*, written in Sanskrit sometime after A.D. 1371 as well as the Guhila Chittaur inscription of V.S. 1339/A.D. 1283 and the Guhila Acaleśvara inscription of V.S. 1342/A.D. 1285. All four of these text will be discussed in chapter four. The *Tāj al-Ma'āsir* also contained some of this imagery, but to a far lesser extent. As noted above, Khuṣrau only included this battle imagery in his description of the victories of the Mongols, who died in a wave of blood, although this could refer to a trope of movement (to be discussed below) as much as a trope of the blood-soaked battleground found in Indic texts.

<sup>117</sup> This argument is made at the end of the next chapter based upon a reading of Amīr Khuṣrau's *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān* and *Nuh Sipahr*.

Amīr Khuṣrau's depiction of Sultan 'Ala' al-Dīn Khaljī's campaign against Siwāna (A.H. 708/A.D. 1308) largely followed the pattern of the Somanātha raid and the Ranthambhor campaign.

The allusion is to the flying birds

Is it customary for a flight of this world conqueror not to return back without conquering a fort and capturing a commandant of the fort he led his army with the object of hunting from the capital city of Delhi up to the fort of Siwana, a distance of 100 farsangs, and besieged that for which was a forest of wild robbers. He saw a rampart over a mountain; the eagle could not soar up to its top with ten pillars, while a gabr named Sital Dev lay concealed in the mountain-fortress like the griffin in the Caucasus, and together with several thousand other gabrs like mountain vultures sat on the ridge of the mountain, ready for their own destruction, and awaiting their turn. Opening wide their mouths, like the stone-eating birds, they waited for the stones to arrive, till the stones of the catapults started flying from every direction. Some of them flattened dead like sparrows by a pellet bow so that they split into pieces, while some others flung about their hands and feet in agony. The soldiers of the royal army were doing their utmost to capture them while these domestic fowls crowed from above. "Just as the hens might play with a falcon."<sup>118</sup>

The trope of loftiness again appeared at the beginning of the narrative. Unlike the previous two examples, Amīr Khuṣrau accomplished this through an allusion to flying birds.

Here again there is an allusion to the fowl and the falcon

Some of the Indian fowls who had escaped with great difficulty from the claws of the royal army's falcons jumped out of their mountain coop and wanted to run away to jauriyan [from Jālōr?], when suddenly the hawks of the royal camp got news of it and sat in ambush for them, killing some of them and rendering others grievously wounded till the time "the crow of darkness sped away from the garden of light and a hawk was hatched from the egg of light."<sup>119</sup>

In these passages, Khuṣrau appeared somewhat more triumphalistic and depicted the conquest of the fort in as a triumph of Islam. For example, the passage

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<sup>118</sup> Translated by M. Wahid Mirza from Amīr Khuṣrau, *Khazā'in al-Futūh*, 38.

<sup>119</sup> Translated by M. Wahid Mirza from Amīr Khuṣrau, *Khazā'in al-Futūh*, 39.

On that day, from the time of the wolf's tail (false dawn) till the setting of the sun "the infidel dogs were slain on the mountain tops so that the flood of their blood rose high, like the ruddy pus."<sup>120</sup>

certainly heralded the Sultanate army and their conquest over the Hindus. Khuṣrau's phrase "the crow of darkness" in the last line was particularly apt since Hindus in Persian poetry are conceptualized as being dark. This metaphor simultaneously depicted the flight of the Hindu (crow) and the Sultanate pursuit (hawk) and satisfied the allusion to fowl and falcon. This triumphal imagery, however, is limited in the *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ* and followed the stated allusion of the passage. Khuṣrau simply did not include a "thematic emphasis on the glorification of the Turk against the Hindu" as stated by Aziz Ahmad.<sup>121</sup>

#### THE TROPES OF THE *KHAZĀ'IN AL-FUTŪḤ*

Amīr Khuṣrau wove the narrative of the *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ* around several identified allusions, some of which acted as tropes with meanings that his medieval audience would have understood, but which are lost today. At the time of the *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ*'s composition, Amīr Khuṣrau was at the peak of his poetic ability and his popularity. His audience was wide and varied, and included not only his royal patrons and the royal court, but notable dignitaries, his Sufi mentor Shaikh Niẓām al-Dīn 'Auliya', and the common people of Delhi and northern Hindūstān. Given the literary complexity of the *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ* it seems safe to conclude that this text mostly circulated among the royal court and intellectuals of Delhi. Since most of his audience knew the events or even participated in them, Amīr Khuṣrau had the opportunity to add literary flourishes to the battle narrative, an act that would certainly have earned him appreciation from his audience. This appealed, beyond a doubt, to Amīr Khuṣrau

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<sup>120</sup> Translated by M. Wahid Mirza from Amīr Khuṣrau, *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ*, 39.

<sup>121</sup> "Epic and Counter Epic," 470.



as well. Yet if we are to understand the text and battles described therein, it becomes necessary to separate the literary flourishes from the historical facts.

To begin with, it would appear that not all allusions were created equal and that historical events dictated the allusions Amīr Khuṣrau selected when composing the narrative. The passages quoted above on the Ranthambhor and Jālōr campaigns consistently used allusions to birds, stars, birds, and falcons. These allusions employ what I have termed a trope of loftiness that will be explained more fully in a moment. ‘Alā al-Dīn Khaljī’s campaigns against the Mongols, however, did not use the same set of allusions. In describing the Mongol campaigns, Amīr Khuṣrau used the following sequence of allusions: fighting a holy war, arms, fighting and killing, war and festivity, fighting and holy war, chess, backgammon, spring and autumn, water, human bodily parts, Resurrection, buildings, stars. The allusion to Islamic holy war occurred twice in reference to the Mongols but never in his description of the Gujarat and Rajasthan campaigns. While we do not know Khuṣrau’s reason for using this allusion in one instance instead of another, it seems likely that this reflected some type of Islamic call-to-arms for the Mongols’ sack of Baghdad and execution of the ‘Abbāsīd caliph in A.H. 656/A.D. 1258.

A second glance at this list reveals a more interesting commonality in Khuṣrau’s choice of allusions. When not utilizing holy war to describe the Mongol victories, Amīr Khuṣrau chose allusions of fluidity or movement: water, chess, backgammon, spring and autumn (seen also in the description of the dust flying from Bihar to Multan). These allusions of movement were almost certainly determined by the Mongols’ use of swift mounted cavalry. This cavalry flowed into and out of the battlefield much more so than the siege of Gujarat and Rajasthan forts. The sole instance in which Amīr Khuṣrau mentioned a building (and with it the trope of loftiness) was at the very end of

the Mongol campaigns when the Sultanate army constructed a rampart (or perhaps a gallows reminiscent of ‘Alā al-Dīn’s fabled *Cor Minār*) from which the bodies of captured Mongols were hung.<sup>122</sup> The realities of Mongol–Sultanate warfare determined the allusions Amīr Khuṣrau chose.

As one might expect, the Gujarat and Rajasthan campaigns repeatedly utilized allusions that referred to siege warfare rather than the swift moving cavalry of the Mongols. Again, the historical reality determined the trope Khuṣrau employed. The allusion to food and water (quoted above) occurred in the Ranthambhor campaign as the besieged army ran short of food.<sup>123</sup> Allusions to movement in the Gujarat and Rajasthan campaigns, such as the allusions to flying birds, wild animals, or fowl and falcon quoted above, only occurred when the Sultanate army was on the march (flying birds) or when the two armies met on the battlefield (wild animals, fowl and falcon). The reality of the events described dictated the allusions employed. Amīr Khuṣrau simply added a poetic flourish to the battle narratives he described.

At times, however, the allusions within the *Khazā’in al-Futūḥ* appear to contain tropes that also alter their meaning. The most quoted passage of the *Khazā’in al-Futūḥ* contains one such trope that has gone unnoticed in previous scholarly works.

Then they made the idol-house of Somnat prostrate itself towards the exalted Ka’ba, and when they cast the reflection of the upturned idol-house in the sea it seemed as if that idol-house first offered its prayers and then took a bath.<sup>124</sup>

This passage has not only appeared in Aziz Ahmad’s “Epic and Counter–Epic in medieval India,” but in numerous articles, monographs and books on South Asian history. It is one of the most cited passages from Amīr Khuṣrau’s entire corpus of

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<sup>122</sup> The *cor minār* (thief’s tower) still stands in New Delhi. Legend states that ‘Alā’ al-Dīn constructed this small brick *minār* with niches on the outside, in which he placed the heads of convicted thieves.

<sup>123</sup> The fifteenth-century Sanskrit *Hammīra Mahākāvya*, which will be discussed at length in chapter four, corroborates this fact.

<sup>124</sup> Translated by M. Wahid Mirza from Amīr Khuṣrau, *Khazā’in al-Futūḥ*, 26.

literary work. Yet this was not the first time Amīr Khuṣrau utilized this literary image of prostration. In describing ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Khaljī’s fortification of Delhi earlier in the *Khazā’in al-Futūḥ*, Amīr Khuṣrau wrote:

The allusion to the building of the rampart

The rampart of Delhi which is second only to the sacred Ka’ba, had been built ages ago and had become more ruined by the constant revolution of the nine spheres than the wine houses in the auspicious reign of the king [‘Alā al-Dīn]. It had fallen down here and there like the over-tipsy drunkards and was unable to maintain its dignity. It now bowed its head before the mean ones and now prostrated itself towards the lower moat, and its turrets, once so lofty that one’s turban fell down to the ground when looking up at them, threw down their caps in unbecoming humility on the earth... The masons thereupon set to work at once and in a short time erected another rampart in its place, such that the waist of its towers clasped the dyed hand of the Pleiades and its powerful arm threw down its armpit the strong Mars while its lofty terrace made the azure sky its girdle. It is necessary that blood be given to a new building and so several thousand goat-bearded Mongols were slaughtered on it [i.e., the rampart withstood a Mongol assault].<sup>125</sup>

Since the rampart bowed to the moat, the notion of conversion would not apply. It seems more likely that this was a trope of submission/consecration.<sup>126</sup> The passage began by comparing the rampart of Delhi to the Ka’ba. The Ka’ba held numerous images until Muḥammad purged the images and reconsecrated the Ka’ba to Allah and the trope may compare Muḥammad’s consecration of the Ka’ba to ‘Alā’ al-Dīn’s consecration (or in this case construction) of the rampart. This trope of submission/consecration would also apply to the Somanātha temple. Farrukhī Sīstānī (d. A.D. 1037) and ‘Abd al-Ḥayy Gardīzī (d. ca. A.D. 1061) both equated the Somanātha temple (spelled Sumanāt in Arabic) with Manāt, one of three images smuggled out of

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<sup>125</sup> Translated by M. Wahid Mirza from Amīr Khuṣrau, *Khazā’in al-Futūḥ*, 15.

<sup>126</sup> Islam literally means “submission (to Allah)” which is why I have chosen to include the dual designation submission/consecration.

the Ka'ba during Muḥammad's time.<sup>127</sup> Sa'dī built upon this image of Somnāt as Manāt in his thirteenth-century Persian Bustān, which Amīr Khuṣrau and educated Muslims certainly read and knew.<sup>128</sup> This trope also presented a sort of double meaning, which certainly appealed to Amīr Khuṣrau, since the Somanātha temple was literally converted through architectural reconstruction into a Muslim mosque after the Delhi Sultanate conquest.

The above passage on the tipsy rampart ended with the trope of loftiness as the rebuilt rampart soared into the heavens and wore the seven stars of the Pleiades as a belt and the azure sky as its girdle. This trope of loftiness appeared throughout *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ* as noted in the quoted passages above. This trope certainly had a meaning to its medieval audience; yet, this meaning is lost today and lies in the realm of conjecture. I have labeled this trope in the above paragraphs as a trope of loftiness since it occurred in conjunction with tall objects such as towers and banners or in descriptions of insurmountable barriers (e.g., the fires of Ranthambhor that soar so far into heavens that birds cannot fly above them). The loftiness in this trope, however, was applied literally as well as figuratively with a secondary meaning of grandeur. In every instance this trope of loftiness held the dual meaning of height and grandeur. Moreover, this trope appeared irrespective of the community (what Aziz Ahmad would call Hindu or Muslim) and the application of this trope therefore equated the Delhi Sultanate with their Indic rivals in terms of resources, material goods, and martial ability. Since the trope's meaning to the medieval audience remains unknown, the effect Amīr Khuṣrau tried to achieve through its use similarly remains unknown,

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<sup>127</sup> Kulsum Parekh, "Some Controversial Points in the History of the Temple of Somnath," published in *Islamic Culture* 28 (1), 287–96. For a comparison of Ranthambhor accounts in the *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ*, *Hammīra Mahākāvya*, and *Hammīrāyaṇ*, see Dasharatha Sharma, *Early Chauhān Dynasties*, 2d rev. ed. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1975), 123–133.

<sup>128</sup> Sa'dī, *Stories from Sa'dī's Bustān and Gulistān*, trans. Levy, 67. Sa'dī's *Gulistān* and his *Bustān* became the standard books for a classical Persian education.

although the trope's recurrent use and application to both communities suggests a commonality rather than an exaltation of Muslim conquest. All of these tropes, in fact, may be seen in a single allusion that occurred in the first chapter of the *Khazā'in al-Futūh*.

Amīr Khuṣrau described the Delhi building projects and the socio-economic reforms most vividly through 'Alā' al-Dīn's expansion of the Quṭb Minār complex and this passage provides an excellent example on the use of these tropes.

#### Allusion to the mosque and the minaret

When by divine guidance he ['Alā' al-Dīn Khaljī] had renewed the damaged structures of the various mosques so that, even like the venerated Ka'ba, they became safe from decay and ruin, his high ambition prompted him that he might build a replica of the lofty minaret of the mosque (Qutub Minār) which is unique in the world and might impart thereby a loftiness to the dome of the sky which could not be surpassed. He first ordered that the courtyard of the mosque be enlarged as far as possible so that the throng of the Muslims which by the grace of God cannot be accommodated in the whole world may find a new world within the world. He further ordered that the circumference of the minaret, for the stability of the building, be made twice as large as that of the first one, so that its minaret be proportionately high and the top of the old minaret may look like the cupola in the center of the new one. At a single gesture from the king all the wagons of the planets which were yoked to the two heavenly bullocks, started their work, Jupiter busied itself in buying stone and iron and the moon acquired honour by driving the bull. Yes, where it is a matter of building the house of god why should the stars not carry stones on their heads, and if they do not come down from their stations: "The minaret itself would run up there and strike their heads with stones."

The seekers of stones hastened impatiently in different directions, some of them clutching the skirt of the mountain and since they were enamored of acquiring stones they, like the lovers, tore into shreds the skirt of the mountain, while some others who were sharper than the steel in uprooting the foundations of unbelief, having sharpened their iron axes started a crusade against the idol-houses of the rais and gave their iron arms added strength in breaking stones. Wherever a temple had girt up its loins for the worship of an idol, the tongue of the pick-axes with an elegant discourse dug out the foundation of unbelief from its heart, so that the temple at once prostrated itself in gratefulness. The stone slabs which had on them inscriptions of long standing villainy made by the

teacher of the angels (Iblis), since the divining pen had ordained that all these slabs should be engraved with the inscription, “Verily the mosques of God are populated by—“ accepted the edge of the axe right into their interiors and tumbled down to the earth...<sup>129</sup>

The trope of loftiness has appeared—as usual—at the beginning of the passage as ‘Alā’ al-Dīn extended the minaret to a loftiness that the dome of the sky could not surpass. The loftiness was to such an extent that the stars and planets carried rocks to build the foundations. This again would suggest that the trope of loftiness existed as a literary motif independent of Hindu conquest. The passage also contained two examples of the trope of submission/prostration. In the first instance, the planets and stars hauled stones for the construction of the minār so that it would not strike them. In the second instance, the Hindu temple bowed to the Minār/mosque and offered its stones complete with inscriptions from the teacher of the angels, Iblis.<sup>130</sup> The trope of loftiness did not apply to a Hindu rampart or temple, which falls to the might of Islam, but to the Quṭb Minār and the Quwwāt al-Islām.

This discussion has attempted to situate the literary images of the *Khazā’in al-Futūḥ* within the social framework of the thirteenth-century audience. Taken piecemeal, the imagery of the *Khazā’in al-Futūḥ* is read like a conquest text written in a hyper-metaphorical style. Hindus died in a sea of blood while their temples bowed—figuratively and literally—to the might of the Delhi Sultanate. These passages would seem to have confirmed Aziz Ahmad’s reading of the *Khazā’in al-Futūḥ* as an epic of conquest. Taken as a whole, however, these passages have revealed a different reading. The allusions Amīr Khuṣrau chose to describe the events in the *Khazā’in al-Futūḥ* were not the products of his imagination; rather, the historical events determined the

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<sup>129</sup> Translated by M. Wahid Mirza from Amīr Khuṣrau, *Khazā’in al-Futūḥ*, 13–14.

<sup>130</sup> Iblis was the teacher of the angels and is analogous to Lucifer. After the fall, Iblis (Lucifer) became al-Shaitan (Satan).

allusions Khuṣrau used. This is evident when one compares Khuṣrau's descriptions of the Mongol and Western Hindūstān campaigns to their different styles of warfare. Moreover, some tropes such as the trope of submission/consecration and the trope of loftiness did not occur solely in relation to the Other (whether Mongol or Hindu). They are also found in allusions Amīr Khuṣrau made about the Muslim community.

## CONCLUSION

This chapter has altered Aziz Ahmad's reading of the *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ* as an "epic of conquest." Conquest was certainly a theme in the *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ*, but it was only one of several themes found within the *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ*. Aziz Ahmad's construction of a dichotomous opposition between Indic "epics of resistance" and Persian "epics of conquest" and his identification of Amīr Khuṣrau's *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ* as the first text written in this manner was false. Instead, Amīr Khuṣrau's *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ* demonstrated the continuity of Islamicate intellectual traditions along with a considerable amount of literary imagination.

Read as literature, the *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ* approaches *futūḥ* (victory) as a literary image. Amīr Khuṣrau followed his Persian predecessors and organized his text according to a series of allusions. The historical event, rather than Khuṣrau's imagination, dictated the type of allusion Khuṣrau employed. The *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ* was not a tale of Amīr Khuṣrau's poetic imagination, but a history poetically imagined. As one might expect in a literary production, a number of tropes appeared throughout the text. Understanding these tropes further refutes Ahmad's thesis of conquest and resistance as some of the most poignant images of conquest (the bowing of the Somanātha temple) were equally applied to Muslim contexts (the bowing of the Delhi rampart). Aziz Ahmad's argument that the Somanātha temple bowed to the Ka'ba as acknowledgement of conquest and conversion was contradicted when Amīr Khuṣrau

employed the same imagery to 'Alā' al-Dīn Khaljī's expansion of the Quṭb Minār and Quwwāt al-Islām, which certainly did not undergo conversion. This imagery, therefore, contained a meaning outside of conquest/resistance. The meaning of this imagery found within the *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ* must be located in the fourteenth-century Persian audience for whom Amīr Khuṣrau wrote; a meaning that is now largely lost.

Read as history, the *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ* approached *futūḥ* (conquest) as a component of Islamicate historiography. The concept of *futūḥ* extended to the establishment of Islam in the first/seventh century. Over time, however, the concept of *futūḥ* changed to become one of several themes in Muslim historiography. While *futūḥ* may have been present in the universal histories of al-Ṭabarī and Ibn al-Aṣir, the narration of conquest became a means to an end: the establishment of the caliphates and the development of Muslim society that was the real object of analysis in these texts. Earlier Persian texts within the Delhi Sultanate contained a literary tradition different from the universal histories of al-Ṭabarī and al-Aṣir. Some of these Persian texts, most notably Tāj al-Dīn Ḥasan Niẓāmī's *Tāj al-Ma'āṣir* incorporated the Persianate literary style of the *fathnāma* that directly influenced Amīr Khuṣrau's *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ*. The *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ* went beyond narrating Khaljī conquests to establish an Islamicate intellectual tradition based on Arabic and Persian traditions within Hindūstān.



## Chapter 3

### Sufis, Sultans, Society and the Search for Authority

By the grace of the Almighty Reality, the  
two revered teachers were blessed with these students:  
Nizamuddin (Awliya) with (Amir) Khusraw,  
Sirajuddin (Bahadur Shah) with Ghalib.

Aṭlaf Ḥusain Ḥālī<sup>131</sup>

‘Izz al-Dīn ibn al-Aṣīr (d. A.D. 630/A.H. 1232) witnessed the horror of Mongol conquest and ended his *Al-Kāmil fi’l-Ta’rīkh* (*The Complete History*) with an apocalyptic lament.

For some years I continued averse from mentioning this event, deeming it so horrible that I shrank from recording it and ever-withdrawing one foot as I advanced the other. To whom, indeed, can it be easy to write the announcement of the deathblow of Islam and the Muslims, or who is he on whom the remembrance thereof can weigh lightly? O would that my mother had not born me or that I had died and become a forgotten thing ere this befell! Yet, withal a number of my friends urged me to set it down in writing, and I hesitated long, but at last came to the conclusion that to omit this matter could serve no useful purpose... Nay, it is unlikely that mankind will see the like of this calamity, until the world comes to an end and perishes, except the final outbreak of Gog and Magog. For even Antichrist will spare such as follow him, though he destroy those who oppose him, but these Tatars spared none, slaying women and men and children, ripping open pregnant women and killing unborn babes...

Another division, distinct from that mentioned above, marched on Ghazna and its dependencies, and those parts of India, Sistan and Kirman which border thereon, and wrought therein deeds like unto the other, nay, yet more grievous... Therefore Islam and the Muslims have been afflicted during this period with calamities wherewith no people hath been visited. These Tatars (may God confound them!) came from the East, and wrought deeds which horrify all who hear of them... We ask God to vouchsafe victory to Islam and the Muslims, for there is none other to aid, help, or defend the True Faith. But if God

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<sup>131</sup> The epigraph, a *ghazal* composed by Ḥālī in his *Yādgār-i Ghālib* (*A Memoir of Ghālib*), is translated by Syed Akbar Hyder, “Ghalib and His Interlocutors,” *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 26, no. 3 (2006): 462–475. Sirāj al-Dīn was the last Mughal emperor, better known as Bahādur Shāh II.

intends evil to any people, naught can avert it, nor have they any ruler save Him.<sup>132</sup>

Ibn al-Aṣīr's account carried the full weight of an impending apocalypse, which finally occurred in A.D. 656/A.H. 1258 when the Mongols sacked Baghdad and executed the 'Abbāsīd caliph. Émigrés fled from the Mongol conquests in Central Asia for the safety of Delhi. The fact that Central Asians viewed Delhi as a haven for Muslims indicated that Hindūstān existed as part of the Islamicate world. While the Mongol conquests infused Hindūstān with a Central Asian Muslim intelligentsia, the conquests also isolated the subcontinent and transformed it from an Islamicate frontier to an island of Islam.

The transformation of Hindūstān into an island of Islam and its isolation from the Islamicate world had a large impact on the Muslim psyche because it fulfilled a longtime fear that the splintering of the *'umma* (the community of Muslims) would lead to apostasy and to the adulteration of Islam.<sup>133</sup> Muslims in the early Islamic Period, when Islam rapidly spread across the Asian and African continents, insulated the community of Muslims through the creation of the *miṣr*. The word *miṣr* is translated today as "a city;" however, the *miṣr* in its original context was both a garrison town and twin city. When the Muslim community conquered a city, they established a *miṣr* near the conquered city in which the Muslims lived and from which they ruled. This protected the conquered region from disorganized Bedouin skirmishes and raids and

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<sup>132</sup> Edward G. Browne, *A Literary History of Persia*, vol. 2, (1902–06; reprint, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 2:427–31.

<sup>133</sup> Such a fear was not completely unfounded. Immediately after the Prophet Muḥammad's death the *riddah* (apostasy) wars occurred. Abū Bakr, the first caliph, put a quick and forceful stop to any tribe that committed apostasy. The *fitna* (civil wars) a few decades later bolstered this fear of a divided Muslim community. Albrecht Noth identified *ridda* and *fitna* as tropes in early Islamic literature.

insulated the young Muslim community from outside influences.<sup>134</sup> When people converted to Islam, they left their city for the *miṣr* where they lived with the Muslim community. This move from the city to the *miṣr* removed the convert from his family, friends, and religious community and reduced apostasy among the Muslim converts. The *miṣr* also inhibited the incorporation of regional religious practices into Islam since the *miṣr* was composed primarily of Muslims from outside the region. The *miṣr* only existed as a twin city for the first century after the Prophet Muḥammad's death, yet the psychological need for a single Muslim 'umma persisted even when the 'umma stretched from Spain to Sind.

The Mongol conquest of Persia in the seventh/thirteenth century led to the emergence of a distinct regional (Indo-Muslim) identity.<sup>135</sup> The Indo-Muslim identity did not immediately form after the Mongol conquests of Persia due to an influx of Central Asians that infused Persianate ideas and practices into Hindūstān. Several decades later, in the eighth/thirteenth century, this Indo-Muslim identity started to emerge over the next two centuries. Amīr Khuṣrau, who not only identified himself as Hindūstānī poet, also contributed to the formation of this Indo-Muslim identity. As discussed in the previous chapter, while Amīr Khuṣrau praised the Delhi Sultanate conquests, he also refrained from describing the conquests of the Hindus with the graphic imagery he used to describe victories against the Mongols. Khuṣrau described

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<sup>134</sup> Marshall Hodgson, *The Expansion of Islam in the Middle Periods*, vol. 2 of *Venture of Islam* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), 208–211 and Ira Lapidus, *A History of Islamic Societies*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 42–53.

<sup>135</sup> One could argue that this split occurred much earlier in Persia with Firdausī's tenth-century *Shāhnāma*, which narrated the Pre-Islamic history of Persia. The extent to which Persian ideas and identity were integrated into or segregated from Arabic intellectual traditions and Arab identity lies far outside the field of this dissertation. The Muslim community in Hindūstān during the sixth/twelfth century, just a century before the Mongol conquests, clearly viewed themselves as living on the frontier. The exile poetry of Mas'ūd Sa'd Salmān clearly reveals the poet's desire to abandon Lahōre and return westward to the Persianate world. A Persian or Turkish identity may have existed on the eve of Mongol conquest, but I believe an Indo-Muslim identity did not. For a discussion and translation of Salmān's poetry, see Sunil Sharma's *Persian Poetry at the Indian Frontier*.

the sack of the Somanātha temple in the *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ* according to the allusion of the sea. In this description, Muslims washed away the sea of filth (heresy) with a storm of Hindu blood; yet, Amīr Khuṣrau immediately downplayed this image of bloody conquest when he wrote “The object really from this is not blood, but: ‘that land became purified by the sword of Islam just as the dust becomes purified by the sun’.”<sup>136</sup> Amīr Khuṣrau incorporated Hindūstāni imagery, rather than images of conquest, into his later works and referred to his Persian verses as Hindavī rather than Persian. The *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān* and *Nuh Sipīhr* both reveal Amīr Khuṣrau’s attempt to incorporate Indic imagery within the Persian literary tradition, a process that culminated a couple centuries later with an established Indo-Persian literary tradition.

The formation of an Indo-Muslim identity led to a search for Indo-Islamic authority that increasingly settled on two sources of authority: the secular authority of the Delhi sultan and the spiritual authority of the Sufi. In previous centuries, the caliph held both secular and spiritual authority. As the ‘Abbāsīd caliphate weakened, a series of sultans arose who claimed secular authority over the frontier zones they governed. Maḥmūd (r. A.H. 388–421/A.D. 998–1030) established the Ghaznavid sultanate as the Sāmānid Empire collapsed. Even as a sultan, Maḥmūd sought and received robes and titles of authority from the ‘Abbāsīd caliph. While Maḥmūd gained fame throughout the Islamicate world for his campaigns in Hindūstān, he deposed Muslim governors and even rival rulers in an attempt to consolidate and expand his empire.<sup>137</sup> The Delhi Sultans, who in terms of political imagination and state formation descended from the Ghaznavid Empire, similarly sought titles and recognition from the caliph. Thus the

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<sup>136</sup> Excerpt taken from the quoted passage on page 55.

<sup>137</sup> Niẓām al-Mulk recorded a story about Maḥmūd in the *Siyāstnāma* that combined both conquest and recognition. Maḥmūd lamented that in spite of his victories in Hindūstān, other lesser Muslim rulers in Transoxiana received recognition from the caliph. Maḥmūd’s response was to conquer these rulers. For an English translation see, Niẓām al-Mulk, *The Book of Government*, trans. Hubert Darke.

end of the ‘Abbāsīd caliphate affected the Muslim community politically, spiritually, as well as psychologically. The collapse of the ‘Abbāsīd caliphate led to a search for authority within Hindūstān. The Muslim community had to choose between reconstituting the caliphate that combined spiritual and secular authority in one individual or continuing the division of the secular and sacred in the (secular) sultan and the (sacred) Sufi. This search for authority eventually focused on the Sufi and the sultan, who competed for recognition within Muslim society as the preeminent authority of Islam in Hindūstān.

#### THE SEARCH FOR AUTHORITY

This Sufi/sultan dichotomy first appeared in modern scholarship in a series of articles written by Simon Digby. The Sufi’s authority in the Delhi Sultanate covered both the spiritual and physical realm. Much of Digby’s article, “The Ṣūfī Shaikh as a Source of Authority,” concerned the Sufi’s protection of his territory from competing spiritual leaders and Sufi orders. Sufis staked claims to physical territory (*wilāyat*) and vigorously defended their turf from other Sufis, including wandering Sufis. The claim to territory occurred between individual Sufis, between Sufi monastic orders, and even within the same Sufi monastic order. Once a Sufi established himself in an area, he became the leading authority in this realm and protected the inhabitants both physically and spiritually. A small section of this article addressed the competition between the Sufi and the sultan with parallels between the sultan’s realm (*daulat*) and the Sufi’s territory (*wilāyat*) as well as the sultan’s palace (*qaṣr*) and the Sufi’s monastic abode (*khānaqāh*). Digby supported his argument with a quote from ‘Iṣāmī’s *Futūḥ us-Salāṭīn*:

In every realm although there is a ruler (*Āmīr*)  
He is under the protection of a *Faqīr*;

Although the rulers may be at the head of the kingdom,  
The *Faqīrs* are the drinkers (averters) of disaster of the kingdom.<sup>138</sup>

‘Iṣāmī credited the Sufi’s spiritual power, not the sultan’s physical power, for the preservation of the Sultanate. While Digby noted the Sufi’s claim as the paramount authority in the Sultanate, his article focused more on Sufi–Sufi opposition than Sufi–sultan opposition.

Digby examined the opposition between Sufi and sultan in a second article, “The Sufi *Shaykh* and the Sultan,” published four years later.<sup>139</sup> Digby asserted that an opposition existed between the Sufi and the sultan, from which the Sufi emerged as the principal authority in both the spiritual and physical world. Again, quoting ‘Iṣāmī’s *Futūḥ al-Salāṭīn*, Digby noted that disorder passed through the Delhi Sultanate upon the passing of the great Delhi Sufi Niẓām al-Dīn.

He was one of the friends of God  
Through whom the realm of Hindōstān was maintained.  
First that man of wise dominion  
Set out from Delhī to another kingdom [i.e., heaven];  
After this that city and country were ruined;  
Discord prevailed in that realm.<sup>140</sup>

According to ‘Iṣāmī it was the Sufi Niẓām al-Dīn ‘Auliyā’ and not the Delhi sultan who maintained the Delhi Sultanate. ‘Iṣāmī harbored a considerable bias against the Delhi Sultanate (Muḥammad bin Tughluq, in particular) and his comments could be dismissed as one man’s negative opinion of the sultan’s authority. Digby, however, demonstrated that Sufis challenged the sultan’s authority in a number of fourteenth-century texts that spanned the Khaljī and Tughluq dynasties. These contrasting claims

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<sup>138</sup> Passage quoted from Digby, “The Ṣūfī Shaikh as a Source of Authority,” 69.

<sup>139</sup> Simon Digby, “The Sufi *Shaykh* and the Sultan,” 71–81.

<sup>140</sup> Quote taken from Digby, “The Ṣūfī *Shaykh* and the Sultan,” 71. K. Z. Ashrafiyan also discusses the tensions between Sufi and sultan in his article, “Sufism in Indian Social and Political life in Amir Khusrau’s Time,” in *Life, Times and Works of Amir Khusrau Delhavi*, ed. Zoe Ansari (New Delhi: National Amir Khusrau Society, 1975), 195–96.

of authority produced an uneasy tension between the Sufi and the sultan that played out in the texts, public opinions, and cultural symbols of the fourteenth century.

Sunil Kumar advanced Simon Digby's concept of contesting claims to authority by examining competing claims made by 'Alā' al-Dīn Khaljī, Niẓām al-Dīn 'Auliya', and their followers.<sup>141</sup> Kumar advanced Digby's Sufi-sultan opposition by focusing on the Delhi Sultan 'Alā' al-Dīn Khaljī and the Delhi Sufi Niẓām al-Dīn 'Auliya'. The works of the court poet and panegyrist Amīr Khuṣrau, according to Sunil Kumar, advanced 'Alā' al-Dīn's claim to authority. Kumar supported his argument almost exclusively on the *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ*, discussed in the previous chapter, and the text's outright praise of Khaljī conquests. Kumar read the *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ* in conjunction with royal inscriptions found at the Quṭb complex that 'Alā' al-Dīn expanded during his reign. For example, Amīr Khuṣrau made an allusion in the *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ* in which the Qur'ānic inscriptions 'Alā' al-Dīn had inscribed around the *miḥrāb* (prayer niche) of the Quwwāt al-Islām mosque traveled from the earth to the moon "so that one would think that the Word of God (*kalām Allāh*) was going to heaven and alighting (*firud āwardan*) on the other side in such away to symbolize the descent of the Qur'ān on earth."<sup>142</sup> As Kumar noted, this imagery did not elevate 'Alā' al-Dīn's spiritual authority but his regnal authority of asserting the *sharī'a* (the correct path of Islamic conduct). "With the revival of the Holy Law, 'Alā' al-Dīn restored the authority of God's Word on earth. Muslims once again acknowledged the omnipotence of Allah in prayer, and the verses of the Qur'ān recited by Muslims wafted from earth to heaven, only to return as a benediction, symbolically traversing the arches of the *miḥrāb* wall."<sup>143</sup> 'Alā' al-Dīn's

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<sup>141</sup> Sunil Kumar, "Assertions of Authority," 37–65.

<sup>142</sup> Translated by Sunil Kumar, "Assertions of Authority," 47.

<sup>143</sup> Kumar, "Assertions of Authority," 47–48.

authority came from the secular power of enforcing laws and regulations such as the *sharī'a* rather than the spiritual authority of the Sufi.

Nizām al-Dīn 'Auliya' launched a counter-claim through the works of Žiyā' al-Dīn Baranī's *Tārīkh-i Fīrūz Shāhī* (*History of Fīrūz Shāh*) and Amīr Ḥasan Sijzī Dehlavī's *Fawā'id al-Fu'ād* (*Morals of the Heart*) that argued the real power behind the throne was Nizām al-Dīn. Kumar largely followed Simon Digby's argument discussed above, although Kumar presented a much stronger argument that Baranī's *Ḥasratnāma* and *Tārīkh-i Fīrūz Shāh* "systematically addressed and destroyed the Delhi sultan's claims to moral authority."<sup>144</sup> Where 'Alā' al-Dīn claimed victory in defeating the Mongols during a siege of Delhi, Žiyā' al-Dīn Baranī ascribed the Mongols' withdrawal to the piety of Nizām al-Dīn. Amīr Ḥasan similarly opposed 'Alā' al-Dīn's claim to authority in the inscriptions of the expanded Quṭb complex (which included the Quwwāt al-Islām mosque). 'Alā' al-Dīn may have enforced the *sharī'a* and promoted the letter of the law, but Nizām al-Dīn superceded 'Alā' al-Dīn by understanding both the letter and the spirit of the law. Nizām al-Dīn even undermined 'Alā' al-Dīn's religious claims in expanding the Quṭb complex, through a series of tales that located Allah's presence not in the stones of the mosque, but in the person of the *pīr* (Sufi master).

Sunil Kumar advanced Digby's argument by moving beyond the text to gauge and engage the sultan and Sufi's authority within the fourteenth-century public sphere rather than the Sufi monastic order. Kumar contrasted 'Alā' al-Dīn's inscriptions in the expanded Quṭb Minār complex, schools, and other public works with Nizām al-Dīn's public discourses on religious practice and custom. This contrast between the Sufi and the sultan challenges Kumar's present-day reader to reexamine the power structure of Sultanate society as well as the categories of contemporary scholarship. I would

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<sup>144</sup> Kumar, "Assertions of Authority, 50.



suggest that in addition to the authority of the Sufi and the sultan, discussed by Digby and then Kumar, that a third source of authority existed in the social traditions of the Hindūstānī Muslim community. These three sources of authority—sufi, sultan, and society—existed in a constant flux with each other. The remainder of this chapter will examine society as a source of authority for the Indo-Muslim community.

In many ways, Amīr Khuṣrau embodied this search for authority between the Sufi, sultan, and society. He negotiated the Sufi and sultan’s competing claims to authority while acting as a member of ‘Alā’ al-Dīn’s royal court as well as Nizam al-Dīn’s spiritual court. The poet’s *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān* and *Nuh Sipīhr* both show how Amīr Khuṣrau lived in two courts at once. Yet the texts also show how Amīr Khuṣrau searched for authority outside of the Sufi and sultan’s courts. Amīr Khuṣrau found a third source of authority in Hindūstān’s society and incorporated this social authority into these two texts. The result was the formation of an Indo-Persian poetic that systematically incorporated Indic imagery into the Persianate literary universe. At the same time, Amīr Khuṣrau advanced an Indo-Muslim identity that turned away from the western Persianate and Arab world and focused its gaze inward to Hindūstān.

#### **AMĪR KHUṢRAU’S *DEVAL RĀNĪ WA KHIẒR KHĀN***

Amīr Khuṣrau wrote the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān* (*Deval Rānī and Khizr Khān*) in A.H. 715/A.D. 1315, four years after the *Khazā’in al-Futūḥ* (*The Treasury of Victories*) discussed in the previous chapter. The poem narrated the courtship of Khizr Khān, the eldest son of Sultan ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Khaljī and the designated heir to the Delhi Sultanate throne, and his marriage to a Gujarati princess referred to as Deval Rānī.<sup>145</sup> Khizr Khān

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<sup>145</sup> Deval Rānī was almost certainly a Persian rendering of the Indic name Devalī or Devī, which appears to be either a regnal or a common name and should not be confused with Hammīra’s daughter of the same name discussed in the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* in chapter five.

approached Amīr Khuṣrau with a basic outline for the narrative that the poet rendered into verse.

From the king's son I easily accept this task without hesitation.  
I came into a high position through employment  
and returned with this book in hand.  
And after that I narrated this meaning  
in black letters and black secrets.

*Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, 41 vv. 11–13<sup>146</sup>

The poem originally culminated in the marriage of Khizr Khān and Deval Rānī. The lovers' story, however, did not end on such a happy note. Shortly after the text was completed, a palace coup occurred in which 'Alā' al-Dīn Khaljī died and his sons were imprisoned. Amīr Khuṣrau appended 319 verses several years later to the end of the text that described Khizr Khān's imprisonment, blinding (an act meant to exclude one from ruling), and his eventual execution. Deval Rānī apparently accompanied her husband during his imprisonment after which she disappeared from the historical record.

Unlike the prose *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ*, Amīr Khuṣrau composed the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān* in the Persian poetic style of *maṣnavī* (discussed in greater detail below), a style typically found in longer Persian epic poetry. The text combined biography with romance by describing the courtship and marriage between Deval Rānī (the beloved) and Khizr Khān (the lover), a comparison that was made in the text's opening epigraph.

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<sup>146</sup> All translations of the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān* are my own. I would like to acknowledge Professor Azhar Dehlavi of Jawaharlal Nehru University and Sadique Hussain for their patience as I struggled through this text during 2000–2001. All pagination refers to Rashīd Aḥmad Sālīm Anṣārī's copy of the text, republished as *Duwal Rani Khazir Khan*, ed. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami (Delhi: Idarah-i Adabiyat-i Delli, 1988).

ایں صحیفہ عشق کہ ہر حرفِ سطرش از زلفِ لیلی و بچہِ مجنوں  
می جنبانند و ہر سخنِ شیرینش در شگافتنِ دلمائے سنگین تیشہ فرہاد  
رماند بنامِ دولِ رانی و خضر خاں نوشته آمد

These pages of love, in which their every letter moves like the curls of Layla and the chains of Majnūn and in which their every word is like Shīrīn (sweetness) in breaking the hard-hearted like the axe of Farhād, is known by the name *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*.

*Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, opening epigraph<sup>147</sup>

In this passage Khuṣrau identified *Deval Rānī* and *Khizr Khān* with two famous couples: Layla and Majnūn from Arabic literature, Shīrīn and Farhād from Persian literature. These famous lovers came from the *Khamsa* of Niẓāmī, which Amīr imitated when he composed his own *Khamsa* in A.H. 697/A.D. 1298. Khuṣrau consciously manipulated the images of these literary figures, playing off Niẓāmī's *Khamsa* and his own *Khamsa*, in order to weave the images of Persian romance into the biographical sketch of his patrons. He also displayed his gift for literary imagination, first by comparing the flowing letters of Perso-Arabic script to the hair of Layla as well as the chains of Majnūn, and then by writing poetry like the sweet words of Shīrīn (a name, but also literally "sweetness") that melts the hard-hearted (a reference to Farhād who broke "hard-hearted" stones).

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<sup>147</sup> Translated by the author from Amīr Khuṣrau, *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, ed. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami, 1. As noted in the Preface, the Persian reproduction comes from Rashīd Aḥmad Sālim Anṣārī's *Diwal Rānī-yi Khaḍir Khān* (A.H. 1336/A.D. 1917) and is in the public domain.

## PRAISE AND PANEGYRIC IN THE *DEVAL RĀNĪ WA KHIẒR KHĀN*

The *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān* contained an unusually lengthy introduction, comprising approximately one-third of the entire text, that consisted of praise, panegyric, and descriptions of Sultanate conquests. After the opening literary salutation quoted above, which compared Deval Rānī and Khizr Khān to the lovers of Persian poetry, Amīr Khuṣrau followed a standard Islamic introduction by praising Allah, the prophet, the caliphs, and finally Niẓām al-Dīn ‘Auliyā’.

Praises to that *shaikh* who is an example of the pious mirror  
with a nature that exactly mirrors Muhammad.

Now after the preface in praise of the prophet,  
with remembrance of the Sufi master [*pīr*] there should be discourse.

Niẓām al-Dīn is the right and happiest name of him.  
He is the Niẓām who seized the religion of truth.

For his address read the two points exactly.<sup>148</sup>  
He knows the marks of the wisdom of the prophets.

The name of Muḥammad and the sign of Muḥammad,  
is evident in him like the *haaf* [letter ḥ] and *miim* [letter m] in Aḥmad

The light of the two worlds is from his knowledge.  
In both worlds this knowledge was acquired and self-taught.

His message, the statements of commands and prohibitions,  
is one step lower than the speech of Jibr’īl.<sup>149</sup>

Resembling the prophets with a chaste life,  
he is like the *kaaf* [letter k] for the other letters of the alphabet.

On account of the height of his prayers the sky must move  
in a circle like it did for Muḥammad’s *mi’rāj* [accession into heaven]

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<sup>148</sup> The two points (*nuqta*) refer to the two dots in the spelling of *Niẓām* in Perso-Arabic script.

<sup>149</sup> That is, the word of Allah which was recited through the angel Jibr’īl. (Gabriel) to the Prophet Muḥammad.

His center is the shade of the stars.  
His place of sitting is where god is living.

Jesus and Khizr are seated on the throne.  
He kisses Khizr's hand and Khizr Khān kisses the feet.<sup>150</sup>

Each breath of Jesus, with its hidden grace,  
Imparts a wave of life to the dead people.

He decorates the Sufi's throne with the *ṣūf* [wool]  
of the pious and decorates the throne of Muḥammad.

His breath is like Mary who conceived Jesus.  
The water from his mouth is balm for the injured hearts.

In every direction his breath reaches,  
thousands of mountains of miseries flee.

In every direction that he reads the praises of God,  
he hinders death of its function.

He senses the hidden, long-lasting love.  
His supplication is the treasure in love's treasury.

His heart, which is filled with desire, has two branded marks.  
(He is) the lamp that lights the balcony of God.

The angel with courage has opened his wings  
(and) revealed the heavens for the sake of (that) dervish [Sufi].

In heaven, in memory of that great person,  
Jupiter has folded its carpet.

Some have placed his woolen shawl upon their shoulder,  
some have placed the pen to paper for him.

I don't want the *khilafat* [apostleship, i.e. to become his successor].  
I want only to die myself under the feet of Niẓām al-Dīn.

All praise to God (who) chose

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<sup>150</sup> Sadique Hussain, who read the text with me on a daily basis, offered the following explanation for this verse: Niẓām al-Dīn kisses the hand of the prophets, Jesus and Khizr, while Khizr Khān kisses the feet of Niẓām al-Dīn (a sign that Khizr Khān was a disciple of Niẓām al-Dīn 'Auliya'.)

that special servant who is the pure *pīr* [Sufi master].

(Nizām al-Dīn) will sit near Muḥammad.  
From my proximity I too will be near to him.

*Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, 15 v. 5–16 v. 13<sup>151</sup>

Amīr Khuṣrau followed these praises for Nizām al-Dīn ‘Auliyā’ with exhortations on leading a virtuous life and established Nizām al-Dīn as both the spiritual and moral authority in Delhi.

The praise of Nizām al-Dīn so early in the text, before either the heir-apparent Khizr Khān or Sultan ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Khaljī, merits comment since this could be seen to directly contradict the Sufi/sultan dichotomy advocated by Simon Digby and Sunil Kumar. In this instance two traditions in Persian scholarship collide. In Persian poetry, the poet’s patron usually received praise before other contemporary figures; however, Islamicate works also follow a standardized introduction beginning with *ḥamd* (Praise of Allah), *na’at* (Praise of the Prophet), and *manqabat* (Praise of the Contemporaries of the Prophet). Amīr Khuṣrau followed this standard Islamicate introduction and praised Nizām al-Dīn immediately after the *manqabat*. If a competition existed between Sultan ‘Alā’ al-Dīn and the Sufi Nizām al-Dīn, then placing Nizām al-Dīn directly after the praises to Allah, the Prophet, and the Contemporaries of the Prophet negotiated this conflict. The pro-‘Auliyā’ faction could have read the praises to Nizām al-Dīn in the beginning of the text as an acknowledgement of his prominence over ‘Alā’ al-Dīn, while the pro-Khaljī faction could have read the praises to Nizām al-Dīn as nothing more than a standardized Islamicate introduction.<sup>152</sup>

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<sup>151</sup> Translated by the author from Amīr Khuṣrau, *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, ed. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami.

<sup>152</sup> Persian poets commonly employed ambiguity in verse as a means to criticize their patron or the ruling elite. Firdausi criticized his lack of recognition and payment from Maḥmūd of Ghazna in the *Shāhnāma*, just as al-Bīrūnī criticized the destruction Maḥmūd wrought upon the Hindu society in the *Tahqīq mā lil-Hind*. Amīr Khuṣrau used ambiguity not to criticize his patron, but to negotiate his loyalty to both ‘Alā’ al-Dīn and Nizām al-Dīn.

Khuṣṛau was an undeniable favorite of the Sufi. As noted in the previous chapter, Amīr Khuṣṛau became a disciple to Niẓām al-Dīn in A.H. 671/A.D. 1272 when the Sufi lived in the house of ‘Imād al-Mulk (Khuṣṛau’s grandfather). Amīr Khuṣṛau became a disciple a quarter of a century before ‘Alā’ al-Dīn ascended the throne and forty-three years before Khuṣṛau wrote the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*. Amīr Khūrd (d. A.H. 770/A.D. 1368–69), who composed a biography on a number of prominent figures in the Delhi Sultanate, noted the close bond the two men shared in his description of Niẓām al-Dīn’s daily routine.

The night prayers were offered in congregation in the hall below. Thereafter the visitors left and the Shaykh [Niẓām al-Dīn ‘Auliya’] returned to his room upstairs. There he busied himself in his devotions for some time... none but Amir Khusrau could remain in the presence of the saint. The poet, who was always full of reports, news, and reviews, would talk about different matters as the Shaykh approvingly nodded his head. Sometimes the Shaykh would ask: ‘What more, O Turk?’ and Khusrau would expound on different matters.<sup>153</sup>

A story often quoted in the fourteenth century linked the two in death as well. Amīr Khuṣṛau, who accompanied Sultan Ghiyās al-Dīn Tughlug on a military campaign to Lakhnautī in A.H. 725/A.D. 1325, learned of Niẓām al-Dīn’s death as the army returned to Delhi. Amīr Khuṣṛau reportedly composed the following couplet (in spoken Hindavī) upon hearing the news:

The beauty sleeps on the bed, tresses covering the face,  
Let’s go home, Khusraw, evening has set over the world.<sup>154</sup>

Amīr Khūrd concluded his biography on Amīr Khuṣṛau with the following words:

In conclusion, Amir Khusraw accompanied Sultan Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq to Lakhnawti. During his absence Sultan al-Mashayikh [Niẓām al-Dīn ‘Auliya’]

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<sup>153</sup> Paraphrased from Amīr Khūrd’s *Siyar al-Auliya’* quoted in Amīr Ḥasan Dihlavī, *Morals for the Heart: Conversations of Shaykh Nizam ad-din Awliya Recorded by Amir Hasan Sijzi*, trans. Bruce Lawrence (New York: Paulist Press, 1992), 34.

<sup>154</sup> Translated by Sunil Sharma, *Amir Khusraw*, 35. For an alternate translation, see Khaliq Nizami’s introduction to the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, 19. Niẓām al-Dīn died on 18 Rabī II 725 (March 29, 1325) and Amīr Khuṣṛau died six months later on 17 Shawwāl 725 (September 26, 1325).

passed away. When he returned from the trip he blackened his face, tore his shirt, and rolling on the ground came towards the hovel of Sultan al-Mashayikh, with torn clothes, weeping eyes, and blood racing in his heart. Then he said, “O Muslims! Who am I to grieve for such a king, rather let me grieve for myself for after Sultan al-Mashayikh I will not have long to live.” After that he lived for six months, then passed away. He was buried at the far end of the garden of Sultan al-Mashayikh—may God have mercy upon him.<sup>155</sup>

Amīr Khuṣrau was buried in a tomb just to the south of Niẓām al-Dīn, a position that marks him today—and perhaps seven centuries ago as well—as Niẓām al-Dīn’s closest companion.

The tomb of Niẓām ud-Dīn ‘Auliya’ continued to attract followers over the centuries. *Qawwalīs* (singers, minstrels) outside the tomb sang Amīr Khuṣrau’s verses that praised Niẓām ud-Dīn as devotees showed their reverence to both men. The reverence later rulers felt toward both men is physically displayed in the tombs, which were constructed of white marble in a style that dates to the seventeenth-century Mughal period. The only structure in the complex constructed during the fourteenth century that exists today is a mosque to the west of Niẓām al-Dīn’s tomb. Tradition has credited Khizr Khān with the construction of this mosque; however, Hussein Keshani has argued that the Delhi sultan Fīrūz Shāh Tughluq (r. A.H. 752–790/A.D. 1351–1388) constructed the mosque in a style that imitated the Khaljī architecture.<sup>156</sup> Khizr Khān constructed some structure, according to later texts, although whether he constructed a building at the site of Niẓām al-Dīn’s tomb (the Niẓām al-Dīn *dargāh*) or at his nearby monastic residence (*khānqāh*) remains unknown.<sup>157</sup>

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<sup>155</sup> Sunil Sharma translated Amīr Khūrd’s biography on Amīr Khuṣrau as an appendix to *Amir Khusraw*, 93–98. The quoted passage is found on page 98.

<sup>156</sup> Hussein Keshani, “Building Nizamuddin: A Delhi Sultanate *Dargah* and its Surrounding Buildings,” (M.A. thesis, University of Victoria [Canada], 2000), 48–75 and 198–200.

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*, 52–59.



Amīr Khuṣrau followed these verses on Niẓām al-Dīn ‘Auliyā’ with an extraordinarily long panegyric to the reigning sultan ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Khaljī. It began with the following passage:

Praises to ‘Alā’ al-Dīn inscribed as the worthy caliph for  
the religion of Allah and Muḥammad (Peace be Upon Him).

The heart’s ocean swelled with waves  
that jewels were thrown to the height of heaven.

The heavens were drowned to such an extent with these jewels  
that the sky could not differentiate between the jewels and the stars.

This wave of pearls made a path on the sky  
scattered by me on the door of the *shāh*.

That *shāh* who is the Alexander of the known world,  
has a heart that is like the Mirror of Alexander.<sup>158</sup>

He is the Pride of the Faith (‘Alā’ī al-Dīn), the King of the World,  
the Power of the Deputy of God.

Muḥammad Shāh who is like a hundred Khusrows and Jamsheeds<sup>159</sup>  
bears the seal (*khatam*) through the *miim* (letter m) of his name.

*Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, 16 v. 14–17 v. 5<sup>160</sup>

In this passage Amīr Khuṣrau displayed his imagination, poetic ability, and praise for the sultan. He referred to ‘Alā’ al-Dīn as Alexander the Great, an obvious reference to the sultan’s adoption of the title “the Second Alexander.” Other titles mentioned by Amīr Khuṣrau included Pride of the Faith (‘*alā’ī dīn wa dunyā*), the King of the World (*shāh walā*), and the Power of the Almighty God (*qadarat-i nā’ib-i īzīdat’alī*). The title, Pride of the Faith (‘*alā’ī dīn wa dunyā*), came directly from ‘Alā’ al-Dīn’s inscriptions on

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<sup>158</sup> The “Mirror of Alexander”(gīr-namā) was “a mirror supposed to be in possession of Alexander the Great, which represented every transaction on the face of the world,” F. Steingass *Comprehensive Dictionary of Persian* (1892; reprint, Delhi: Munishiram Manoharlal, 1996), 1108.

<sup>159</sup> Khusrow and Jamsheed were two Pre-Islamic kings of Persia. Firdausī, the “Father of Persian literature” related their exploits in the *Shāhnāma*.

<sup>160</sup> Translated by the author from Amīr Khuṣrau, *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, ed. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami.

minted coins that carried his regnal name of ‘Alā’ al-dunyā wa’l dīn.<sup>161</sup> Amīr Khuṣrau likely chose these epithets to fit the meter rather than promote a new religious identity for ‘Alā’ al-Dīn. Amīr Khuṣrau also included a wonderful play on the emperor’s full regnal title, ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Muḥammad Shāh Khaljī, in the final verse. Muḥammad in Perso-Arabic script is spelled (without short vowels) as m-ḥ-m-d, which minus the first letter (m or miim), spells ḥ-m-d or with the unwritten vowels included *Aḥmad* (lit. “most praiseworthy”). *Aḥmad* commonly referred to the Prophet Muḥammad, who was the seal (khatam) or last of the prophets. In this passage, like the previous passage on Niẓām al-Dīn, Amīr Khuṣrau masterfully finessed praising ‘Alā’ al-Dīn while not offending Niẓām al-Dīn. The passage could be read as elevating ‘Alā’ al-Dīn to a position second only to the caliph or read simply as a series of honorific titles and literary puns.<sup>162</sup>

Amīr Khuṣrau spent an incredibly long time praising his patron and Khizr Khān’s father, ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Khajī. In fact the praises are so long that it is difficult to determine where the panegyric ends, but if one started with the above passage and ended with Khuṣrau’s description of the former Delhi Sultanate rulers, then the praises to ‘Alā’ al-Dīn extend over 442 couplets or 30 pages of printed text. At times Amīr Khuṣrau praised the sultan’s character and at other times the sultan’s actions. For example, Amīr Khuṣrau commented on ‘Alā’ al-Dīn’s conquests in Hindūstān with the following verses.

In every direction that army of the world-conqueror went,  
the sky filled with cries of *Allahu Akbar* (God is Great).

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<sup>161</sup> Stan Goron and J. P. Goenka, *Coins of the Indian Sultanates: Covering the Area of Present-day India, Pakistan and Bagladesh* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 2001), 37.

<sup>162</sup> Amīr Khuṣrau, in fact, was quite famous for composing riddles, word games, and literary enigmas in both vernacular Hindavī and Persian. A number of word games attributed to Amīr Khusru may be found in Amrit Rai, *A House Divided: The Origin and Development of Hind/Hindavi* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1984).

Hundreds bowed from every direction toward the pious Ka'ba  
and the [Hindu] temple was caused to put its face on the earth.

Solomon's winds blew from him  
and thousands of elephants fled on the way.

A drop from his sword looked like a flood to the Mongols.  
Many storms of Raksh<sup>163</sup> were brought from his army.

His arrow pierced the pearls of the stars.  
His carpet lies on the fifth balcony of heaven.

On the dust of his threshold the angel writes  
each and every attribute of the kings.

The lions [army] of his royal hall reach the sun.  
Allah made the lion hopeful of (basking in) the sun.

The kings of the regions come to his door  
with the *jizya* [tax] on their head to prostrate to him.

The other kings obtain dignity from his door.  
The crown receives its height from his head.

The portraits of the kings' faces in his hall  
are like the Chinese silks that line the corridors.

Saturn has applied the dirt of his door to its face  
like the Hindu applies vermilion to his own face in the spring.

Heaven should proceed slowly  
so that his reign will last for a long time.

*Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, 18 v. 6–19 v. 1<sup>164</sup>

Many of the tropes discussed in chapter two appear in this passage: the (Somnāt?)  
temple (*butkhāna*) that prostrated to the Ka'ba in Mecca, the association between

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<sup>163</sup> Raksh was the horse of Rustam. Rustam embodied the warrior–hero and was one of the principal heroes in Firdausī's Persian epic, the *Shāhnāma*. Abū al-Qāsim Firdausī, *The Epic of Kings: Shah-nama, the national epic of Persia*, trans. Reuben Levy (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967) and *Shahnameh: The Persian Book of Kings*, trans. Dick Davis (New York: Viking, 2006).

<sup>164</sup> Translated by the author from Amīr Khuṣrau, *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, ed. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami.

Mongols and floods, and the trope of loftiness (arrows piercing the stars, his carpet lying on the fifth heaven, angels who write on the dust of ‘Alā’ al-Dīn’s threshold).

Amīr Khuṣrau also wove moral tales (often under the heading of *ḥikāyat*) into the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, many of which revolved around King Solomon and the King of the Ants or tales such as the following:

The mouse’s tale (an allegory)

There once was a mouse who dreamt he was a camel.  
He was happy in heart and mind.

He was happy on account of his sound sleep  
and (as a camel) roamed here and there in happiness.

Suddenly a heavy burden was put on the camel.  
It was a troublesome burden of 100 *mans* [800 lbs].

The miserable mouse became helpless under that burden  
and on account of that misery, it killed the camel (dream).

It is good to interpret these sweet dreams  
so that the wrong meaning does not make an impression.

*Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, 26 v. 5–26 v. 10<sup>165</sup>

This passage on not being deceived by perceptions of grandeur contained the type of moralistic tale commonly found in the Persian “mirrors for princes” literature.<sup>166</sup>

While this served as a means to break up the monotony of panegyric in the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, it also provided a means for indirectly criticizing ‘Alā’ al-Dīn’s policies.

After an informative section that described the previous rulers of the Delhi Sultanate, Amīr Khuṣrau returned to more praises for ‘Alā’ al-Dīn and narrated his various military campaigns. Interestingly, Amīr Khuṣrau mentioned two Gujarat

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<sup>165</sup> Translated by the author from Amīr Khuṣrau, *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, ed. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami.

<sup>166</sup> See Julie Meisami, *Persian Historiography to the End of the Twelfth Century* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999). Two works that exemplify this style of writing are: Nizām al-Mulk, *Siyāstnāma* and ‘Unṣur Ma‘ālī Qabus, *Mirror for Princes: The Qabus Nama*, trans. Reuben Levy (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1951).

campaigns in the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān* whereas he only included the first in the *Khazā'in al-Futūh*. The campaign of A.H. 698/A.D. 1299, discussed in the *Khazā'in al-Futūh*, has remained the more famous of the two campaigns even though it was a raid more than a conquest. Led by 'Alā' al-Dīn's brother Ulugh Khān and 'Alā' al-Dīn's minister and general Nuṣrat Khān, this campaign culminated in the sack of the Somnāt (Somanātha) temple. As discussed in chapter two, 'Alā' al-Dīn actively engaged in symbolic forms of legitimacy. He expanded the Quṭb Minār complex in order to symbolically link himself to the founders of the Delhi Sultanate, Quṭb al-Dīn Aibak and Shams al-Dīn Iltutmish.<sup>167</sup> His conquest of the Somnāt temple symbolically linked him to Maḥmūd of Ghazna, the first sultan to campaign in Hindūstān, who also sacked the Somnāt temple.

With the power his lofty fortune, he struck the kings.  
The king of Gujarat fell to his grip.

He sent the grand Ulugh Khān  
who sent the dust of the that land into the wind.

For the king and for the honor of the eternal religion,  
(Ulugh Khān) struck that bad king for the good king.

For the brave warriors who are like the sea and shore,  
the cup was filled up with blood of the captives.

Injury befell Somnāt, which fell in that place,  
on account of which the world's temple became afraid.

There was such a strong force (of soldiers) that it raised the foundations.  
The earth shook as if it had fallen in the river.

See how happiness came from the good stars.  
Such a praiseworthy omen arose for Maḥmūd as well.

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<sup>167</sup> Chapter two of this dissertation discussed 'Alā' al-Dīn's expansion of the Quṭb Minār and its symbolism.

When he became successful in his goal (of conquering Somnāt).  
(‘Alā’ al-Dīn) became the acknowledged successor (of Maḥmūd).

*Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, 64 vv. 4–10<sup>168</sup>

After sacking the Somnāt temple and while returning to Delhi, Ulugh Khān and Nuṣrat Khān attempted to collect the sultan’s share of the loot from the soldiers as prescribed by Islamic law. Some recent converts to Islam of Mongol descent, apparently unfamiliar with this law, refused and led a brief rebellion. As this rebellion occurred, through either strategy or chance, a nearby Hindu ruler Kānhaḍ Devā chose to attack the Sultanate encampment and captured much of the Somnāt loot (see chapter five). Ulugh Khān and Nuṣrat Khān regained control of the army, but the “Neo-Muslims” had fled. They eventually found refuge in the Ranthambhor Fort. One of these Mongols, known as Muḥammad Shāh in Persian sources and Mahimāsāhī in the Sanskrit *Hammīra Mahākāvya* (the subject of chapter five), died fighting the Sultanate army in the service of Hammīra. Amīr Khuṣrau also described a second Gujarat campaign in the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*. Amīr Khuṣrau, unfortunately, did not give a date for this second campaign in which Gujarat was conquered and annexed into the Delhi Sultanate, but it seems to have occurred sometime between A.H. 704–710/A.D. 1304–5 to 1310–11.<sup>169</sup>

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<sup>168</sup> Translated by the author from Amīr Khuṣrau, *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, ed. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami.

<sup>169</sup> Scholars currently accept that ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Khaljī conducted two military campaigns against Gujarat. The first occurred in A.H. 698/A.D. 1299, which led to the sacking of the Somnāt temple. The second campaign occurred a few years later. A second campaign occurred around A.H. 705/A.D. 1305–06, according to Z.A. Desai, “A Persian Inscription of Karna Deva Vaghela of Gujarat,” *Epigraphia Indica Arabic and Persian Supplement* (1975): 13–20; Satish Chandra Misra *The Rise of Muslim Power in Gujarat: A History of Gujarat from 1298 to 1442*. (New York: Asia Publishing House, 1963), 64–66; Elizabeth Lambourn, “A Collection of Merits Gathered from Different Sources: The Islamic Marble Carving and Architecture of Cambay in Gujarat Between 1200 and 1350 AD,” (Ph.D. diss. School of Oriental and African Studies in University of London, 1999), 47–50. Peter Jackson has challenged the certainty of this date, preferring to put the conquest of Gujarat between 1304 and 1310 (*Delhi Sultanate*, 195–197).

Amīr Khuṣrau also included a description of the Ranthambhor and Siwāna military campaigns examined in the previous chapter. He described the Ranthambhor campaign as follows:

He started with the feet of elephant and the treasury  
toward the (region of) Jhāin (governed by) Ulugh Khān.

Toward the fortress of Ranthambhor he quickly went.  
Where a mountain of tulips grows from the flowing of blood.

On account of all the dust around the army,  
they appeared like the ocean that surrounds the land.

At the same time, according to tradition, the king ('Alā' al-Dīn)  
also went toward him and struck the mountain of halls.

The fort itself had such a highness that it  
rivaled the king who has highness as well as strength.

(Hammīra) was a king as well as the progeny of Pithōrā,  
but on account of pride, carried a haughty air.

On account of being full of roaring, he brought (self-)deception.  
He claimed the title of Hammīr Dēv.

He ['Alā' al-Dīn?] had ten thousand fast horses  
who were like the swift wind that (arises) from the fast blowing [horses].

Two weeks after they left Delhi,  
the litters were placed on the elephants.

The infantry and cavalry were without limit.  
And what can I say of the infantry? It was countless.

The castle (*hisāri*) was three farsang [11.6 miles?] from its walls.  
From the throwing of rocks, it looked like a shower from the clouds.

They ['Alā' al-Dīn's army] collected in a circle around the fort  
which was lower by one point than Kheybar.

Muḥammad, shāh of the world, arrived  
and surrounded that Khaybar like 'Alī.

The catapults (*maghribī*) arose from east and west  
And put down that tower in a single stroke.

At the moment the awesome rock struck  
it was as if every beam of the turret fell to the ground.

When this clever rock was at the side of the king,  
He put his face on the earth to eat that fort (*qal'a*).

The king had courage for his foundation,  
after one or two courageous months he opened the (the fort).

The fortress (*dezhī*) [constructed] from one stone placed on another  
was built through over thirty years of endeavors.

When it had the right intention to that path [of Islam]  
The need of one hundred years came in one month.

*Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, 65 v. 1–66 v. 5<sup>170</sup>

The trope of loftiness has appeared once again, and as in the *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ*, it has occurred in reference to the fort ramparts as well as Hammīra whose “highness” is reflected in his magnanimousness and strength. The next couplet is also very interesting: “He was a king as well as the progeny of Pithōrā / but on account of pride, carried a haughty air.” Hammīra’s downfall in the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* clearly arose from his hubris, which he finally recognized during the early morning hours before the *jauhar* (self-immolation of the women) and his subsequent death on the battlefield. Amīr Khuṣrau made no mention of this in the *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ*, but the account is clearly supported by the Sanskrit *Hammīra Mahākāvya*. The reference made to Hammīra as a lion also occurs in the *Hammīra Mahākāvya*, when Hammīra tells Mahimāsāhī that a Rajput is one who roars like a lion at the time of death and who indeed roared like a lion in his final battle against the Sultanate soldiers. Lastly, Amīr Khuṣrau also wove

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<sup>170</sup> Translated by the author from Amīr Khuṣrau, *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, ed. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami.



this image of Hammīra eating stones, apparently out of hunger, into the *Khazā'in al-Futūh*.

Scholars have long speculated that Amīr Khuṣrau attended many of the campaigns he described in his works. He clearly attended some military excursions against the Mongols and he related the story of his capture by the Mongols in both the *Miftāh al-Futūh* as well as the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*. At the end of his description on the Malwa campaigns, he included the following verses.

However this sword wielder was master of the pen.  
The sword was also a standard in the army.

When he knew the shāh of the world's favor  
The pen-bearers wrote like the swords of the kings.

*Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, 68 vv. 8–9<sup>171</sup>

This would seem to indicate that Amīr Khuṣrau attended the Malwa campaign of A.H. 705/A.D. 1305 that led to the Delhi Sultanate's conquest of Mandū under the general 'Aīn al-Mulk. Given the extensive description of the Deccan campaigns contained in the *Khazā'in al-Futūh*, it seems possible that Amīr Khuṣrau remained in Malwa or perhaps traveled with other divisions of the Sultanate army before he accompanied Malik Kāfūr the following year (A.D. 706/A.D. 1306–7) to Dēvgīr/Dēōgīr.<sup>172</sup>

Amīr Khuṣrau wedged his account on Siwāna between his descriptions of the conquest of Malwa and the Deccan campaigns. Although brief, the account offered some interesting imagery and historical information.

And from there (Mandū) the shāh proceeded towards the kingdom  
officially known as Siwāna.<sup>173</sup>

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<sup>171</sup> Translated by the author from Amīr Khuṣrau, *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, ed. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami.

<sup>172</sup> The argument against this is Amīr Khuṣrau's lifelong reluctance to leave the city of Delhi.

<sup>173</sup> Rashīd Ahmad Sālīm Anṣārī writes *samāna* instead of *siwāna* in the text, but notes that *siwāna* occurs as a textual variant in the Asafiya Library manuscript (*Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, ed. Nizami, 59). Nizami also interprets the word as *Samāna* and notes in his introduction that *Samāna* was in Sind. (*Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, ed. Nizami, 50–52). The reference to Satal De, whom the *Kānhaḍade Prabandh* also cited as the ruler

There was a bad, strong-armed king there.  
They [?] pulled down the stones of the kings for support.

The large Satan, whose name was Satal Dēv,  
all his cavalry were in order and all were faithful.

Many hardhearted Satanists (*gabrān*)<sup>174</sup> were in his service.  
On top of the fort (*qal'a*), they were harder than his castle (*hiṣārī*).

His [?] sword became ruby colored.  
He snatched the country from most of the kings.

The shāh's army was stationed for five or six years.  
He could not bring down half the bricks.

With one movement the shāh prepared to go.  
He began [the conquest] on that mountain with a sea of soldiers.

It was Satal Dēv who had numerous elephants.  
The sleeping elephants were awakened on account of the shāh.

After that he [Malik Kāfūr?] became promoted in the shāh's army,  
and as such he [led] the way in the direction of Telingī.

*Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, 69 vv. 2–10<sup>175</sup>

Amīr Khuṣrau has introduced some confusion in these verses largely due to his use of the third singular pronoun. Do the king's hardhearted soldiers pull down the stones of the (rival) kings for support or does 'Alā' al-Dīn's army pull down the stones for an escalate? Whose sword became ruby colored through the conquest of kings—Satal Dē's sword or 'Alā' al-Dīn's sword?

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of Siwāna during this time, clearly indicates that *siwāna* (a region in southern Rajasthan) is the correct reading.

<sup>174</sup> The translation of *gabrān* as Satanists is very loose. The Persian word *gabr* (pl. *gabrān*) meant Zoroastrians or “fire worshippers” and generally referred to any pagan or infidel. The word is not as common in Indo-Persian works as it is among Iranian authors who wrote about Hindūstān (e.g., Sa'dī used the word in his *Bustān*). Since Amīr Khuṣrau chose such an unusual word for infidel, perhaps working off the allusion between the fire worshipping Zoroastrians and the fire of Hell, I have chosen a non-traditional translation with a similarly unusual word choice. Note that Amīr Khuṣrau used the same reference to the Hindus as *gabr* and the allusion to the fort as Hell in the *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ* (see the translation in chapter two).

<sup>175</sup> Translated by the author from Amīr Khuṣrau, *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, ed. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami.

The introduction to the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān* comprised a third of the entire text. As the above passages have indicated, this text contained a wealth of historical material. The introduction began with praises to Allah, the Prophet Muḥammad, and the Companions of the Prophet before it addressed the contemporary figures of the Delhi Sultanate. Amīr Khuṣrau praised Niẓām al-Dīn ‘Auliya’ in the beginning of the text and he strategically placed these praises directly after the praises to Allah, the Prophet, and the caliphs. Praises to ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Khaljī immediately followed. The vast bulk of the introduction consisted of praises to ‘Alā’ al-Dīn. A deeper analysis of Amīr Khuṣrau’s work lies outside the scope of this dissertation, but it seems likely that Amīr Khuṣrau drew upon years of his panegyric *qaṣīda* poetry as well as his previous poetry in composing these verses on ‘Alā’ al-Dīn. Numerous allusions from the prose *Khazā’in al-Futūḥ* have reappeared in the *maṣnavī* verse *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān* even though this text did not contain the *nasabat* (allusion) emplotment found within the *Khazā’in al-Futūḥ*. The inclusion in the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān* of the same literary imagery found in the *Khazā’in al-Futūḥ* without any reference to the stated *nasabat* (allusion) reinforces the argument in the previous chapter that these allusions were also tropes known to the medieval audience but lost today.

### **The Lover and Beloved in the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān***

The first third of the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*—often referred to as the “historical part” of the text—contained an extended introduction of praise and panegyric as well as descriptions of the Delhi Sultanate’s dynastic history and military conquests. The remaining two-thirds of the text focused on the courtship and marriage of Khizr Khān and Deval Rānī. The division between biography and panegyric, like the previous section, was never definitive and this part of the text also contained

numerous stories (*hikāyat*) similar to the “Mouse who thought he was a camel” story quoted above, astronomical allusions (Amīr Khuṣrau was apparently an avid astronomer/astrologer), and outright panegyric. Amīr Khuṣrau sprinkled numerous historical details throughout the text and included a description of the second conquest of Gujarat, which led to the marriage alliance between Deval Rānī and Khizr Khān, in this second section of the text.

Amīr Khuṣrau broke the monotony that might otherwise arise in four thousand verses of *maṣnavī* by including poetic interludes.<sup>176</sup> These interludes often functioned like a Greek chorus within the text. At times they recapitulated, in even greater poetic imagery, the biographical details Khuṣrau provided in the previous section. At other times and particularly toward the end, the interludes foreshadowed the next section of the story. Often these interludes had marginal or even no connection to the more biographical sections that preceded and followed them. In every instance, however, these interludes contained poetic imagery and imagination that surpassed anything else in the text. Khuṣrau clearly meant to distinguish and separate these interludes from the more biographical sections of the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*.

The print edition of the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān* as well as every manuscript seen by the author has marked these interludes with a set of standardized titles. The printed edition marked these interludes with the headings *ghazal az zabān-i ‘āshiq* (*ghazals* from the tongue of the lover) followed in every case by *pāsukh az lab-i ma’shauq* (responses from the lips of the beloved). Many manuscripts have utilized these headings to divide the sections, with the most common variant being *az zabān-i ‘āshiq* and *az lab-i ma’shauq*. This textual variation, which is obviously marginal, is hinged on

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<sup>176</sup> In the first third of the text, the “historical section” that consisted primarily of panegyric, these interludes were stories such as the mouse who thought he was a camel. In the latter two-thirds of the text, what I am terming the “biographical section” of Khizr Khān and Deval Rānī’s courtship and marriage, the interludes were primarily *ghazal* poetry.

the use of the word *ghazal*. Amīr Khuṣṣrau followed a *maṣnavī* rhyme scheme when he composed the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*. In the *maṣnavī*, the final syllable of the hemistich in each couplet must rhyme. This produced the *maṣnavī* rhyme scheme of AA/BB/CC/DD/ and so forth.

This was not the case for the *ghazal*. The *ghazal* followed a rhyme scheme of AA/BA/CA/DA. Unlike the *maṣnavī*, the two hemistiches did not need to rhyme. Rather, the rhyme occurred with the final syllable (*radīf*) of the final hemistich in the couplet. This produced the *ghazal*'s distinct rhyme scheme of AA/BA/CA/DA.<sup>177</sup> The last couplet of the *ghazal* also failed to contain Amīr Khuṣṣrau's name (*takhalus*), another standard practice in *ghazal* composition. Although called “*ghazal*,” these verses all followed the *maṣnavī* rhyme scheme. The length and content of the “*ghazals* from the lover” also conformed more to *maṣnavī* than *ghazal* poetry.<sup>178</sup> Thus, the word *ghazal* in “*ghazals from the lover*” served to distinguish the highly poetic interlude from the remainder of the text.

Khuṣṣrau may have provided a clue on how to read these *ghazals*. Amīr Khuṣṣrau wrote in the *Ghurrat al-Kamāl* (A.H. 693/A.D. 1293),

Whatever *mathnawi* and *ghazal* I have written,  
that is an emulation of the genius of Nizami and Sa'di.<sup>179</sup>

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<sup>177</sup> This *radīf* end-rhyme is a defining characteristic of the *ghazal*. A poet's collection of *ghazals* was often alphabetically organized according to the *radīf*.

<sup>178</sup> The *ghazal* tended to be shorter poems, two to twelve verses in length. These *maṣnavī* passages that Khuṣṣrau labels as *ghazal* were twice as long, or about twenty to thirty verses in length.

<sup>179</sup> For the Persian couplet and its translation, see Waris Kirmani, “Khusrau and the Tradition of Persian Ghazal,” *Life, Times and Works of Amir Khusrau Delhavi*, ed. Zoe Ansari (New Delhi: National Amir Khusrau Society, 1975), 170. That said, Rahman points out that Amīr Khuṣṣrau “perhaps overwhelmed with a sense of his poetic genius” includes the following couplet in his *Khamsa*:

Khusrau's grandeur grew high and  
there took place a tremor in Nizami's grave.

For the Persian couplet, the quotation, and the translation, see Syed Sabahuddin Abdul Rahman, “Appreciative Study of Variegatedness of Amir Khusrau's Poetry,” *Life, Times and Works of Amir Khusrau Delhavi*, ed. Zoe Ansari (New Delhi: National Amir Khusrau Society, 1975), 92.

Nizāmī Ganjavī (A.H. 535-40 to 613?/A.D. 1141-46 to 1209?) and Sa’dī (A.H. 610-15 to 691/A.D. 1213-19 to 1292) were two of the greatest poets in Persian literature and Amīr Khuṣrau certainly invoked their names as a means to legitimize his poetry by placing himself in their company. Yet, this passage goes beyond legitimization. Nizāmī in his *maṣnavī* verse and Sa’dī (especially in the *ghazal*) infused Sufi imagery into their poetry. Amīr Khuṣrau opened the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān* with an epigraph (translated above, page 79) that compared Deval Rānī and Khizr Khān to the Arabic lovers Layla/Majnūn and Persian lovers Shīrīn/Farhād. The story of these lovers extended back into Arabic and Persian folklore and were later rewritten in Persian as two separate *maṣnavī* poems in Nizāmī’s five-part *Khamsa*. Nizāmī’s *Khamsa* apparently had a strong impact on Khuṣrau and in A.H. 700/A.D. 1301 Amīr Khuṣrau reworked these themes to produce his own *Khamsa* that followed Nizāmī’s storyline. Layla and Majnūn made another appearance in the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān* with the following verses:

The discourse in this book is for the lovers  
known in our time as Deval Rānī and Khizr Khān.

This parchment possesses the blessed picture and word;  
It is a blessed omen in two ways.

One is that inside (the book) is the that very success  
[through which], O Khizr Khān, you rule the kingdoms.

The second is that in that in a style like Layla and Majnūn  
(Amīr Khuṣrau) composed the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*.

*Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, 44 v. 16–45 v. 3<sup>180</sup>

In this last couplet Amīr Khuṣrau claimed to have written the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān* in the style of Layla and Majnūn. That Amīr Khuṣrau emulated Nizāmī is clear. The question is whether Amīr Khuṣrau also incorporated Sufi imagery into the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān* as Nizāmī did in his *Khamsa*.

<sup>180</sup> Translated by the author from Amīr Khuṣrau, *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, ed. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami.

## THE GHAZAL IN THE *DEVAL RĀNĪ WA KHIẒR KHĀN*

Digby and Kumar both located Amīr Khuṣrau within ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Khaljī’s camp in the Sufi and sultan’s competition to become the principal source of authority for the Indo-Muslim community. The first third of the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān* contained panegyric to both Niẓām al-Dīn ‘Auliyā’ and ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Khaljī. The remainder of the text focused on the royal court, particularly the courtship and marriage between ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Khaljī’s son and crowned prince, Khizr Khan, and the Gujarati princess Deval Rānī. Amīr Khuṣrau, however, also wove Sufi-laden literary imagery into this tale on the Khaljī royalty through the *ghazal* interludes. If this is the case, then the Sufi-sultan dichotomy for authority is refuted by the entire *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*: first, by the incorporation of panegyric praising Niẓām al-Dīn before ‘Alā’ al-Din and later by a Sufi poem produced for the royal court.

The Sufi tale, perhaps like Sufi practice and belief, has remained paradoxically defined and open. The doctrines of Sufism were intentionally esoteric and required a *pīr* (Sufi master) to instruct a *murīd* (disciple) in the correct interpretation and practice of Sufism. The Sufi tale promoted—although never explained—Sufism through stories in which the characters or the storyline followed the Sufi disciple’s progression to spiritual (Sufi) enlightenment. Farīd ud-Dīn ‘Aṭṭār’s *Maṭīq al-Ṭayr* (*Conference of the Birds*), for example, related the Sufi path through an allegorical tale in which thirty birds embarked upon a search for the mythical *sīmurgh*. After many struggles that represented obstacles in the disciple’s path of spiritual progression, the birds finally realized that they were the *sīmurgh* (which can be read a *sī murgh* or “thirty birds”) and that the Divine resided within them.

The Sufi tale did contain some identifiable elements. The Sufi tale almost always contained the divine attributes of *jamāl* (beauty), *jalāl* (majesty), and *kamāl*

(perfection) as well as an expanding cast of metaphors such as the *bulbul* (a small bird, lover) and the rose (beloved). The concept of *fanā* (annihilation of the self) almost always occurred in these tales, as did the separation and the reunion of the lover with the beloved. The degree to which a poem or tale should possess these attributes and metaphors, however, was never defined. The Sufi elements of the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān* never approached the great Sufi *maṣnavī* poets such as Farīd al-Dīn ‘Aṭṭār, Niẓāmī Ganjavī, or Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī or the *malḡūzat* literature of Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī and Niẓām al-Dīn ‘Auliya’.<sup>181</sup> Amīr Khuṣrau also never approached the Sufi content found in the works of his near-contemporary Ḍiyā’ al-Dīn Nakhshabī (d. A.H. 751/A.D. 1350). Nakhshabī composed the *Ṭūṭīnāma* as well as the *Gulriz*, a *maṣnavī* Sufi tale that described the love between a man (lover) and nymph (beloved).<sup>182</sup> While the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān* may not equal the Sufi works produced before and contemporaneous with Amīr Khuṣrau, that should not negate the presence of Sufi elements within the text.

The presence of a Sufi tale is supported by the historical circumstances surrounding the text, patron, and author. Amīr Khuṣrau, as noted in the beginning of the chapter, was a disciple and close companion of the Sufi Niẓām al-Dīn ‘Auliya’. Every *maṣnavī* Amīr Khuṣrau wrote during the fourteenth century contained a section

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<sup>181</sup> See Farīd al-Dīn ‘Aṭṭār, *Conference of the Birds*, Niẓāmī Ganjavī *Khamsa*, Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī *Spiritual Couplets*. For the *malḡūzat* literature, see Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī, *Signs of the Unseen: The Discourses of Jalaluddin Rumi*, trans. W. M. Thackston, Jr. (Boston: Shambhala, 1999) and Niẓām al-Dīn Auliya’s *malḡūzat* recorded by Amīr Ḥasan Dihlavī, *Morals for the Heart*, trans. Bruce Lawrence.

<sup>182</sup> It is surprising that Nakhshabī’s work has not received more recognition. For an English translation of the *Ṭūṭīnāma* see, Ḍiyā’ al-Dīn Nakhshabī, *Tales of the Parrot*, trans. Pramod Chandra (Graz : Akademische Druck-Verlagsanstalt, 1976). *Gulriz*, ed. Muhammad Kazim Shirazi and F. Rizkallah Azoo, *Bibliotheca Indica*, no. 213 (Calcutta, Asiatic Society, 1912). For a discussion on Nakhshabī, see Bruce Lawrence, *Notes from a Distant Flute: The Extant Literature of Pre-Mughal Indian Sufism* (Tehran, Imperial Iranian Academy of Philosophy, 1978), 42–44; Saiyid Athar Abbas Rizvi, *A History of Sufism in India*, 2 vols. (1978–83; reprint, New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 2002), 1:131–33; and for manuscripts Khaliq Ahmad Nizami, *Supplement to Elliot & Dowson*, 3 vols. (Delhi: Idarah-i Adabiyat-i Delli, 1981), 3:109–10. I intend to compare the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān* and *Gulriz* in a future project.



immediately after the *manqabat* (Praise of the Contemporaries of the Prophet) that praised Niẓām al-Dīn ‘Auliyā’. These *maṣnavīs*, combined with the *ghazal*, *qaṣīda*, and *qawwālī* that Amīr Khuṣrau wrote in Persian and Hindavī, produced a large corpus of material that praised Niẓām al-Dīn. Khizr Khān was a disciple of Niẓām al-Dīn as well, which Amīr Khuṣrau noted in his “Praises to the Shaikh” couplets quoted in full above (pages 81–83). Amīr Khuṣrau wrote, “He (Niẓām al-Dīn) kisses Khizr’s hand and Khizr Khān kisses the feet.”<sup>183</sup> Thus, the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān* contained an unusual conjunction of poetry, patron, and *pīr*.

In order to better understand how Amīr Khuṣrau may have incorporated a Sufi tale into the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, it is necessary to examine some passages Amīr Khuṣrau wrote in the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*. The passages quoted below come from the first collection of *ghazals* from the lover and from the beloved. These *ghazals* followed the description of Ulugh Khān’s (Somnāt) raid in Gujarat. Ulugh Khan defeated Karan Rāi (Rāja Karnadeva) and captured the capital. He found Kanūl Dī Rānī (Karnadevā’s queen, Kamaladevī) in the castle and brought Kanūl Dī to Delhi where she married ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Khaljī. One night, when the sultan was in a particularly good mood, she obtained a promise to fulfill her wish. Kanūl Dī related the story of her daughters—one who died as an infant and the second who remained in Gujarat—and requested the sultan to reunite her with her daughter. The sultan, upon hearing the story as well as the beauty and virtues of this daughter, realized that she would make an excellent wife for his son, Khizr Khān. He once again sent Ulugh Khān to Gujarat (this time

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<sup>183</sup> This was a play on the name of Khizr Khān. Khizr, who drank the water of immortality, wandered the world occasionally helping Sufis in their spiritual development or even initiating people with the *khirqa* patched frock. See, Annemarie Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1975), 98–106. In this verse, Niẓām al-Dīn kissed the hand of Khizr (the immortal mystic) and Khizr Khān kissed the feet of Niẓām al-Dīn (marking himself as a disciple).

conquering the territory) to reunite Kanūl Dī with her daughter. Ulugh Khān has just found the daughter, Deval Rānī.

Come musician, play the silken harp (and sing of)  
the happiness that came to the imprisoned friend.

In this way bring music into the heart,  
as this *ghazal* glows inside the veil.

*Ghazals* from the mouth of the lover

Whose face is this that makes my eyes bright?  
What smell is this that makes the assembly like a garden?

This face can't be the moon of heaven.  
The garden does not have this type of scent.

I see the face that gave life to the soul,  
but gave the promise of slavery to the heart.

A pious love is born in myself from that glance.  
The blessed face will be in me.

O Beloved, you give life to my soul!  
Whoever lives gets life from you, not from the soul. I am such a person.

I am putting your life-sustaining feet on my eyes,  
but this is not from respect of your feet.

The eyes are like rays from the sun  
upon which you may properly walk.

Who was your companion who accompanied (me) on every road,  
who lightened (my) heart here and there?

There will be happiness in that Sahara and the desert  
around your face will be like a garden.

What dust comes into your braided hair?  
With the water of my own eyes, I will wash off that dust.

‘Alī bin Uṣman al-Hujwīrī (A.H. 465–469/A.D. 1073–1077), known as Dātā Ganj Bakhsh, listed three aspects of the Divine in the *Kashf al-Mahjūb* (*Unveiling of the Veiled*): *jamāl* (beauty), *jalāl* (majesty), and *kamāl* (perfection).<sup>185</sup> Poets often introduced the concept of *jamāl* (beauty) in their poetry through references to a series of images. Amīr Khuṣrau incorporated *jamāl* and *jalāl* in the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān* through the sections of *ghazals*, while the *ghazal* passages in their entirety comprised the *kamāl* (perfection). The *ghazals from the tongue of the lover* contained imagery of *jamāl* (beauty). The beloved in these verses is personified as both Deval Rānī and the Divine.

This face can't be the moon of heaven.  
The garden does not have this type of scent.

I see the face that gave life to the soul,  
but gave the promise of slavery to the heart.

A pious love is born in myself from that glance.  
The blessed face will be in me.

O Beloved, you give life to my soul!  
Whoever lives gets life from you, not from the soul. I am such a person.

The identification of the beloved with the Divine was hardly novel. However, Amīr Khuṣrau also incorporated the *jalāl* (majesty) of the Divine in the same text through the response of the beloved.

Response from the lips of the beloved

See what kinds of things the creator gave to me at my creation?  
How many happy rivers he has opened for me.

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<sup>184</sup> Translated by the author from Amīr Khuṣrau, *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, ed. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami.

<sup>185</sup> ‘Alī bin Uṣman Al-Hujwīrī, *The Kashf al-Mahjub: The Oldest Persian Treatise on Sufism* (1911; reprint, Lahore: Islamic Book Foundation, 1976), 289–290 with an interesting twist on the Khizr story on page 290. See also Safdar Ali Baig, “Ameer Khusrau, His Beliefs and the Sufi Tradition,” in *Life, Times and Works of Amir Khusrau Delhavi*, ed. Zoe Ansari (New Delhi: National Amir Khusrau Society, 1975) and Mīr Sayyid Manjhan Rājgīrī, *Madhumālatī*, trans. Aditya Behl and Simon Weightman (New York, Oxford University Press, 2000), xiv–xix.

First of all, he spoils me with unkindness.  
Through love, he gives glad tidings to the crown.

You see what kind of happy fortune I have?  
The head of my auspicious tree strikes the moon.

That breeze blew in from the green garden  
so that this bright soul has become refreshed.

Uprooting the rose, like me, from the delicate branch<sup>186</sup>  
he puts it in the treasury of hopes.

Now I myself have the confidence of (his) favor  
since that flower-stem became drunk from my scent.

My heart bears witness  
that I will not live out the remainder of life without riches.

He should graft me with kindness  
so that I may blossom with the pain of a life of love.

I am moving my head towards him;  
I am cutting off my life for his existence.

I am a drunk lion with the eyes of a Hindūstāni deer.  
With one glance I will defeat Turkistan.

I reached out to the hope (of the lover).  
In every direction I sent a speedy arrow.

I made my heart into a lush meadow.  
I am preparing my hunt for the lion.

In his attack and vengefulness  
the hunt of my life will one day become my prey.

The hunt for the soul will be the hunt for Khizr Khān,  
who will have life everlasting like Khizr.

*Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, 89 v. 9–90 v. 14<sup>187</sup>

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<sup>186</sup> The beloved was also represented as a rose, and the lover as a *bulbul* (small bird) in Persian poetry.

<sup>187</sup> Translated by the author from Amīr Khuṣrau, *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, ed. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami.

The *response from the lips of the beloved* did not offer much of a response to the lover; rather, these verses reflexively turned back to the beloved/Divine to display the *jalāl* (majesty) of the Divine. This interplay between Beauty and Majesty, lover and beloved, has precedent in Khusrau's *Shīrīn wa Khusrow*. Amīr Khuṣrau's version of the *maṣnavī Shīrīn wa Khusrow*, one of five *maṣnavīs* he rewrote in imitation of Niẓāmī's *Khamsa*, contained a back-and-forth discussion between Khusrow and Farhād on the nature of love. Amīr Khuṣrau may have expanded this concept in the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān* to create a discourse between the lover/beloved, the *jamāl/jalāl*, that repeatedly occurred throughout the text rather than in a single episode.

Scholars nevertheless have downplayed or refuted the presence of a Sufi tale in Amīr Khuṣrau's poetry. In the most recent monograph on Amīr Khuṣrau, *Amir Khusraw: The Poet of Sultans and Sufis*, Sunil Sharma presented an argument for a Sufi presence in Khuṣrau's works. Sharma wrote, "Amir Khusraw seems to be one of the few poets, one can even say the only one in the entire history of pre-modern Persian poetry, who was simultaneously a court poet in the business of praising kings and a sufi poet whose poems were performed in a mystical context." Sharma supported this with a quote from Amīr Khūrd (d. A.H. 770/A.D. 1368–69), "Devote yourself to the service of the sultan and be a sufi."<sup>188</sup> Wahid Mirza, who wrote the authoritative biography of Amīr Khuṣrau, made only a marginal reference to the Sufi tale in Khuṣrau's work. He noted that many of Khuṣrau's "poems" (*ghazals?*) contained "a fiery passion capable of both exoteric as well as esoteric interpretation... [that] made his poems extremely popular with the ṣūfīs."<sup>189</sup> Mohammad Habib and Syed Sabahuddin Abdur Rahman avoided commenting on the presence of Sufi imagery in Khuṣrau's poetry. They both preferred

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<sup>188</sup> Translated by Sunil Sharma, *Amir Khusraw*, 28. A full translation of the section on Amīr Khuṣrau from Amīr Khūrd's *Siyar al-'Auliya'* may be found in Appendix I of Sunil Sharma, *Amir Khusraw*.

<sup>189</sup> Wahid M. Wahid Mirza, *The Life and Works of Amir Khusrau*, 206.

to analyze his poetry as a product of the Khaljī court.<sup>190</sup> Waris Kirmani, who was perhaps the greatest critic on identifying Sufi elements in Khusrau's poetry, wrote the following assessment.

He [Amīr Khuṣrau] was also conscious that he was transplanting the Persian *ghazal* on to Indian soil, and that the future assessment of his worth would depend on its appeal to the Indian people. Khusrau, therefore, wanted to mould his *ghazal* on a pattern which would reflect the spirit of Indian life. With this aim uppermost in his mind, he rejected certain themes prevalent among earlier poets. The axe fell on didactic and Sufistic themes. He categorically declares them to be unsuitable for the *ghazal*.

In spite of this, however, *Khusrau has generally been reckoned to be a Sufi poet... Still it would be an overstatement to call him a Sufi poet... Khusrau was a man of varied interests and worked in different capacities, but he did not allow his poetry to be influenced by worldly or even unworldly occupations [emphasis added].*<sup>191</sup>

In arguing this position, Kirmani referenced Annemarie Schimmel who wrote, "Like Bū 'Alī, he [Amīr Khuṣrau] was a member of the Čištīya order, but much more a courtier and gentleman than a genuine mystic..."<sup>192</sup> Yet, Kirmani failed to mention that Schimmel also referred to Khuṣrau in this booklet as a "musician and scholar, mystic and panegyrist."<sup>193</sup> These varied assessments have arisen over the definition and degree the Sufi tale must play in a poetical work.

The poetry of Ḥāfiẓ may elucidate Amīr Khuṣrau's position within Sufi poetics. Ḥāfiẓ (A.H. 726–91/A.D. 1326–89) has occupied a place similar to Amīr Khuṣrau, as a poet who incorporated Sufi elements yet remained a poet rather than a Sufi. Both men were associated with the royal court and both were disciples in Sufi orders (although Ḥāfiẓ's status as a disciple is debatable). Carl Ernst cited the biographical compendium

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<sup>190</sup> See Mohammad Habib, *Hazrat Amir Khusrau* and Syed Sabahuddin Abdur Rahman, *Amīr Khuṣrau as a Genius*.

<sup>191</sup> Kirmani, "Khusrau and the Tradition of Persian Ghazal," 171.

<sup>192</sup> Annemarie Schimmel, *Islamic Literatures of India*, (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1973), 16; Kirmani, "Khusrau and the Tradition of Persian Ghazal," 171.

<sup>193</sup> Schimmel, *Islamic Literatures*, 16.

titled *Nafhat al-Uns (Breaths of Fellowship)* of Nūr al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī (A.H. 817–898/A.D. 1414–1492), who wrote the following about Ḥāfiẓ. “Although it is not known whether he took the hand of discipleship from a master or had a correct relationship in Sufism with a member of this group, still, his verses are so much in accordance with the teachings of this group that no one disputes it.”<sup>194</sup> The case for Amīr Khuṣrau, whose relationship with Niẓām al-Dīn ‘Auliyā’ was well known, should be even stronger.

Turning to the question of Ḥāfiẓ as a Sufi poet, Carl Ernst commented:

Was Hafiz a Sufi as well as a poet? This raises again the question of what constitutes mystical poetry... Poetry is employed for esthetic effects, such as meter and rhyme, and for the emotional effect of its content; for Sufis, properly interpreted poetry in the ritual context of listening to music was particularly powerful... To the extent that his poetry has been recited and appreciated by Sufis, both in solitary reading and in ritual performance, we may call him a Sufi poet; the extent of his reception, indeed, makes him a major Sufi poet.<sup>195</sup>

Amīr Khuṣrau incorporated Sufi imagery into *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān* in a manner similar to Ḥāfiẓ in his *ghazals*. In fact, the two are poetically linked through Ḥāfiẓ’s composition of a couplet referring to Amīr Khuṣrau, the Parrot of India:

All the parrots of India have become sugar-breakers  
Through this Persian which is going to Bengal.<sup>196</sup>

Neither poet advanced taṣawwuf (Sufi theory/practice) in their works nor did they utilize Sufi allegory or didactic tale to advance Sufi concepts. Both poets, however, incorporated Sufi imagery into their works. The *ghazals* of the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, like the *ghazals* of Ḥāfiẓ, contained Sufi imagery.

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<sup>194</sup> Translated by Carl Ernst, *Shambhala Guide to Sufism* (Boston, Shambhala, 1997), 165–66.

<sup>195</sup> Ibid, 164 and 166.

<sup>196</sup> Translated by D. B. Nasim, “Amir Khusrau’s Lyrical Poetry,” in *Amir Khusrau: Critical Studies* (Lahore: National Committee for the 700th Anniversary of Amir Khusrau, 1975), 45.

According to Digby and Kumar, Sufis and sultans vied for the recognition as the most important source of authority within Muslim society. The *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, at first glance, appears to be another panegyric text produced for court consumption to legitimate the sultan's role as the paramount authority within the Delhi Sultanate. Such a reading, however, is transgressed by the inclusion of Sufi content within the text. This Sufi content could be explained in the latter two-thirds of the text through Khizr Khān and Amīr Khuṣrau's relationship to Niẓām al-Dīn 'Auliya'. Amīr Khuṣrau, however, sprinkled couplets that praised Niẓām al-Dīn throughout the entire text and in some surprising ways. For example, Sunil Kumar has argued that 'Alā' al-Dīn Khaljī embarked on a wide-ranging campaign in which he constructed, renovated, and expanded public works. Scholars have interpreted 'Alā' al-Dīn's construction/expansion of the Quṭb Minār complex, a mosque and minaret that date to the founding of the Delhi Sultanate, as a symbolic link to (and maybe even a surpassing of) the Delhi Sultanate's founders Quṭb al-Dīn Aibak and Shams al-Dīn Iltutmish. If the above passages demonstrate anything, they show that Amīr Khuṣrau certainly understood symbolism. Sunil Kumar linked 'Alā' al-Dīn's building campaigns to Amīr Khuṣrau's poetic imagery when he wrote:

Certainly it is easy enough to ignore the writings of Amīr Khuṣrau as the work of a court-panegyrist, who would but write platitudes, no matter how far-fetched, as long as they satisfied his patron. But what is ignored in any hasty dismissal of the *Khazā'in al-Futūh*, is the manner in which the text is able to unravel and follow the discursive logic of the iconography of the Delhi *maṣjid-i jāmi'*. There is no evidence in Amīr Khuṣrau's work to suggest that he read (or was interested in reading) 'Alā' al-Dīn Khaljī's epigraphs; yet, the poet was able to approximate their intent with uncanny regularity.<sup>197</sup>

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<sup>197</sup> Sunil Kumar "Assertions of Authority," 49.



Given that Amīr Khuṣrau was able to “approximate [‘Alā’ al-Dīn’s] intent with uncanny regularity,” he nevertheless included the following pair of couplets in the “Story of the mouse and the camel” quoted above.

The *pīr* [Niẓām al-Dīn], I heard, is the axis of the world (*quṭb-i āfāq*)  
fixed like the two pillars of the ninth heaven  
through which everyone who is a king of the country, in time,  
becomes a pious man if he disciplines himself.

*Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, 35 vv. 2–3<sup>198</sup>

These couplets are bracketed by admonitions on justice within the kingdom. Given that Amīr Khuṣrau understood ‘Alā’ al-Dīn’s use of the *maṣjid-i jāmi‘* (the mosque at the Quṭb Minār complex) and approximated such symbolism “with uncanny regularity” in his poetry, Khuṣrau nonetheless referred to Niẓām al-Dīn ‘Auliyā’ as the *quṭb-i āfāq* and appropriated the central symbol of ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Khaljī’s authority for Niẓām al-Dīn ‘Auliyā’.<sup>199</sup> Moreover, Khuṣrau appropriated ‘Alā’ al-Dīn’s imperial project in a text he wrote for ‘Alā’ al-Dīn’s son, Khizr Khān, which certainly circulated within the court.

Amīr Khuṣrau negotiated the contest between the Sufi and sultan in some interesting ways. He juggled verses in the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān* and managed to praise and legitimate both the Sufi and the sultan. Amīr Khuṣrau’s search for authority, however, went beyond the Sufi–sultan dichotomy advocated by Digby and Kumar. Amīr Khuṣrau found a third source of authority that he also praised in the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, but which only emerges when viewed in conjunction with his next *maṣnavī*, the *Nuh Sipihr*.

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<sup>198</sup> Translated by the author from Amīr Khuṣrau, *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, ed. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami.

<sup>199</sup> It is possible that *quṭb* referred to the Sufi rank held by Niẓām al-Dīn ‘Auliyā’. Amīr Khuṣrau, however, applied a nearly synonymous epithet to Quṭb al-Dīn Mubārak Shāh in the *Nuh Sipihr* (discussed below).

## THE NUH SİPIHR AND THE EMERGENCE OF INDO-ISLAM

Amīr Khuṣrau completed the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān* in A.H. 715/A.D. 1315. The following year was tumultuous to say the least. Amīr Khuṣrau noted ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Khaljī’s illness in the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān* and the sultan’s death, hastened it seems by Malik Nā’ib Kāfūr, occurred in A.H. 716/A.D. 1316. A series of court intrigues precipitated and followed ‘Alā’ al-Dīn’s death. Malik Kāfūr, who led the Deccan campaigns, utilized the sultan’s slow death and diminished faculties to order the imprisonment and blinding of the designated heir Khizr Khān and his brothers, Shādī Khān and Farīd Khān. As Malik Kāfūr’s plot unfolded, Alp Khān who was the brother-in-law to ‘Alā’ al-Dīn and father-in-law to Khizr Khān by Khizr Khān’s first wife, rode to Delhi to meet with the ailing emperor. He was assassinated (perhaps by Malik Kāfūr’s own hand) in the royal palace. Upon ‘Alā’ al-Dīn’s death, his infant son Shihāb al-Dīn ‘Umar ascended the throne with Malik Kāfūr as the regent and de facto ruler. A month later, ‘Alā’ al-Dīn’s imperial guard cut short Malik Kāfūr’s reign from behind the throne. Quṭb al-Dīn Mubārak Shāh (r. A.H. 716–720/A.D. 1316–20), another son of ‘Alā’ al-Dīn by a third wife, imprisoned Shihāb al-Dīn ‘Umar and then began to purge rival claimants to the throne. He ordered the execution of his half-brothers Khizr Khān, Shādī Khān, Farīd Khān, and Shihāb al-Dīn ‘Umar. In the midst of all this court intrigue, Amīr Khuṣrau assembled his fourth collection of poetry *Baqīya Naqīya* (*The Pure Remnant*). According to Syed Abahuddin Abdur Rahman, Khuṣrau now considered himself a master poet and no longer followed Niẓāmī or Sa’dī in matters of composition.<sup>200</sup> In A.H. 718/A.D. 1318 Amīr Khuṣrau completed his fifth and final collection of poetry, *Nihāyet al-Kamāl* (*The Height of Perfection*) and completed a *maṣnavī* dedicated to Quṭb al-Dīn Mubārak Shāh titled *Nuh Sipihr* (*The Nine Planets*).

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<sup>200</sup> “Appreciative Study of Variegatedness,” 94–95.

The *Nuh Sipih*r consisted of nine chapters that praised not only Quṭb al-Dīn Mubārak Shāh, but the attributes of Hindūstān as well. Like his other *maṣnavī* of this century, Amīr Khuṣrau included the standard introduction with praises to Niẓām al-Dīn ‘Auliya’ appended to the *manqabat* and before the praises to the reigning sultan. Scholars have focused on the third chapter where Amīr Khuṣrau praises the people, language, and environment of Hindūstān. Other sections of the *Nuh Sipih*r merit some comment since they support some assertions made here and in the previous chapter.

Amīr Khuṣrau sought to legitimize Quṭb al-Dīn Mubārak Shāh’s rule on account of the tumultuous events of A.H. 716/A.D. 1316. Quṭb al-Dīn Mubārak Shāh minted coins in which he identified his Khaljī lineage and yet simultaneously distanced himself from the court intrigues at ‘Alā’ al-Dīn’s death by marginally changing the Khaljī title of the Second Alexander (*sikander ṣānī*) to the Alexander of the Age (*sikander al-zamān*).<sup>201</sup> Quṭb al-Dīn Mubārak Shāh also adopted a number of new titles as demonstrated in what Goron and Goenka label the *al-imām* legend:<sup>202</sup>

*al-imām al-a‘zam khalīfa rabb al-‘alamīn  
quṭb al-dunyā wa’l dīn abū’l muṣaffar mubārakshāh  
al-sultān ibn al-sultān al-wāsiq billāh amīr  
al-mū’minīn*<sup>203</sup>

The Imām Most High, the Caliph (and) Lord of the Two Worlds  
Quṭb al-Dunyā al-Dīn Abū al-Muṣaffar Mubārak Shāh  
The Sultan and son of The Sultan, He Who Trusts in God,  
The Commander of the Faithful

<sup>201</sup> This title was clearly used by ‘Alā’ al-Dīn in minted coins, inscriptions, and even in the poetical works of Amīr Khuṣrau. As Goron and Goenka note, Shihāb al-Dīn ‘Umar also adopted and minted coins with the title of *sikandar al-ṣānī* even though he was only five or six at the time. See Stan Goron and J. P. Goenka *Coins of the Indian Sultanates*, 39–40 and especially the inscription on coin D240.

<sup>202</sup> Goron and Goenka, *Coins of the Indian Sultanates*, 40–41.

<sup>203</sup> The transliteration in this quotation has been changed from Goron and Goenka’s presentation to conform to the transliteration scheme of this dissertation. The inscription may be found in Goron and Goenka, *Coins of the Indian Sultanates*, 41.

The titles *al-imām al-a‘ẓam* (The Imām Most High) and *khalīfa rabb al-‘alamīn* (Caliph, Lord of the Two Worlds) occurred for the first time in Quṭb al-Dīn Mubārak Shāh’s coins. This was also the first time a Delhi Sultanate claimed the title of *khalīfa* (caliph) rather than *yamīn al-khalīfa* (Right Hand of the Caliph, found on ‘Alā’ al-Dīn’s coins) or some other variation.<sup>204</sup> Noth and Gwaliari noted, “In the NS [*Nuh Sipīhr*], Khuṣrau more often than not, addressed his patron Mubārak Shāh as Khalīfa and also called him Quṭb-i-Zamīn (Pole of the Earth) and Quṭb-i-Falak (Pole of the Sky) over and over again. These references are too numerous in the NS to be recounted.”<sup>205</sup> Interestingly, this was the same imagery Amīr Khuṣrau appropriated from ‘Alā’ al-Dīn and used in reference to Niẓām al-Dīn three years earlier in the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*. Amīr Khuṣrau praised Niẓām al-Dīn ‘Auliya’ as the pillar of the world (*quṭb-i āfāq*)<sup>206</sup> and challenged ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Khaljī’s “discursive logic of iconography” only to change course three years later.

‘Alā’ al-Dīn Khaljī sought authority by expanding the Quṭb Minār complex, both a horizontal expansion of the mosque and a vertical expansion of the *minār*, in an attempt to link himself to former rulers of the Delhi Sultanate. ‘Alā’ al-Dīn also gained authority through his defense of Hindūstān from the Mongols, his conquests throughout the subcontinent, and his rule of the land. Amīr Khuṣrau celebrated these

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<sup>204</sup> For a translation of Amīr Khuṣrau’s “Third Sipīhr” (“Third Planet”), see R. Nath and Faiyaz Gwaliari, *India as Seen by Amīr Khuṣrau* (Jaipur: Historical Research Documentation Programme, 1981), 121–24. This is confirmed by the coins and inscriptions published in Goron and Goenka, *The Coins of the Indian Sultanates*, 9–41.

<sup>205</sup> Nath and Gwaliari, *India as Seen by Amīr Khuṣrau*, 121.

<sup>206</sup> The *quṭb* (pillar, pole, axis) in *quṭb-i āfāq* may have had a secondary meaning. When I studied the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān* at Jawaharlal Nehru University with Professor Azhar Dehlavi, he commented that the word *quṭb* may have referred to a rank that Niẓām al-Dīn held within his monastic order. The word *quṭb* could also refer to Quṭb al-Dīn Bakhtiyār Kākī, a Sufi who lived in the Delhi during the reign of Sultan Shams al-Dīn Iltutmish. Quṭb al-Dīn Bakhtiyār Kākī taught Farīd al-Dīn Ganjishakar who in turn taught Niẓām al-Dīn ‘Auliya’. Wahid Mirza noted that Niẓām al-Dīn inherited Quṭb al-Dīn Bakhtiyār Kākī’s mantle (*Life and Works of Amir Khuṣrau*, 113–15). Thus, *quṭb-i āfāq* (the axis/pillar of the world) may have acknowledged Niẓām al-Dīn’s position as the successor of Quṭb al-Dīn Bakhtiyār Kākī. The application of the image to Quṭb al-Dīn Mubārak Shāh, however, strongly questions such a reading.

building projects and conquests in the *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ* discussed at length in the previous chapter. Quṭb al-Dīn Mubārak Shāh, the son of 'Alā' al-Dīn Khaljī, similarly legitimized his reign by constructing a series of monuments and public works within Delhi. Amīr Khuṣrau described the projects of Quṭb al-Dīn Mubārak Shāh in the first chapter of the *Nuh Sipīhr*. Quṭb al-Dīn Mubārak Shāh constructed the *Qaṣr-i Nau* (the New Palace) as well a new fort or the renovation/renaming of 'Alā' al-Dīn Khaljī's Sīrī fort as the *Dār al-Khalīfat* (House of the Caliph).<sup>207</sup> Amīr Khuṣrau also described Quṭb al-Dīn Mubārak Shāh's construction of a *jāmi' masjid* (a congregation mosque) within Delhi.<sup>208</sup> Khuṣrau's choice to order the *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ* and *Nuh Sipīhr* in a similar manner, with descriptions of Delhi and the projects the sultans sponsored, would seem to be more than coincidental. Amīr Khuṣrau clearly attempted to legitimate Quṭb al-Dīn Mubārak Shāh in much the same way that 'Alā' al-Dīn sought legitimization through patronage of public works.

Scholars and literary critics have cited Amīr Khuṣrau's use of Hindūstānī imagery as the defining characteristic of the *Nuh Sipīhr*. One might speculate that Amīr Khuṣrau could not have praised Quṭb al-Dīn Mubārak Shāh's military conquests since the Delhi Sultanate army had already conquered most of Hindūstān at the time of his accession. Yet Amīr Khuṣrau did praise the Deccan campaigns of Mubārak Shāh's slave, Khuṣrau Khān, which he could have easily ascribed to the sultan's leadership. Instead of viewing conquest as the principal aspect of Delhi Sultanate historiography, it may be time to accept that conquest was only one aspect and that authors such as Amīr Khuṣrau may have incorporated other avenues of historiography into their texts. The

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<sup>207</sup> For a summary of the contents in the *Nuh Sipīhr*, see Wahid Mirza, *Life and Works of Amir Khusrau*, 181–89 and Nath and Gwaliari, *India as Seen by Amīr Khuṣrau*, 12–13. Nath and Gwaliari discussed the *Dār al-Khalīfat* from 120–24. Some of Quṭb al-Dīn Mubārak Shāh's coins were minted in the *Dār al-Khalīfat*, indicating this was a fort rather than a palace. See Goron and Goenka, *Coins of the Indian Sultanates*, 12–13 and 41–43.

<sup>208</sup> Nath and Gwaliari, *India as Seen by Amīr Khuṣrau*, 117–19.

imagery from the third chapter of the *Nuh Sipihr* reveals one such avenue of historiography.

Amīr Khuṣrau not only praised Hindūstān in the third chapter of the *Nuh Sipihr*, he also argued that Hindūstān exceeded anything else found in the rest of the Islamicate world. Discussing Arabic learning in Hindūstān, he penned the following description in the *Nuh Sipihr*.

My second point is that the people of India speak different languages.

But the people outside India cannot speak in Indian dialects.

The people of Khita (Chinese Turkistan), Mongols, Turks, and Arabs are unable to speak Indian languages.

But we can speak any language of the world as fluently and effectively as a shepherd tends his sheep.

Our mastery over the languages is as assertive as is our capacity to conquer other lands.

But, no country has the courage to look at us aggressively.

They are barbarous. We are far advanced intellectually and culturally.<sup>209</sup>

After a few dozen verses that praised Hindūstān's language and learning, Amīr Khuṣrau wrote a somewhat startling set of verses that praised Sanskrit.

Everybody is proud of his own language and does not admit superiority of any other one.

It shall be improper on my part to talk of Persian, Turkish and Arabic and beguile myself of their virtues.

One should talk of his own country. As I belong to India, it is only befitting (that I also talk of the things Indian).

There is yet another language which is the best of all. It is the language of the Brahmans.

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<sup>209</sup> Translated by Nath and Gwaliari, *India as Seen by Amīr Khuṣrau*, 57.

Like the Arabic, the Sanskrit also has its grammar, definitions, system, technique and rules, and literature.

Everybody who is related to Literature or Art derives inspiration from these works.

These four Vedas are the source of all learning.

The Vedas are written in the Sanskrit which is the language of the Brahmans. They have learnt all arts and sciences from its (Vedic) literature.

This language (Sanskrit) is a pearl among pearls. It may be inferior to Arabic but it is decidedly superior to the best of the Persian, viz. Darī.

Although Darī is also a sweet language, the literary excellence of the Sanskrit is in no way inferior to that of Darī.

One who had gone to the depth of this language (Sanskrit) cannot make a mistake in that respect.

Had I been able to acquire sufficient command of this language, I would have praised my King [Quṭb al-Dīn Mubārak Shāh] even in this language.

Our King is the Pole of the Earth [Quṭb-i-Zamīn]. His throne is as high as the Pole of the sky [Quṭb-i-Falak].<sup>210</sup>

Amīr Khuṣrau ranked Arabic, the language of the Qur'ān, as the highest language with the languages of Hindūstān as a close second. The statements in the *Nuh Sipīhr* paralleled verses Khuṣrau wrote in the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*.

Be quiet if I make an error. It is on account of my intellect and not from the use of Hindavī which is no less than Persian.

The exception is Arabic language, the master of all languages, which succeeds over all other languages.

The other dominant languages are that of Rayy [Persia] and Rūm [Turkey]. The opinion of those who know judge them less than Hind.

The Arab says, "I have (composed) this text in another's language."

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<sup>210</sup> Translated by Nath and Gwaliari, *India as Seen by Amīr Khuṣrau*, 74–76.

so that he does not intermix his Arabic with other languages.

Such a deficiency arises in mixing Persian words (with Hindavī), which like the sharp pickle causes one to consume less.

The best riches are from one's own treasury.  
Borrowed stuff is free from excellence.

The language of Hind is like the Arabic language,  
in that the intermixing here occurs less often.

The rule of Arabic is based on syntax and etymology;  
(Hindavī) is not one letter less in its rules.

One who is the banker of these three shops  
will know that there is neither mixture nor boasting.

If you ask for an explanation of what this means,  
then you won't know if it is derived from the other (languages).

Though if you are speaking true and fairly and descriptively [and yet]  
you delineate the boundary of Hindī, you are injuring my words.

*Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, 41 v. 17–42 v. 13<sup>211</sup>

Amīr Khuṣrau made an interesting distinction between languages in these verses. He referred to his Persian verses as Hindavī, the language of Hindūstān, and distinguished it from the Persian spoken in Aghanistan (Darī), Persia, and Turkey.

Amīr Khuṣrau also praised the birds and animals, plants, people, culture and customs of Hindūstān in the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān* and *Nuh Sīpihr*. In the *Nuh Sīpihr*, for example, he made a series of arguments on why Hindūstān is Paradise on earth.

Now I put up the second argument [why Hindūstān is like Paradise] by citing the example of Peacock, the Bird of Paradise. This intelligent argument would be thoroughly convincing.

Peacock is the Bird of Paradise and it can live only in Paradise. If India is not Paradise, why was it made abode of Peacock, the Bird of Paradise?

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<sup>211</sup> Translated by the author from Amīr Khuṣrau, *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, ed. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami.



Had India not been the Paradise, Peacock, the Bird of Paradise (would not have been found here and it) would have adopted some other garden as its Home.

Had Paradise been in some other country, Peacock would definitely gone there.

As India was similar to Paradise, Peacock (the Bird of Paradise could live here and it) did not go anywhere else.<sup>212</sup>

This link between Hindūstān and Paradise, or even Hindūstān as Paradise, occurred in the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān* as well. Amīr Khuṣrau played upon the link between the peacock and paradise in the following couplets.

Some people call the Hindū[stānī] people black.  
It is the Mecca of the world.

One might imagine Hindūstān as a paradise  
from which there is a connection to this garden.

And if not, how then are the people and peacock living here?  
Where is their adorned house if it is not here?

*Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, 43 v. 15–44 v. 2<sup>213</sup>

The blackness of the Hindū was a metaphor in Persian literature. This metaphor compared the Hindu's blackness to the beloved's mole (both marks of beauty). Amīr Khuṣrau linked the blackness of the Hindu to the Ka'ba in these verses. The blackness of the Hindu as the Ka'ba, in turn, reinforced his link between Hindūstān and heaven in the next two verses. In the final verse, Amīr Khuṣrau extended the blackness to the Hindu as well as the peacock (which has black legs), both of which were clearly linked to heaven and by extension he equated Hindūstān (the abode of Hindus and peacocks) with Paradise.

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<sup>212</sup> Translated by Nath and Gwaliari, *India as Seen by Amīr Khuṣrau*, 36–37.

<sup>213</sup> Translated by the author from Amīr Khuṣrau, *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, ed. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami.

Never one to let a good metaphor go unused, Amīr Khuṣrau returned to the image of Hindūstān and Paradise in the following couplets on flowers. He wrote in the *Nuh Sipihr*:

When Adam descended from Paradise, the fragrance of Heavenly wine and fruits was fresh upon his lips.

He came to India fresh with the Pleasures and delicacies of Heaven and yet he found this country and its climate perfectly enjoyable (without any difference).

The scent of Paradise which came with him was fresh, pleasant and invigorating.

How stimulating were the soil and flowers of this land for physical pleasure and mental solace!

The special feature of India's beauty is that its flowers blossom the year around and they are all fragrant.

India is not like Ray or Rum where fragrant flowers do not grow except for two or three months.

Even during that period [i.e., during the spring season] roses and poppies which grow there [in Ray and Rum] have no fragrance. Otherwise it is all dull due to snowfall and hailstorms.<sup>214</sup>

The *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān* was much more subtle in linking Hindūstān and Paradise. Amīr Khuṣrau described Khizr Khān and Deval Rānī's second meeting in the following couplets. This meeting apparently occurred in a garden. The garden, in both Islamicate poetry and common belief, resonated with images of heaven which was conceived as a garden.

Description of the spring and its garden of lofty branches in the country of Khizr Khān who is like the tree of paradise in the garden of heaven and proceeding to the rose of Karna<sup>215</sup> and finding again the scent of love that wastes away the intelligence of the mind.

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<sup>214</sup> Translated by Nath and Gwaliari, *India as Seen by Amīr Khuṣrau*, 39.

<sup>215</sup> Karṇadevā was the father of Deval Rānī. The phrase "proceeding to the rose of Karna" clearly indicates that this passage described Khizr Khān's second meeting with Deval Rānī (the beloved/rose).

When the zephyr breeze renews the beauty of the garden  
the heart of the *bulbul* makes a pledge to the rose's face.<sup>216</sup>

The loaded clouds rain pearls down  
like the eyes of the lover beholding the beloved.

The lovers fell into a consuming passion.  
The desire of love became renewed.

As in the case of the lovesick and the impatient ones,  
the rose's collar was torn by the cry of the *bulbul*.

The ring of hair scattered by the wind  
was like the violet kissing the feet of the box-tree.

She placed the flower's stem behind her ear,  
making those with captured hearts senseless.

*Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, 128 vv. 2–10<sup>217</sup>

The next dozen couplets increasingly built upon the metaphor of the beloved as a rose.

The presence of the beloved and the rose necessitated a garden, which led Khuṣrau  
back to the image of Hindūstān as Paradise.

In the forbidden garden there is a beautiful garden  
which even the garden of heaven cannot rival.

In that country everywhere there is a rare tree  
that takes its water from the stream of paradise.

Each and every [rose/flower] is different from the roses of Khurāsān.  
Each one appears to have different coloring.

*Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, 129 vv. 5–7<sup>218</sup>

Amīr Khuṣrau produced a wonderful play on imagery in this last couplet. He  
transformed the metaphor of the beloved as a rose in the garden of Paradise into the  
beloved as a (Hindūstānī) flower in a Hindūstān garden of Paradise. This

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<sup>216</sup> The *bulbul* was a small bird. This was a famous metaphor in Persian poetry: the *bulbul* (lover) and the rose (beloved).

<sup>217</sup> Translated by the author from Amīr Khuṣrau, *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, ed. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami.

<sup>218</sup> Translated by the author from Amīr Khuṣrau, *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, ed. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami.

transformation led Khuṣrau to compose pages and pages of comparisons in which the beloved was compared to nearly every Hindūstānī flower imaginable.

Amīr Khuṣrau eventually wove the metaphor of the beloved as Hindūstānī flower and the virtue of the Hindūstān language into a single argument for the greatness of Hindūstān and Indo–Persian Hindavī.

The names of all of these flowers are in Persian  
however in Hind they grow from the earth [indigenously].

If this flower grows in the country of Persia,  
then why is it not in their memory?

*Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, 130 vv. 3–4<sup>219</sup>

For our flowers, the Hindī names are ill-suited  
and yet every flower is from the garden of paradise.

If this flower is in Rūm [Turkey] or Shām [Syria]  
then it goes by a Persian or Arabic name.

*Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, 132 vv. 11–12<sup>220</sup>

In Egypt and Rūm [Turkey] there are silvery idols  
but they lack the quick and nimble coquetry.

In spite of their being better in Hindūstān,  
they are not green like the Lebanese Cypress.<sup>221</sup>  
Yet although there may not be much greenery,  
the daffodil (*nasrīn*) is more favorable than the tulip.

Most of the flowers [beloveds] are of mixed color—  
a hundred trees, straight like the cypress, are servants to them.

*Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, 133 vv. 9–13<sup>222</sup>

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<sup>219</sup> Translated by the author from Amīr Khuṣrau, *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, ed. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami.

<sup>220</sup> Translated by the author from Amīr Khuṣrau, *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, ed. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami.

<sup>221</sup> These two couplets must be read together (*qiṭ'a-ye band*) in order for the meaning to become clear. Another metaphor for the beloved was the cypress. The beloved stood straight and tall like the cypress tree. Having just stated that the idols (beloved) were better in Hindūstān, Amīr Khuṣrau then had to acknowledge that the cypress (beloved) in Lebanon was better as it has more greenery. Amīr Khuṣrau responded with the argument that the jonquil (in spite of its lack of greenery) was better than the tulip (yet another metaphor of the beloved). Note that in the final couplet translated, Amīr Khuṣrau had the cypress (beloved) bow to the flowers (beloved) of Hindūstān.

<sup>222</sup> Translated by the author from Amīr Khuṣrau, *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, ed. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami.

Amīr Khuṣrau unequivocally placed Hindūstān above the rest of the Islamicate world. First he noted that the beauties (flowers) occurred only in Hindūstān and then he undercut his critics who might ask why he used Persian names by stating that the Persian names are better suited even though the flowers clearly belonged to Hindūstān and not Persia. In the third set of verses, he extended this from flowers to the beloved (represented in verse by the common metaphor as an idol). The Hindūstān beloved excelled not only in coquetry, but in every manner as indicated by the daffodil which surpasses the tulip (and cypress!) and was acknowledged by the beloveds of Egypt and Syria (represented as the straight cypress tree) that bowed in servitude to the Hindu[stān] beloved.

In these verses in the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān* and the *Nuh Sipihr*, Amīr Khuṣrau systematically changed the tropes of the Persian poetics to incorporate imagery and metaphors native to Hindūstān into a literary tradition imported from Central Asia. If not the birth, this was certainly the christening of Indo-Persian poetry. Khuṣrau also played with Persian literary motifs by introducing Hindūstān animals, flowers, and imagery into the Persian *maṣnavī*. Amīr Khuṣrau identified his language as separate from the Persian of Central Asia and he used indigenous imagery suggesting that he differentiated his Indo-Persian poetry of Hind from other Persian dialects and literary traditions such as Darī (Afghanistan), Rayy (Iran), and Rūm (Turkey).<sup>223</sup> It is important to note that Khuṣrau wrote during the formative period of Indo-Persian poetry. Thus the use of native tropes and metaphors did not approach the level that would occur in subsequent centuries when this tradition became firmly established.

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<sup>223</sup> When Amīr Khuṣrau referred to the language of Rūm, he generally meant Turkish. I include it in this list because of the couplet in the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, “If this flower is in Rūm [Turkey] or Shām [Syria] / then it goes by a Persian or Arabic name” (*Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, ed. Nizami, 132 v. 12). This may have referred to a Perso-Turkish language.

## CONCLUSION

As the preceding pages show, the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān* and the *Nuh Sipīhr* reveal the emergence of an Indo-Persian literary tradition that began turning inward toward native tropes and metaphors. This emergence of the Indo-Persian literary tradition coincides with and perhaps results from the consolidation of an Indo-Muslim community. Amīr Khuṣrau's works, when viewed as a whole rather than in piecemeal sections, reveal the emergence of this Indo-Muslim community. Simon Digby and Sunil Kumar both highlight the Indo-Muslim community's search for authority and the competition that results when the Sufi and the sultan both claim authority over this community. The issue, however, is not limited solely to a debate between Sufis, sultans, and their respective courts; rather, it extends throughout society from weavers and leather workers all the way to Sufi and sultan court.<sup>224</sup>

The thirteenth-century Mongol invasions played a key role in the fourteenth century search for authority. The Mongol conquest of Persia divided the Islamic world into segments: North Africa, Egypt, the Near East to the west of Baghdad, and islands of Islam isolated from the larger Islamic world to the east of Baghdad. These islands of Islam included Hindūstān as well as the Muslim trading communities in Indonesia and China. Contact between the Islamic world's core and periphery continued through oceanic voyages, but this contact was limited to maritime centers, political, and social elites. Sultans including 'Alā' al-Dīn Khaljī acknowledged a nominal allegiance to the 'Abbāsīd caliph in their minted coins and royal titles, but did so to a

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<sup>224</sup> That is, the debate occurs throughout society and one can find other voices of authority outside of the elite circles such as in the mystical and poetical works of the leather worker Ravidās and the weaver Kabīr. A brief discussion of their lives and a selection of their poetry (in translation) can be found in John Stratton Hawley and Mark Juergensmeyer, *Songs of the Saints of India* (1988; reprint, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2004) and for Kabīr see his *The Bijak of Kabir*, trans. Linda Hess and Shukdeo Singh (1983; reprint, New York: Oxford University Press, 2002).

much lesser extent than the Ghaznavids and Ghūrīds. The absence of the ‘Abbāsīd caliphate, which combined both secular and religious authority, nevertheless led to a contest between the Sufis and sultans to determine the next source of authority.

At first glance, the fourteenth-century texts indicate that the sultan—and particularly ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Khaljī—emerges as the primary source of authority. Amīr Khuṣrau’s *Khazā’in al-Futūḥ* and *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān* both celebrate Delhi Sultanate victories over the Mongols as well as Hindu kings. The Delhi Sultanate withstood a century of Mongol invasions at a time when the core of the Islamic world fell to the Mongol army. Under ‘Alā’ al-Dīn’s leadership, the Delhi Sultanate not only perseveres but prospers with renewed building projects, economic prosperity, and military conquests. Amīr Khuṣrau praises ‘Alā’ al-Dīn’s conquests in the *Khazā’in al-Futūḥ* and *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān* and also notes the improving morale within the Muslim community.

A closer examination, however, reveals a strong Sufi element in the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*. All of Amīr Khuṣrau’s *maṣnavī* poems contain praises to his Sufi master, Niẓām al-Dīn ‘Auliya’. By appending these praises to the introductory verses of the text, Amīr Khuṣrau manages to praise Niẓām al-Dīn before he praises his patron, whether that patron is ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Khaljī, Khizr Khān, or Quṭb al-Dīn Mubārak Shāh. Khuṣrau also appears to appropriate ‘Alā’ al-Dīn’s symbolic claims to authority through his expansion of the Quṭb Minār in a series of verses that clearly identify Niẓām al-Dīn as the *quṭb* (pillar, axis) through which the people and even the king (the subject of this section of verses) reach heaven. This symbol of the *quṭb* appears in the *Nuh Sipīhr* with Quṭb al-Dīn Mubārak Shāh, who claimed the title of *khalīfa* (caliph) with the implication that he holds both secular and religious authority over the Muslim community. The image of the *quṭb* clearly resonates with religious overtones and reaffirms Digby and

Kumar's thesis of a contest between 'Alā' al-Dīn, Nizām al-Dīn, and Quṭb al-Dīn Mubārak Shāh for authority over the Muslim community.

Acting as a poet in the sultan's court as well as a disciple in the Sufi's court requires quite a bit of finesse on the part of Amīr Khuṣrau. Appending the praises to Nizām al-Dīn at the end of the *manqabat* demonstrates one tactic Khuṣrau employs to appease both sides. The incorporation of Sufi imagery within the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, a text written for Khizr Khān who was a fellow disciple of Nizām al-Dīn, reveals a second way Amīr Khuṣrau negotiates this antagonism. By bracketing these sections off as *ghazals*, Amīr Khuṣrau simultaneously highlights the Sufi content of these passages and downplays their role in the narrative as poetic interlude. Khuṣrau's *Khamsa* contains a similar back-and-forth technique although certainly on a scale far less than the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*. Amīr Khuṣrau's *dīvāns* of collected poetry also contain various types of poetry alternately praising his sultan or his Sufi master.

A third interpretation of this search for authority emerges when the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān* is placed in context with the *Nuh Sipihr*. Both texts promote Hindūstān society by praising the language, culture, and environment of the subcontinent. The introduction, even if tentative, of Hindūstānī imagery in the Persian literary traditions reveals a third search for authority. The Mongol conquests that result in the isolation of the subcontinent from the Islamic world lead to a search not only of a secular and religious authority, but also a search for a social authority in the formation of an Indo-Muslim identity. What does it mean to be Indo-Muslim? Amīr Khuṣrau begins to formulate an answer in the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān* and *Nuh Sipihr* when he incorporates cultural images of his native land into the Persian literary tradition. In the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān* and *Nuh Sipihr*, he celebrates his Hindavī or Indo-Persian poetry as the finest of the Persianate languages. He infuses native flowers, birds,



animals, and customs into his verses and even includes aspects of Hindūstānī life outside of the Muslim community such as brahminical practices, learning, and a passage in which he praises the Sanskrit language. The incorporation of these images, which seem to form on the page, do not contain the developed symbolism found in later Sufi works such as the *Madhumālatī* or the *Padmavat*; yet, they have reveal a turn away from the Persian world toward a Hindūstānī world increasingly dominated by Sufism.

## Chapter 4

### On Rajputs and Red Herrings

The history of the succeeding centuries [i.e., after the seventh century] is a rather drab story of endemic warfare between rival dynasties. It can be followed in some detail, thanks to the numerous inscriptions and copper-plate charters of the period, but the detail is monotonous and uninteresting to all but the specialist.

Arthur Basham, *The Wonder That Was India*<sup>225</sup>

The previous two chapters examined the context in which Amīr Khuṣrau wrote the *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ* and the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, two so-called epics of conquest. Amīr Khuṣrau's texts responded to the Mongol conquest of Persia in the middle of the thirteenth century and the Delhi Sultanate's successful resistance to Mongol conquest in the thirteenth and fourteenth century. The previous chapter showed how the Mongol conquest of Persia isolated the Delhi Sultanate from the rest of the Islamicate world and how this isolation led to a new search of authority. This search for authority led to the emergence of an Indo-Muslim society distinct and different from its Persian and Turkish predecessors. A similar phenomenon occurred among the Hindus in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The Delhi Sultanate conquests in Western Hindūstān facilitated a search for identity that culminated with the emergence of the Rajput warrior ethos in the fifteenth century.

Brajadulal Chattopadhyaya wrote in a seminal article on the Rajputs, "The origin of the Rajputs is a red herring much dragged about in historical writings on early-medieval and medieval India."<sup>226</sup> The red herring stemmed from the assumption

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<sup>225</sup> Arthur L. Basham, *The Wonder that Was India: A Survey of the Culture of the Indian Sub-continent before the Coming of the Muslims* (New York: Grove Press, 1954), 69–70.

<sup>226</sup> Brajadulal Chattopadhyaya, "Origin of the Rajputs: The Political, Economic and Social Process in Early Medieval Rajasthan," in *The Making of Early Medieval India* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1994), 56. All

that a history of the Rajputs must begin with a study of Rajput origin. This assumption has led many scholars away from history and into the mythohistorical realm of Rajput origin. What were the origins of the Rajputs? According to C. V. Vaidya the Rajputs originated in the Vedic Period, for “None but the Vedic Aryans could have fought so valiantly in defense of the ancestral faith.”<sup>227</sup> Other scholars traced the Rajputs back to Central Asian (Śāka) immigrants. Indic society assimilated these immigrant tribes or local clans toward the end of the first millennium A.D. through the legends of a fire sacrifice that designated the descendants as fire-born (*agnikula*).<sup>228</sup> The *agnikula* legend served as a nexus for all subsequent Rajput claims: Rajput dynasties (particularly the Paramāra, Caulukya, Cāhamāna/Cauhān, and Pratīhāra) and subsidiary Rajput clans that traced their lineages back to the *agnikula* sacrifice. The red herring of Rajput history is not simply the origin of the Rajput, but the location of a single historic moment for the Rajput identity.

Chattopadhyaya acknowledged this red herring of Rajput origin, but followed the historical evidence to elucidate a social history of the early Medieval Rajputs. His articles, later collected and published as *The Making of Early Medieval India*, focused on “the process of localized state formation,” a phenomenon that could be tracked

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references to this article refer to the version published in this volume. This article was also reprinted with a slight variation in title as “The Emergence of the Rajputs as Historical Process in Early Medieval India,” in *The Idea of Rajasthan*, (ed. Karine Schomer, Joan L. Erdman, Deryck O. Lodrick, Lloyd I. Rudolph [New Delhi: Manohar Publishers & American Institute of Indian Studies, 1994], 2:161–91), which is perhaps the article’s best incarnation as this reprint included helpful section headings.

<sup>227</sup> C. V. Vaidya quoted by Chattopadhyaya, “Origin of the Rajputs,” 57. It is interesting that when scholars speak of defending the Vedic faith, they refer specifically to a Muslim challenge to Hinduism. These defenders of the Vedic faith never appear in discussions about Jains or Buddhists, even though these religions and their monks directly challenged Vedic beliefs (most notably the animal sacrifice). The defenders of the ancestral [Vedic] faith also never defended Vedic practice when Hindus themselves moved away from aniconic Vedic rituals and began worshipping images in temples. The simple fact is that the Rajputs were neither defenders of Vedic practices nor descendants of such a group.

<sup>228</sup> The *agnikula* legend will be discussed below, on page 149.

through history.<sup>229</sup> Nandini Sinha Kapur has continued Chattopadhyaya's work in her study of the Mewar Rajput dynasties through the fifteenth century.<sup>230</sup> Both authors have demonstrated how one might study the localized Rajput state formation in terms of political process, social (clan, marital) formations, and cultural diffusion outside of the origins debate. Neither author, however, studied the development of the Rajput ethos and the emergence of a Rajput identity distinct from the Indic warrior class even though both acknowledged that the emergence of such a warrior identity signaled a historical discontinuity.<sup>231</sup>

Both authors noted that the Rajput social identity challenged the traditional concept of the *kṣatriya* (warrior) *varṇa* as well as the dominant concept of a warrior class. This challenge led to a distinct warrior identity based on neither *varṇa* nor class sometime before the fifteenth century.<sup>232</sup> Chattopadhyaya wrote that inscriptions “indicate that the proliferation of the Rajputs contributed toward an undermining of

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<sup>229</sup> Chattopadhyaya interpreted his work as the study of “the process of localized state formation” in the introduction to *The Making of Early Medieval India*, especially 19, 23–24, 35–37. He demonstrated how this localized state formation occurred with respect to Rajput and clan systems (“Origin of the Rajputs,” 64–79; 88) and the effect various clans had on state formation through the *sāmanta* system (“Origin of the Rajputs,” 79–86). Rajput clans dominate Chattopadhyaya's work, but are only one type of localized state formation. Trade and urban centers, for example, also played a role in localized state formation, as discussed by Chattopadhyaya in “Trade and Urban Centres in Early Medieval North India” in *Making of Early Medieval India* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1994), 130–54 and “Urban Centres in Early Medieval India: An Overview,” in *Making of Early Medieval India*, (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1994), 155–82.

<sup>230</sup> Compare Nandini Sinha Kapur's discussion of fortification in *State Formation in Rajasthan: Mewar During the Seventh-Fifteenth Centuries* (Delhi: Manohar Publishers, 2002), 173–184 to Chattopadhyaya's discussion (“Origin of the Rajputs,” 76–77) and Kapur's discussion of administrative apparatus (*State Formation in Rajasthan*, 155–170) and her acknowledgment to Chattopadhyaya (17) to Chattopadhyaya's discussion on the Rajput political system (“Origin of the Rajputs,” 79–86). It also seems that Nandini Sinha Kapur's second chapter, “Mewar as a Locus of a State,” on the consolidation of the Guhila clan, and her third chapter, “Mewar Between Thirteenth and Fifteenth Centuries,” on the incorporation of non-Rajput clans into the Mewari political system are extensions of Chattopadhyaya's work on the role of the clan in localized state formation (i.e., sections II and III from “Origin of the Rajputs”).

<sup>231</sup> Kapur discussed the “military and administrative apparatus” of Mewar in *State Formation in Rajasthan*, 70–74; 155–70.

<sup>232</sup> A discussion of the Rajput warrior identity from the end of the fifteenth century though the eighteenth century may be found in Dirk H. A. Kolff, *Naukar, Rajput & Sepoy: The Ethnohistory of the Military Labour Market in Hindustan, 1450–1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

the political status of the early *kṣatriya* groups which were taking to less potent occupations and also that the preferred term for the ruling stratum was now not so much '*kṣatriya*' as 'Rajput'.<sup>233</sup> The Rajputs developed a social identity that increasingly displaced the ideological place of *varṇa*. Rajputs viewed themselves as warriors, but they did not necessarily come from the *kṣatriya* (warrior) *varṇa* nor did they necessarily engage in *kṣatriya* activities.<sup>234</sup> The Rajput identity incorporated a warrior ethos even when Rajputs engaged in activities far removed from the *kṣatriya*'s traditional role in the Hindu social order.

Kapur, like Chattopadhyaya, also saw the Rajput status as the product of social mobility or the means to attain a better social status. "In fact," Kapur wrote, "many claims made by the Rajput ruling families may be seen as attempts to get away from the actual origin rather than to reveal it."<sup>235</sup> Socially mobile families and clans employed a Rajput identity to mask less desirable aspects of their ancestry or to promote their status within society. Linking a family or a clan to a legendary warrior or a heroic companion simultaneously legitimated the family/clan and obscured the family/clan's past. The Pratīhāras, Cāhamānas/Cauhāns, Solāṅkis/Caulukyās, and Paramāras all utilized the Rajput myth of the *agnikula* sacrifice to create a mytho-historical origin for their clan. Once established in the socio-political realm, this mytho-historical origin began to appear in non-royal inscriptions that sought to increase the donor family's social and political standing. Inscriptions in which the patron was a merchant, a military or administrative figure, for example, often contained a lengthy introduction

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<sup>233</sup> Chattopadhyaya, "Origin of the Rajputs," 82.

<sup>234</sup> As will be discussed in two more pages, Rajput tales often incorporated people outside of classical (brahminical) society. These people outside of classical society became Rajput, a process described in scholarship as Rajputization, and then entered into brahminical society. While people often identify the Rajput as part of the *kṣatriya varṇa*, a brief examination of the Rajput tales reveals Rajputs who act as Brahmins, merchants, and craftsmen, all of which are outside of the duties for the *kṣatriya*.

<sup>235</sup> Kapur, *State Formation in Rajasthan*, 21.

that mentioned the ruler's genealogy and his ancestor's accomplishments. This could, and often did, introduce socio-political markers such as the *agnikula* sacrifice. By mentioning the *agnikula*, an inscription entered this discourse on state formation, simultaneously promoting the ruler's dynastic claims and possibly increasing the donor family's political or social status. The promotion of the Rajput identity, by distancing itself from *kṣatriya* genealogy, created a more inclusive genealogy of political and social mobility in which groups across *varṇa* and class participated.

The Delhi Sultanate campaigns in the first decade of the thirteenth century facilitated this rise of Rajput identity in Western Hindūstān. A new social identity emerged from the ashes of Sultanate conquest, reborn as the warrior identity of the Rajputs. This latent social identity developed from the preexisting *kṣatriya varṇa* and warrior class; yet, challenged both *varṇa* and class by offering a model that not only competed with them, but gradually folded both the *varṇa* and class concepts of the warrior into a post-Sultanate Rajput identity. This Rajput social identity was based upon the promotion and adoption of a warrior ethos across *varṇa* and class groups. In order to understand the development of this Rajput warrior ethos and social identity in the Sultanate Period, it is necessary to examine what the Rajput ethos and identity became in the post-Sultanate Period.

### THREE MODERN RAJPUT TALES

The Rajput warrior rides into modern conceptions on the vehicle of legend and folk tale. Bards and folk storytellers retold and respun the oral narratives of past Rajput battles into the modern-day image of the Rajput. Recited for centuries, scholars recorded these tales in the early twentieth century. While these Rajput tales speak of events in the past, they exist in the present. Rajput tales such as the epic of Pābūjī, the *Khyāt* of Naiṅsī, and the tale of Hadi Rani, however, provide a starting point for

understanding attributes the society gradually incorporated into the Rajput image. At its core, the Rajput tales were didactic: they defined what Rajput meant and instructed the listener on how to act like a Rajput.

### The Epic of Pābūjī<sup>236</sup>

The son of a regional ruler and a nymph, Pābūjī manifested extraordinary powers as a child. Although Pābūjī was the youngest son and therefore not the heir to the throne, he nonetheless befriended the exiled Thori brothers and made them his courtiers. Pābūjī and the Thori brothers underwent a series of adventures that mirrored the *Rāmāyaṇa* as well as local myths and tales. In one episode, Pābūjī gave an oath to the Cāraṇ clan that he would drop everything to defend them if he acquired Kesar Kāḷamī, a horse born from a mythical being just like Pābūjī. The adventures continued and increasingly created a tension between the protagonist Pābūjī and antagonist Khīcī. This antagonism foreshadowed the final climatic battle of the epic.

Pābūjī's fortune turned for the worst when he decided to marry. When the wedding procession arrived, the soon-to-be mother-in-law greeted Pābūjī and prepared a customary *tilaka* of curd for his forehead. Pābūjī stated, "Rāṭhoṛs do not bow the head before a woman,"<sup>237</sup> and offered his horse, Kesar, as a substitute. Kesar received the

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<sup>236</sup> Since the Pābūjī tales are oral narrative, it is difficult to determine when or if various parts of the tale became standardized and fixed in performances. Muhato Naiṇsī includes a version of the Pābūjī story, *Vāta Pābūjī rī*, in his seventeenth-century *Khyāt*, see Richard D. Saran and Norman P. Ziegler, *The Merṭiyo Rāṭhoṛs of Merto, Rājasthān: Select Translations Bearing on the History of a Rājput Family, 1462-1660*, 2 vols. (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001), 2:188-216. This not only indicates the presence of the story in the seventeenth century, but suggests that the story circulated in or before the sixteenth century. For a discussion of the differences in these texts, see Chapter 4 and Appendix 1 of John D. Smith, *The Epic of Pābūjī: A Study, Transcription and Translation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991). For a study of the variation and development of the Pābūjī story see John D. Smith, "Where the Plot Thickens: Epic Moments in Pābūjī," *South Asian Studies* 2 (1986): 53-64. The Pābūjī story develops not only in narrative, but also artistically on the painted cloth that serves as a visual cue during the oral performance. For the visual development and change, see Van De Wetering, "Fighting a Tiger: Stability and Flexibility in the Style of Pābūjī *Pars*," *South Asian Studies* 8 (1992): 33-52.

<sup>237</sup> This quote is taken from Smith, *The Epic of Pābūjī*, 418. The episode is also discussed by Lindsey Harlan, "On Headless Heroes: Pābūjī from the Inside Out," in *Multiple Histories: Culture and Society in the*

*tilaka* and the wedding ceremony commenced. In the midst of the ceremony, word arrived that the Khīcī had rustled the Cāraṇ cattle. There are textual variations at this juncture. Pābūjī completed the entire wedding ceremony in the *Vāta Pābūjī rī*. More recent performances have Pābūjī halting the wedding on account of his previous oath to the Cāraṇ that he will drop everything to defend them. In the oral narrative recorded by John Smith, Pābūjī severed the wedding knot with his sword in the midst of circumambulating the fire.<sup>238</sup> Lindsey Harlan recorded an oral version in which Pābūjī severed the knot and then ties it to his horse, who once again took Pābūjī's place. In all variations, Pābūjī rode into battle without consecrating the marriage and left behind Ḍhēbo, the greatest warrior of the group, who was sleeping off his celebration of Pābūjī's wedding.

When Ḍhēbo finally awoke and learned of the impending battle, he mounted his steed Haraṇāgar to pursue Pābūjī and his retinue. Ḍhēbo and Haraṇāgar rode so quickly that Haraṇāgar tired and Ḍhēbo carried him to continue the pursuit. As Ḍhēbo, carrying Haraṇāgar, approached the battleground he called out to the circling vultures to save room for Khīcī flesh. The vultures, however, could not wait and demanded a feast of flesh from their lord, Ḍhēbo. Unwilling to sacrifice his horse, Haraṇāgar, Ḍhēbo disemboweled himself. He fed the vultures with his own entrails and then tied his sash around his waist before reaching Pābūjī. Ḍhēbo single-handedly slayed the entire Khīcī army and swung his sword to kill Khīcī. Pābūjī arrived just in time to grab the sword in mid-swing and spared Khīcī's life. Ḍhēbo finally revealed his disembowelment to Pābūjī and promptly died, setting up the final battle between Pābūjī and Khīcī.

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*Study of Rajasthan*, ed. Lawrence A. Babb, Varsha Joshi, and Michael W. Meister (Jaipur: Rawat Publications, 2002), 128-29.

<sup>238</sup> Pābūjī completes three of the seven circumambulations. See Smith, *Epic of Pābūjī*, 423.



The epic culminated as the defeated and humiliated Khīcī formed an alliance with Jaisiṅgh Bhāṭī. Pābūjī learned of their approach and set out with the Thori brothers to meet the approaching army. As he rode out to battle, he passed a Rebārī wedding procession and all of the Rebārī men proclaim their allegiance to Pābūjī, abandoning the wedding procession for the battlefield.<sup>239</sup> Both sides suffered heavy losses during the battle. Pābūjī mounted Kesar and entered the melee searching for Khīcī, but they soon fall into a stalemate in which neither can defeat the other. Realizing this, Pābūjī instructed Khīcī to exchange weapons, since only his own sword could strike down Pābūjī. Even then, Pābūjī must taunt the reluctant Khīcī to swing the final blow. Pābūjī and Kesar ascend to heaven in a palanquin as the battle continued below. Witnessing the death and ascension of Pābūjī and Kesar, Cado informed the other Thori brothers of Pābūjī's demise.

The great lord Pābūjī has left us and passed on to heaven. Now we have nobody in the land, in this village, in Kolu. If we fight these (enemies), nobody will be able to kill us and we shall not obtain release. So let us take up our swords against each other, and cut off each other's heads! . . . all of the great lord Pābūjī's chieftains cut at each other and met their end there in the battle.<sup>240</sup>

As the blood on the battlefield pooled and began to intermix, the goddess separated the blood based on the clans. Seeing this, Pābūjī asked her to refrain from separating the blood so that all of the clans could intermix.

When the wives of Pābūjī and the Thori brothers hear about the husbands' deaths, they prepared for *satī* (immolation in the funeral pyre). As the widows enter the pyre, they urged Ḍoḍ-Gehalī, the wife of Būṛo who is seven months pregnant, to

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<sup>239</sup> The Rebārī are a third clan. During the final battle as the blood mixes into a common stream and flows from the battlefield, the goddess separates the intermingled blood back into three streams for each of the three 'castes' in the text: Bhīl, Rebārī, and Rajput.

<sup>240</sup> Smith, *Epic of Pābūjī*, 449–450.

forgo immolation and raise her child. Ḍoḍ-Gehalī grabs a knife, cuts the child out of her womb, and handing the newborn to a wet-nurse, proceeds to ascend the funeral pyre.

### **The *Khyāt* of Naiṅsī**

Richard Saran and Norman Ziegler have translated and published sections of three early Rajput oral narratives that were redacted between A.D. 1568 and 1678 during the reign of Rājā Jāsvantsīṅgh.<sup>241</sup> The sections of these three oral narratives described alliances between the rulers of Jodhpur and the region of Merṭo, the growing independence of Merṭo and its subsequent conflict with Jodhpur, and the collaboration and then the search for recognition between Merṭo and the Mughals. The last and most well known of these texts was the *Khyāt* of Naiṅsī. Muṅhato Naiṅsī (d. A.D. 1670) served the royal court in a variety of positions and eventually attained the high position of administering and collecting revenue from the various territories controlled by Jodhpur. Naiṅsī drew upon court records used for administration in the composition of his *Khyāt*. Naiṅsī wrote his *Khyāt* from A.D. 1658–59 until November 29, 1668, when Jāsvantsīṅgh imprisoned him during a Deccani campaign.<sup>242</sup> Naiṅsī was released upon his return to Jodhpur, but ordered to pay a sum of 100,000 rupees to the royal treasury.<sup>243</sup> His refusal led to his arrest on December 28, 1669 and his eventual suicide on August 3, 1670. The Pābūjī epic circulated as an oral performance before Naiṅsī wrote his *Khyāt*, as evidenced in the following story when Dūdo recollects the epic; however, the *Khyāt* was written (and is therefore dated) before the Pābūjī epic.

The *Khyāt* is a chronicle of stories, such as the “Story of the Time that Dūdo Jodhāvāt Killed Megho Narsīṅgdāsot Sīndhaḷ.”<sup>244</sup> This episode revolved around a *vair*

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<sup>241</sup> Saran and Ziegler, *Mertīyo Rāṭhōrs of Merṭo, Rājasthān*, 1: 8.

<sup>242</sup> Saran and Ziegler, *Mertīyo Rāṭhōrs*, 1: 1–24.

<sup>243</sup> Saran and Ziegler, *Mertīyo Rāṭhōrs*, 1: 21–24.

<sup>244</sup> Saran and Ziegler, *Mertīyo Rāṭhōrs*, 1: 188–90.

(revenge killing) in which Rāv Jodhojī ordered his son, Kuṃvar Dūdo, to kill Narsiṅgdāsot Sīndhaḷ's son, Megho.<sup>245</sup>

On the next day... Megho said: 'Dūdojī! You found an opportunity; all of my Rājput̃s departed in my son's marriage procession. I am [on my own] here.' Then Dūdo said: 'Meghojī! We two will fight one another. Why should we kill [other] Rājput̃s?'

... Megho came from one side; Dūdo came from the other side. Then Dūdo said: 'Megho! Strike a blow.' Megho said: 'Dūdo! You strike a blow.' Megho struck a blow; Dūdo warded it off with [his] shield. Dūdo remembered Pābūjī and struck Megho a blow. [Megho's] head was severed from [his] body and fell. Megho died fighting. Then Dūdo took Megho's head and started off.

Then his Rājput̃s said: 'Put Megho's head on [his] body. He is a great Rājput̃.' Dūdo put the head on the body. Afterward Dūdo said: 'Do not pillage a single village. Our business was with Megho.' Having killed Megho, Dūdo turned back.<sup>246</sup>

Naiṅsī's *Khyāt* is dominated by *vair* (revenge killing) stories in which Rajputs fought each other. This episode began with a question of *vair*, but ended in a personal contest between two sons of Rajput rivals. Naiṅsī inserted the epic of Pābūjī into this tale of personal combat when Dūdo must taunt his opponent (as Pābūjī did to Khīcī). The Pābūjī story ended with Pābūjī asking the goddess to mix the blood and the clans into a single Rajput community. A similar event seems to happen at the end of this episode, when the Rajputs prevent Dūdo from desecrating Megho's body. A warrior ethic transcends rivalry on the battlefield or between clans.

In another episode, Naiṅsī described the death of Sekho at the Battle of Sevakī on November 2, 1529. This battle pitted Rāv Gāṅgojī of Jodhpur and Rāv Jait̃sī from

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<sup>245</sup> Saran and Ziegler defined *vair* as "the debt of vengeance owed upon the murder of a family member, kinsman, or dependent" (*Mertīyo Rāṭhōrs*, 1: 84 n. 27) and provide background of this debt in the second volume of the series under Narsiṅhdās Khīndāvat and Megho Narsiṅhdāsot (*Mertīyo Rāṭhōrs*, 2:383–84) and Āskaraṅ Satāvāt (*Mertīyo Rāṭhōrs*, 2: 219).

<sup>246</sup> Naiṅsī's *Khyāt* translated by Saran and Ziegler, *Mertīyo Rāṭhōrs*, 1: 189–90.

Bikaner against Gāṅgojī's half-brother Vīramde (Sekho's paternal uncle) and Daulatīyo (Daulat Khān) of Nagaur.<sup>247</sup>

Meanwhile the Rāv spoke, "If you [so] advise, I shall strike the [lead] elephant with an arrow, [or], if you [so] advise, I shall strike the mahout with an arrow." The [lead] elephant was approaching. The mahout was shouting. Then [Gaṅgo] hit the mahout with an arrow; the mahout fell. And he hit the elephant's temple with a second arrow. The elephant fled; Daulāt Khān also fled. And Sekho stood his ground. Sekho did not consider fleeing. Sekho dismounted along with seven hundred men; there was a battle. Sekho died fighting along with [his] son. Hardās died fighting along with [his] son. The Turks fled. Many died. Many turned back.

[Before he died] Sekhojī was gasping convulsively on the battlefield. Then Rāv Gāṅgo asked: 'Sekhojī! Whose land [is it now]?' Then Rāv Jaitsī had shade provided for Sekhojī. He had [Sekho] take opium. He served water [to Sekho]. Then Sekho asked: 'Who are you?' He said: 'I am Rāv Jaitsī.' Sekho said: 'Rāvjī! What have I harmed of yours? We—father's brother [and] brother's son—were quarrelling over land.' Then Sekho said: 'Jaitsījī! Your fate shall be what mine has been.' As [he spoke] in such a way, Sekho's soul (*jīv*) departed.<sup>248</sup>

Once again, Rajputs demonstrated compassion to each other on the battlefield as Rāv Jaitsī comforted the dying Sekho with shade, water, and opium. Sekho's refusal to acknowledge Rāv Gāṅgo's victory mirrored a similar refusal by the dying Mongol Mahimāsāhi to acknowledge 'Alā' al-Dīn Khaljī's victory in the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* discussed in the next chapter. Sekho's prophecy that Rāv Jaitsī, who wrongly entered a battle between families, would suffer the same fate proved true as the next Jodhpur ruler defeated him and occupied the city of Bikaner.

The next Jodhpur ruler, Rāv Mālde, consolidated his kingdom when he annexed Bikaner and continually attempted (unsuccessfully) to undercut Vīramde's control of Merto. When Rāv Mālde campaigned to the southwest of Jodhpur, he ordered Vīramde and his troops to join him. At the same time, he secretly conspired with Daulat Khān (who opposed both Rāv Mālde and his father in the passage quoted above) to attack the

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<sup>247</sup> A helpful summary of this battle may be found in Saran and Ziegler, *Mertīyo Rāṭhōrs*, 2:189–90.

<sup>248</sup> Naiṅsī's *Khyāt* translated by Saran and Ziegler, *Mertīyo Rāṭhōrs*, 1:197–98.

largely unprotected Meṛto with the false rumor that the Vīramde had captured the stray elephant (mentioned in passing in the previous battle) and kept it as a sort of war trophy that proclaimed his dominance over Nagaur. The *Mārvār rī Parganām rī Vigat*, a text contemporaneous with Naiṅsī's *Khyāt* and which Naiṅsī may have helped write, related the following story.

Four days went by; he held [these] conferences in secret. Then [Vīramde] asked some *khavās* [and] *pāsvāns*:<sup>249</sup> 'These days the Rāv does not speak to me; what is he conferring about in secret?' Someone told [him] what news there was. Then [Vīramde] wrote letters and sent them to Meṛto. A Raibārī brought the letter to Meṛto a watch before Daulatīyo [arrived]. Rāṭhor Akhairāj Bhādāvat had come to Meṛto without requesting leave from Rāṭhor Vīramde. [The Raibārī] put the letters in Akhairāj's hands. Akhairāj prepared the fort for defense. He closed the gates. He sent scouts before [the enemy]; they brought back the information [that] the army had advanced to about four *kos*<sup>250</sup> [from Meṛto]. He closed the main gates of the fort, climbed up on top of a tower, and stayed ready. Not very many retainers were inside the fort. Daulatīyo came and sacked and looted the city. And he came and began to reduce the fort. [His] *sāth* penetrated the fort. Then Akhairāj Bhādāvat observed: 'There is no *sāth*<sup>251</sup> [to aid us] nearby, and today Vīramde's men are being captured. I see with my own eyes [that] there is no dignity in this situation. Today I must die.' Then Akhairāj leaped from the wall of the fort [along with] fifteen to twenty men. Akhairāj wielded a nine-digit long lance in a dash [through the ranks of the enemy; some men] were struck, [others] warded it off... Victory was Akhairāj's.<sup>252</sup>

Akhairāj fought as a Rajput when he realized that he must die to protect the fort and he then jumped from the fort with fifteen to twenty men to victoriously fight the entire army of Daulat Khān.

Rāv Mālde, the ruler of Jodhpur, next unsuccessfully plotted a series of intrigues against Vīramde. He sent Vīramde to Ajmer in an attempt to weaken Vīramde's base of power in Meṛto. When Vīramde had settled in Ajmer, Rāv Mālde then sent a force to

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<sup>249</sup> The words *khavās* and *pāsvān* both refer to the attendants of a landholder.

<sup>250</sup> Four *kos* is about eight miles.

<sup>251</sup> The *sāth* is a retinue of brothers, sons, and a select few trusted men who swore allegiance to a ruler or leader. See Saran and Ziegler, *Meṛṭīyo Rāṭhors*, 1:90 n. 63.

<sup>252</sup> Translated by Saran and Ziegler, *Meṛṭīyo Rāṭhors*, 1:103–04.

kill or send him into exile. Realizing the plan, Vīramde left in the middle of the night and confronted the band of soldiers in Reyām.

And ahead, unknown [to him, Mālde's] *sāth* was already prepared [for him]. Thereafter a battle occurred. Adversity befell Vīramde.

Many of Vīramde's *sāth* died fighting. Three horses were cut down under Vīramde. He mounted a horse [wielding] a knife. He snatched up ten of the opponents' lances and held them together with the reins. He suffered four wounds on the head. Streams of blood went down into [his] beard.

Both armies becoming satiated with battle, were standing [apart] on the far side [of the battlefield].

Vīramde was tending to his wounded men.

Then Pañcāyaṇ came. He came and said: 'Wherever will you find Vīramde in such a state [again] that you are not killing him today?' Then the *sirdārs* said: 'Brother! Once [already] we have with difficulty averted misfortune on [our] chests. Brother! Vīramde will not die by our doing. And, if you would kill [him], that one [over there] is Vīramde.'

Then Pañcāyaṇ came upon Vīramde with thirty horsemen. And he called out to Vīramdejī. The Vīramdejī said: 'Hey Pañcāyaṇ! Is it you? Very well, come forth! Pañcāyaṇ! There are many boys like you in Mārṣvār, if any one [of them] could press the back of Vīr[made], then [why hasn't he]?' Pañcāyaṇ drew the reins of his horse and remained standing right there.

Then Vīramdejī said: 'One such as [you] I might kill even while he stands [over] there. But, be off!' Then Pañcāyaṇ turned the reins [of his horse] right back [around].<sup>253</sup>

Vīramde's battle, like Akhairāj's, occurred against a force that far outnumbered his own. Even with his entire *sāth* (retinue) dead, Vīramde single-handedly fought his opponents to a stalemate and returned to Merṭo where he apparently lived his life in an uneasy truce with Rāv Malde.

### The Tale of Hadi Rani

Ann Grodzins Gold recorded a third Rajput tale, also from the region of Jodhpur (Marwar), about Hadi Rani. This folktale began with Hadi Rani, a female and only child of a Rajput warrior, being raised in the Rajput martial tradition. She received the traditional training of a Rajput male and learned the thirty-six types of weapons.

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<sup>253</sup> Naiṇsī's *Khyāt* translated by Saran and Ziegler, *Mertīyo Rāṭhōrs*, 1:201–202.

However, she was a female and the day arrived when she would get married. Word arrived at the close of the wedding ceremony that the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb's army was about to capture a Rajput princess. The bridegroom was requested to leave for battle. Hadi Rani's husband, however, sought to delay his departure until the morning in order to consummate his marriage. Hadi Rani chastised him saying, "Wear my bangles, and give me your sword and sit secure in these four walls; and don't ever call yourself a Rajput." Upbraided by his wife on his duty, he left the house but paused at the city gates to send a message to Hadi Rani. The messenger, arriving at the house, asked Hadi Rani for her assurance that if her husband should die on the field of battle, she would commit *satī*. Hadi Rani becomes enraged at this two-pronged insult: first, that she would not perform *satī* as custom demanded; secondly, that her husband hesitated once again before entering battle. She "... seizes a sword from the wall and—admonishing the messenger to deliver her last remembrance—beheads herself in a single stroke. . . A weeping soldier carries the platter to her husband. Her husband ties the head around his neck (or in other accounts his saddle)..."<sup>254</sup> Hadi Rani's husband finally entered battle where he not only scared Aurangzeb's soldiers with his wife's decapitated head, but "fights valiantly to a Rajput victory and his own death."<sup>255</sup> Aurangzeb's attempt to obtain the Rajput princess is foiled.

#### FOUR ATTRIBUTES OF RAJPUT ETHOS

The three Rajput tales described above reveal four attributes: 1) acts of fidelity that supported and promoted the Rajput's honor and valor; 2) extraordinary feats in battle; 3) the immolation of women in the pyre, either as an act of *satī* or increasingly through the act of *jauhar* ; 4) a tragic-heroic plot in which the Rajputs achieved victory

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<sup>254</sup> Ann Grodzins Gold, "Gender, Violence, and Power: Rajasthani Stories of Shakti," in *Women as Subjects*, ed. Nita Kumar (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1994), 36.

<sup>255</sup> Gold, "Gender, Violence, and Power," 36.

through death. These four attributes formed a basis for the Rajput social identity at the advent of the Mughal Period and provide a beginning for studying the emergence of this social identity in the Pre-Mughal Period.

### **Fidelity**

The image of the Rajput in historical memory was based on honor and valor. Individuals in these tales revealed their Rajput-ness by demonstrating their fidelity to these concepts of honor and valor.<sup>256</sup> Rajput tales were also didactic, defining and instructing the audience on proper Rajput conduct. Rajputs in the three tales above displayed their honor by remaining true to their oaths, often at great personal sacrifice to themselves. They displayed their valor by never shying away from a fight, even when they rode out to a certain death. This fidelity to the ideals of honor and valor elevated the Rajput beyond the status of a warrior in a manner similar to the medieval knight's elevation beyond the warrior.

The Rajput displayed his fidelity to a higher standard of life through his relationship with his horse and the bond between Rajput and horse was no ordinary bond. Pābūjī's horse, Kesar, took his place twice: when the horse bowed his head to the mother-in-law to accept the *tilaka* and when Pābūjī severed the wedding knot and retied it to Kesar who completed the marriage ceremony. The role of the horse in this marriage ceremony, although unusual, reflected and amplified the ideals of Rajput duty within the tale. Rajput duty distilled to its most basic component was to protect the wife and family. Dhēbo protected Haraṇāgar when he disemboweled himself, rather than his horse, to feed the vultures.

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<sup>256</sup> The display of honor and valor, of course, is not unique to the Rajput tale, but only a component of the Rajput tale.



Rajputs demonstrated their fidelity not only by adhering to the oaths they gave to their horses before battle, but when they fulfilled the vows they made to protect others. Pābūjī demonstrated such fidelity when he left his marriage ceremony—not even delaying to complete four quick turns around the ceremonial fire—to recover the Cāraṇ cattle. The Rabarī later in the text reaffirmed Pābūjī’s choice, when the Rabarī men similarly left the wedding procession for battle. The act of Rajputs abandoning their wedding ceremonies served a very specific purpose: it placed the Rajput within the family structure yet left the marriage unconsummated. Naiṇsī’s *Khyāt* contained two examples of such fidelity: first, when the Rajputs prevented Dūdo further desecrating Megho’s beheaded body, and later when Rāv Jaitsī comforted the dying Sekho even though they were enemies.

### **Extraordinary Feats**

In addition to fidelity, the Rajput tale contained instances of extraordinary feats that confirmed the Rajput’s martial prowess. In the Pābūjī epic, for example, Ḍhēbo disemboweled himself to protect his horse; yet, he went on to defeat the entire Khīcī force and was in mid-stroke in delivering the deathblow to Khīcī when Pābūjī stopped him. The death of Khīcī, the antagonist in the Pābūjī tale, had to be at the hand of Pābūjī (protagonist), but the text clearly highlighted Ḍhēbo’s martial prowess and his single-handed victory over the Khīcī warriors made him second to none. When Khīcī and Pābūjī finally met, the two reached a stalemate. Pābūjī overcame this stalemate by exchanging weapons with Khīcī, an act that clearly indicated that Pābūjī could only die by his own hand. Even after switching weapons, Pābūjī still had to goad Khīcī into striking him. Again, the text placed Pābūjī’s martial prowess above his rival, who could not defeat him. This martial prowess was then generalized to the Rajputs as a whole after Pābūjī’s death. The Thorī brothers, like Ḍhēbo and Pābūjī, did not die from the

enemy's sword. "Now his chieftains who remained behind fought and fought, and killed many of the (Bhātī) army; and now those chieftains could not die, and nobody could kill those chieftains."<sup>257</sup> With no enemy that could defeat them, the Thorī brothers slayed each other and followed Pābūjī into heaven.

### ***Satī and Jauhar***

The Rajput women had a role that mirrored the Rajput male. By committing *satī*, immolation of the widow in her husband's pyre, the Rajput woman demonstrated fidelity to their husbands as well as their duty as Rajput women. The act itself was an extraordinary feat that displayed the Rajput woman's valor, honor, and virtue. As with the Rajput males, the fact that the women remained faithful even in the face of death, mattered more than the manner in which they died. Thus, women whose marriage ceremony was interrupted (as in the Pābūjī tale) were not expected to perform *satī*. The fact that they still committed *satī* was seen as even more valorous and honorable. The Rajput tale functioned as a didactic tale, instructing and promoting women to commit *satī* even when the status of the marriage was somewhat questionable.

The Pābūjī epic contained such an example. Even though Pābūjī left the wedding ceremony before it was completed, the next chapter began "Pābūjī has returned after going to Ūmarkoṭ and being married,"<sup>258</sup> clearly indicating the acceptance of Pābūjī's marriage. Phulvantī, as Pābūjī's wife, committed *satī* even though her marriage was unconsummated and completed under questionable circumstances. The Thorī wives joined Phulvantī and also committed *satī*, including Ḍoḍ-Gehalī, who was pregnant at the time and therefore exempted from performing

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<sup>257</sup> Smith, *Epic of Pabuji*, 449.

<sup>258</sup> Smith, *Epic of Pabuji*, 422-23.

such an act. Instead of carrying her baby to term, Ḍoḍ-Gehalī cut out her fetus and then handed the child to a wet-nurse before she entered the pyre.

The Rajput tales discussed above contain acts of *satī*; yet, the act of *jauhar* would become perhaps the most defining element of Rajput identity. *Jauhar* inverted the practice of *satī* by having women immolate themselves en masse prior to their husbands' death in a hopeless battle. Amīr Khuṣrau provided the first historical account of *jauhar* during Sultan 'Alā' al-Dīn's conquest of Ranthambhor in A.D. 1301, Chittaur in A.D. 1303, and Jālōr in A.D. 1311. This act was later commemorated in various Indic works composed during the fifteenth century and discussed in the next chapter. The residents of Chittaur witnessed two more military campaigns that ended in *jauhar*. A second incident of *jauhar* occurred in A.D. 1535 when the Gujarati sultan Bahadur Shah sacked Chittaur and a third *jauhar* occurred in A.D. 1568 during the campaigning against the Mughal emperor Akbar.

The immolation of women on the pyre and the death of men in the field of battle formed two complimentary aspects of Rajput identity. Rajput men made vows to die in battle and then died in battle to fulfill their vows. Women did the same by vowing to commit *satī* if their husbands died and then dying to show their fidelity. The Rajput men in these tales displayed extraordinary acts on the battlefield and the Rajput women displayed extraordinary acts through their performance of *satī* and *jauhar*.

### **The Tragic-Heroic**

The Rajput ethos shown in the Rajput's fidelity to his or her vow, the Rajput's extraordinary acts in battle and in death, and the Rajput female's performance of *satī* or *jauhar* resulted in the emergence of a tragic-heroic metahistorical plot for the Rajput tale. Rajputs always died in battle and the audience who listened to these tales increasingly expected the Rajput's death. The audience, however, reacted to these tales

as if they were heroic rather than tragic. These tales glorified the Rajput ethos and the audience lauded the honor and valor found in the Rajput's death. This heroic twist recast the Rajput tale as a didactic tale that not only recollected the historical events but promoted these events as the ideal behavior for Rajputs. The audience was instructed on what to do if a similar situation such as a siege should occur. The next chapter examines the emergence of the tragic-heroic metahistory in two Rajput texts, the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* and the *Kānhaḍade Prabandh*.

The tale of Hadi Rani followed and inverted the Rajput tales of Pābūjī and Naiṅsī's *Khyāt* described in the preceding paragraphs. The hero in the Hadi Rani tale was not a Rajput man, but a Rajput female. Hadi Rani was imbued with a Rajput identity early in the tale, when she learned the traditional thirty-six arts of weaponry.<sup>259</sup> Like Pābūjī and Tej Singh, her marriage to a Rajput was interrupted with the news of impending battle. Unlike these two tales, however, her husband refused to leave for battle and Hadi Rani rebuked him for abandoning his duty. Hadi Rani's husband paused a second time at the city gates and sent a messenger asking for Hadi Rani's assurance that she would commit *satī* if her husband died. This Rajput's fidelity was questioned for a second time in the tale and for the second time Hadi Rani emerged as the exemplary Rajput when she took a sword and beheaded herself as a symbol of her commitment. The female Hadi Rani, not her Rajput husband, was beheaded—a sign, in case the others were missed, that Hadi Rani was the true Rajput in the tale. When Hadi Rani's severed head was delivered to her husband, he finally rode into battle with the head attached to his belt (or saddle) where he met his death fighting. Hadi Rani's beheading could symbolize her performance of *jauhar* before her husband's death; yet, the beauty of this tale is that Hadi Rani has emerged as the Rajput exemplar

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<sup>259</sup> The thirty-six arts of weaponry is a trope in Classical Sanskrit indicating martial training.

and her husband's death may actually make him the *satī*. The tale of Hadi Rani contains all of the elements of the traditional Rajput tale, but inverts the roles of men and women. This tale, collected by Gold only a few decades ago, only makes sense by inverting the Rajput categories and demonstrates how engrained the Rajput ethos has become in modern society.

#### THE WARRIOR ETHOS IN INDIC LITERARY TRADITIONS

One of the above four markers of Rajput identity occurred in two stone inscriptions of the Guhila clan. These two inscriptions are dated only a few decades after the first Delhi Sultanate raids in Western Hindūstān and two decades before Sultan 'Alā' al-Dīn Khaljī's conquest of the Chittaur fort in A.D. 1303. The inscriptions, therefore, are roughly contemporaneous with Amīr Khuṣrau's accounts in the *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ*. These inscriptions provide an opportunity to compare the Rajput identity in thirteenth-century records with that in two fifteenth-century Rajput texts discussed in the next chapter.

The first inscription, dated to V.S. 1339/A.D. 1283 and inscribed on a black stone placed near a gate to the Chittaur fort, listed the genealogy of the Guhila dynasty. The Guhilas, who ruled as subordinate lords in Southern Rajasthan from the eighth century, consolidated their power and gained control of the Chittaur fort sometime during the thirteenth century. This inscription celebrated their control of Southern Rajasthan and legitimated the Guhila's rule. The Guhila dynasty in this inscription began with Bappa Rāval and his son Guhila. Earlier Guhila inscriptions did not include references to Bappa Rāval and his inclusion in this inscription represents an attempt on the part of the Guhilas to transition from a subordinate position as regional lords to a more imperial position by claiming to have descended from a *brāhmaṇa-kṣatriya*.<sup>260</sup>

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<sup>260</sup> Kapur, *State Formation in Mewar*, 75–77.

The inscription, written in Sanskrit, was quite long at about sixty verses. In the final, sixty first verse, the poet wrote, “A further account of the dynasty will be found in another eulogy. Poet Veda-Śarmā composed these two eulogies—the best fruit of his fame.”<sup>261</sup> The continuation of this inscription is lost. The following selections from the inscription, however, provide a general feel for the inscription as a whole.

11. Bāpā Rāvala acquired new royal fortune by the great favour of Hāritarāśi, who has just got the *Sāyujya-mukti* (a kind of emancipation of the spirit whereby it becomes one with the universal spirit) by the light received from always worshipping Ekaliṅgajī.

12. Whose sword chose as his bride the wealth of his enemies without any effort, having as ornament the courtyard filled with pearls fallen from the heads of his enemies’ elephants which were split open, with drums beating in advance, and with the battlefield as the place of kindling the sacred fire, being ever praised by his followers.

13. His son Guhila, who was as glorious as Vishnu ruled his territory with justice. So the line of kings descended from him bore the well-known name of the Guhila dynasty.

14. The *piśāchas* [demons] experiencing great joy at the close embrace with their wives fattened on the blood of the armies of hostile kings, do not, when the Guhila king conducts a battle, remember the fight of Bhimasena, the cause of the destruction of the Kurus.<sup>262</sup>

In this inscription, Bappa Rāval, who was born a Brahmin, became a *kṣatriya* through spiritual service to Ekaliṅgajī.<sup>263</sup> The caste transformation from *brāhmaṇa* to *kṣatriya* may seem peculiar, however it probably parallels the *agnikula* myth in which the Pratīhāras, Cāhamānas/Cauhāns, Solāṅkis/Caulukyās, and Paramāras became *kṣatriya* through a fire sacrifice. The *agnikula* myth entered the epigraphical record during the twelfth century as a foundation myth for these four dynasties and it seems plausible that the myth was too firmly established by the last quarter of the thirteenth

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<sup>261</sup> English translation from, “A Stone Inscription Containing the Genealogy of Sisodiā Kings of Chitore in Meywar Dated Saṃvat 1339,” in *A Collection of Prakrit and Sanskrit Inscriptions* (Bhavnagar: State Printing Press, n.d.), 84.

<sup>262</sup> English translation from, “A Stone Inscription Containing the Genealogy of Sisodiā Kings of Chitore in Meywar Dated Saṃvat 1339,” 78–79.

<sup>263</sup> Ekaliṅgajī was an important regional deity and would become the royal deity of the Mewar house.

century for the Guhila kings to claim descent from the *agnikula*. In the *agnikula* myth, a sage created the progenitors of these dynasties from the sacrificial fire to defeat a demon who was interrupting the sage's rituals. The *agnikula* lineages claimed to be purified by the fire. Bappa Rāval similarly had a purified status as a *brāhmaṇa* transformed through his devotion to Hāritarāśi into a *kṣatriya*. The introduction of the *agnikula* and Bappa Rāval also signaled the rise of the Rajput identity as it gave individuals—even Brahmins—a warrior identity.<sup>264</sup>

The twelfth and fourteenth verses incorporated some of the battle imagery found in later Sanskrit works. This demonstrates that either the authors of these inscriptions, Sanskrit texts, and (as will be discussed in the next chapter) vernacular texts, drew their imagery from a common literary tradition or else these authors were influenced by narrative descriptions and literary images from other traditions that they incorporated into their text.<sup>265</sup> Medieval Sanskrit battle narratives contained vivid accounts of bloodshed and the phrase from the twelfth verse, “...the courtyard filled with pearls fallen from the heads of his enemies' elephants...” is reminiscent of a battle narrative contained in the *Madhurāvijaya* written nearly a century later in South India.

Severed by the half-moon shaped arrows of the archers, a multitude of elephant rider hands fell in the pools of blood like snakes in the sacrificial fires of Parīkṣit

At the same time, the resolution (of the warriors) clashing together made sparks of fire that arose from the clashing of blood-red pearls dropping from the *kumbha* (frontal globe) of the elephant which was cleft by streaks from the hero's sword.

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<sup>264</sup> This, I believe, is what Chattopadhyaya referred to when he wrote that inscriptions “indicate that the proliferation of the Rajputs contributed towards an undermining of the political status of the early *kṣatriya* groups which were taking to less potent occupations and also that the preferred term for the ruling stratum was now not so much ‘*kṣatriya*’ as ‘Rajput’” (“Origins of the Rajputs,” 82).

<sup>265</sup> This argument may not seem that contentious, but I'll argue at the end of this chapter that some of these literary images may have been shared by authors of Persian, Sanskrit, and vernacular literatures (written texts as well as the oral traditions of the Persian and Rajasthani bards).

As soon as the *kumbha* was split in two by the sword, the horse rider tuned away with haste. Yet at that very moment, the elephant, having seized this (attacking) horse by the legs, tore (him) asunder in the great expanse (of the elephant's legs).

Several night-prowlers (demons and jackals, *niśācarā*) using the trunks as a straw to the (elephant's) mouth joyfully sucked up the stream of blood that came forth from the *kumbha* mounds of the elephants (and) spit out the pearls.

[The image of the pearl (bone, sinew) occurs again a dozen verses later:]

The heads of elephants were pierced with his javelins, on account of which rapid streams of pearls rushed out of the *kumbha* mounds. They carried the brilliance of a flock of swans dispersing because of Kārttikeya's powerful destruction of Mount Krañca.<sup>266</sup>

*Madhurāvijaya*, IX, vv. 1–4, 15<sup>267</sup>

The reference to the pearl as bone or sinew in battle narratives in the *Madhurāvijaya*, a Sanskrit *mahākāvya* poem written by a crowned princess sometime in the A.D. 1370s and circulated among the court and educated elite, indicates that the image belonged to the Indic textual traditions. Yet this image can also be found in the Persian *Tāj al-Ma'āsir* along with allusions to other precious stones such as the blood (red as a ruby) and the tarnishing of the sword into carnelian. The imagery, therefore, occurred in two separate and distinct literary traditions.

The Chittaur inscription reverted back to a more typical form in the next set of verses that described the grandson of Bāpa Rāval and son of Guhila.

18. [Guhila's] son was king Śīla, who was a destroyer of thick clouds in the form of the numerous elephants of his enemies, whose blithe form was full of the mettle exciting to enjoyment of the Laskhmī of his brave enemies[?] Even now when his name finds its way to our ears, it makes us forget the name of other *Chakravarti*-kings of Bharatkaṇḍa like Prithu and others.

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<sup>266</sup> *Krañca* is the “name of a mountain (part of the Himālaya range) said to have been split by Kārttikeya (VP),” Monier Monier-Williams, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary* (1899; reprint, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 323.

<sup>267</sup> All translations from the *Madhurāvijaya* are my own. For a discussion of the text as well as a printed copy (in devanāgarī script) and English translation, see Gaṅgādevī, *Madhurāvijayam of Gaṅgā Dēvi*, ed. S. Thiruvēnkatachārī (Annamalainagar: Annamalai Univeristy, 1957).



19. His immense fame after filling all the lands and skies, sent a part of itself to the next world. This part took the form of the purely brilliant Śeśa, the support of the three worlds, the protection of the cave of nectar, and the bed of Vishnu.

20. He took Jayaśrī after bathing it with water from the edge of (his) sword as if it were polluted by touching the Chāndālas (out-castes).<sup>268</sup>

Many medieval inscriptions resonated with the imagery found in these verses.

References of kings married to goddesses such as Śīla's marriage to the Jayaśrī, the goddess of victory, were quite common for a major medieval kingdom and acted as a second means of legitimating Guhila rule by duplicating the political imagery used by larger dynasties such as the Caulukyās and the Rāṣṭrakūtas.<sup>269</sup> The inscription continued with Śīla's son, Kāla-Bhoja.

21. His son was king Kāla-Bhoja, whose great prowess was shining in all sides, who surpassed Kāmadeva in comeliness of body, and who was possessed of valour irresistible by his enemies.

22. How can those like me describe the battles in which even headless bodies deprive heroes of their heads with the sword—battles of him whose wrath never remained without seeking out its object and whose glory situated in the blade of his sword is every night loudly sung with the clappings of hands by the bard-like Vetāls, making a roaring sound and bearing about the skulls of warriors.<sup>270</sup>

These verses and most medieval royal inscriptions focused on the glorious deeds of the king and his army. Inscriptions generated within the royal court rarely mentioned a king's defeat or the performance of *satī* by his wife.

While these verses did not discuss the death of the king (hero), they did describe the death of the enemies. The twenty-second verse of this inscription contained an image of headless warriors, "in which even headless bodies deprive heroes of their

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<sup>268</sup> English translation from, "A Stone Inscription Containing the Genealogy of Sisodiā Kings of Chitore in Meywar Dated Saṃvat 1339," 79.

<sup>269</sup> For example, the *Madhurāvijaya* contained the following verse: "Scratches on the body of the attacking hero, from the arrows the Turkish warrior shot, gave the false impression of being scratches from the Goddess of Victory (Jayaśrī) through her sexual enjoyment (of Kampa)."

<sup>270</sup> English translation from, "A Stone Inscription Containing the Genealogy of Sisodiā Kings of Chitore in Meywar Dated Saṃvat 1339," 79–80.

heads.”<sup>271</sup> This image of the headless warrior, found in medieval literature, would become a hallmark of the Rajput’s extraordinary feat in battle in later Mughal texts.<sup>272</sup> The *Madhurāvijaya*, quoted above, included the following couplet about two common warriors in battle:

For a long time two (warriors) were quarreling. Their heads were severed (simultaneously) by the other’s sword. The two bodies were abandoned with them both as friends, (and) through every step of the way, they went to the divine city.

*Madhurāvijaya*, IX, v. 11<sup>273</sup>

The same image is repeated in the *Madhurāvijaya* when Kampa, the crown prince and hero of the text, defeated the rival Madurai sultan in personal combat.

That light of the Karṇāṭa race, riding a horse with a downward thrust of the sword edge, indifferent from the sword-edge thrust by this (Sultan), severed his head in the twinkling of an eye.

The head of the Sultan, accustomed to the pleasing speech of unfamiliar ritual practices, the crown of the Turkish empire, that never even bowed to the gods in heaven, fell to the ground.

He (Kampa) was pleased that even when the head had fallen, the enemy’s headless body moved– the left hand engaged in restraining the bridle and the other hand stretched out in preparation to strike a blow.

On King Kampa’s head, held high with pride, a shower of flowers from the tree of heaven fell. Rice and unblown flowers were released by maids anxiously expecting royal majesty.

*Madhurāvijaya*, IX, vv. 34–37<sup>274</sup>

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<sup>271</sup> For a discussion of headless warriors, see Linsey Harlan, “On Headless Heroes,” and Lindsey Harlan, *The Goddesses’ Henchmen: Gender in Indian Hero Worship* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003).

<sup>272</sup> In other words, I am not claiming that the Rajput tale was an innovation with no precedent in medieval literature. The Rajput tale, like the Rajput warrior identity, built upon established and recognized traditions. The Rajput tale differentiates itself by the combination of all four attributes identified above and by stressing the tragic–heroic plot. The tragic–heroic plot will be discussed in the next chapter.

<sup>273</sup> Translated by the author from Gaṅgādevī, *Madhurāvijayam*, ed. S. Thiruvengkatachari.

<sup>274</sup> Translated by the author from Gaṅgādevī, *Madhurāvijayam*, ed. S. Thiruvengkatachari.

The *Madhurāvijaya* employed the same imagery when it referred to both the hero and the enemy. These verses clearly placed the image of the headless warrior within the realm of warrior tales in Indic textual traditions. In the Rajput tales, like in the verses above, the warriors continued to fight even while decapitated.

This inscription and the *Madhurāvijaya* also contained similar description of *bhūts* (spirits, goblins) that inhabited the battlefield and drank the blood of the dead and dying. The twenty-second verse of this inscription mentioned the “bard-like *vetāls*” (demons, ghosts, goblins) who clapped the skulls of the dead warriors like bards play their instruments. The *Madhurāvijaya* contained similar depictions of the battleground.

Several night-prowlers (*niśācarā*, demons and jackals) using the trunks as a straw to the (elephant’s) mouth joyfully sucked up the stream of blood that came forth from the *kumbha* mounds of the elephants (and) spit out the pearls.

An elephant’s corpse was quivering because of the entrance of birds desiring to consume the internal organs. On account of thinking it was still alive, a jackal having sat nearby fled even though it yearned for lifeless (flesh).

As soon as the heads of the elephant riders were cut by weapons, they did not fall down since the unsullied beautiful (heads) were desired for ear-ornaments by the female *niśācarī* demons (who were standing) below (the elephants).

*Madhurāvijaya*, IX, vv. 4–6<sup>275</sup>

These vivid and picturesque descriptions in the *Madhurāvijaya* were visually depicted in memorial stones, especially the three-panel memorial stones of Central and South Hindūstān.<sup>276</sup>

A few generations after Kāla-Bhoja, the Guhila inscription praised the Guhila ruler Aghasimha.

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<sup>275</sup> Translated by the author from Gaṅgādevī, *Madhurāvijayam*, ed. S. Thiruvengkatachari.

<sup>276</sup> For a description and analysis of these memorial stones, see S. Settar and Gunther D. Sontheimer, eds., *Memorial Stones: A Study of Their Origin, Significance, and Variety* (Dharwad: Institute of Indian Art History, Karnatak University, 1982).

30. His son [the great-grandson of Kāla-Bhoja] was Aghasiṃha, who was as brilliant as the sun of hot summer. The wives of his enemies bore faces like the moon by day.

31. How is the tale of bravery of that lion to be told, whose loud roaring terrifies away the elephants in the form of kings, to the elephants residing in the directions and whose white fame beautiful with its pleasing luster encircles the globe of the whole of this Brahmāṇḍa like a female swan hatching her egg.<sup>277</sup>

The description of Aghasiṃha, who roared as a lion and terrified the elephants, although certainly a literary metaphor, is echoed in the *Hammīra Mahākāvya*. During the fifteenth century, Nayacandra Sūri composed the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* in which he described the early fourteenth-century conquest of the Ranthambhor fort in Rajasthan. In this text, translated and discussed in the next chapter, a Muslim named Mahimāsāhi approached King Hammīra and asked to fight alongside Hammīra against the Delhi Sultanate army in the upcoming battle. Hammīra responded with the following words.

“We wish to liberate the lives. We are doing so to protect our homes.  
This is the dharma of the *kṣatriyas*. Not even at the end of time is it alterable.

He alone is a *kṣatri* who even at the end of life is one who is able to roar.  
Is it not said that king Suyodhana (Duryodhana) is an example in this regard?

You are from a different region. They are not besieging to put you in harm.  
Wherever you wish to go—anywhere you say—we lead you there.”

*Hammīra Mahākāvya*, XIII, vv. 149–51<sup>278</sup>

Hammīra, indeed, roared like a lion just before his death on the battlefield. Here again, the imagery of battle occurred in both inscription and in poem and applied to both Hindu and Muslim.

A second Guhila inscription, dated only three years later in V.S. 1342/A.D. 1285 found in the Acaleśvara temple at Mount Ābu reinforced the royal claims made in the

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<sup>277</sup> English translation from, “A Stone Inscription Containing the Genealogy of Sisodiā Kings of Chitore in Meywar Dated Saṃvat 1339,” 80–81.

<sup>278</sup> Translated by the author from Gaṅgādevī, *Madhurāvijayam*, ed. S. Thiruvengkatachari.

Chittaur inscription of V.S. 1339/A.D. 1283 discussed above. Like the Chittaur inscription, the Acaleśvara inscription began with a description of Bāpa Rāval .

11. Assuredly from the Brahmā-like Hārīta, Bappaka obtained, in the shape of an anklet, the luster of a Kshatriya [Kshatriya-hood], and gave the sage, his devotion his own Brāhmanical lustre. Thus even till now, the descendents of that line, shine on this earth, like *Kshatriya-hood*.

12. The son of Bappaka, a master in politics, became king (and was) called Guhila; the race bearing whose name is verily continued by kings born in his dynasty.<sup>279</sup>

The inscription again mentioned the Guhila clan's transformation into *kṣatriya* from their previous *brāhmaṇa varṇa*. This inscription, however, referred to the Guhila's as *kṣātrā hi dharmmā iva* "(those who have) a dharma like the *kṣatriya*." The *Hammīra Mahākāvya* used the phrase *kṣatriyānām-ayaṃ dharmah* in verse XII.149 (quoted above). The authors of these inscriptions and text clearly linked the Guhilas and Hammīra to the *kṣatriya varṇa*.

The Acaleśvara inscription also incorporated *kṣatriya* warrior imagery found in the Chittaur inscription. Interestingly, the Acaleśvara only briefly mentioned the earlier Guhila rulers mentioned above and reserved praise of the Guhila military prowess for the middle and later rulers. Two examples should show the continuity between the two inscriptions. The description of Kummāṇa, the grandson of Aghasiṃha (the last ruler quoted above from the Chittaur inscription), contained the first battle narrative in the Acaleśvara inscription.

19. Then the sword of Kummāṇa, like a cloud in his sky-like march, bathed the brave warriors with purse showers (dropping) from its blade, on a day (rendered) cloudy (as it were) by the dust (raised) from the earth (by his army); and at the same time, washed off the *Kuṅkuma* (saffron) on the breasts of their wives variegated (or speckled) with the collyrium of their eyes:

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<sup>279</sup> English translation from, "A Stone Inscription of Achaleśvara Mahādeva on Mount Ābu, Dated Saṃvat 1342," in *A Collection of Prakrit and Sanskrit Inscriptions* (Bhavnagar: State Printing Press, n.d.), 89–90.

20. Of him was born king Allaṭa who imitated indomitable death in battle and whose terrible sword vanquished, as it were in sport the army of his foes.<sup>280</sup>

Medieval poets used references to saffron and collyrium in a way similar to the passages described in the previous inscription on pearls and precious stones.

Several verses later a series of rulers are introduced in the Acaleśvara inscription who appended the name/title of *siṃha* (lion) to the royal name. The frequency of battle narratives increased with the introduction of these *-siṃha* rulers.

34. Then did king Kshema-si[m]ha, extirpating all seditious persons by the feat of his powerful arms, bring security on the earth.

35. The wives of goblins, having drunk some blood, and maddened, with their foot faltering under intoxication, give it to their husbands in skulls emitting large quantity of blood; the goblins, in their turn having repeatedly drunk the cup held in the hands of their delighted female companions, and being highly delighted, sing loudly his glories on the battle-field.<sup>281</sup>

As with the earlier Guhila inscription and the *Madhurāvijaya*, the author of the inscription depicted the goblins of the battlefield. The Guhila Chittaur inscription mentioned above referred to these ghouls (*vetāl*) of the battlefield as bards: “the blade of his sword is every night loudly sung with the clapping of hands by the bard-like *Vetāls*, making a roaring sound and bearing about the skulls of warriors.”<sup>282</sup> In this later Guhila inscription at the Acaleśvara temple, the goblins on the battlefield became bards a second time as they “sing loudly [king Kshema-siṃha’s] glories on the battle-field.”

The Chittaur inscription of V.S. 1339/A.D. 1283, the Acaleśvara inscription of V.S. 1342/A.D. 1285, and passages from *Madhurāvijaya* all described warriors and battles that eventually became identified with the Rajput social and warrior identity. The inscriptions and the texts depicted the gore of battle through vivid accounts of bone

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<sup>280</sup> English translation from, “A Stone Inscription of Achaleśvara Mahādeva on Mount Ābu, Dated Saṃvat 1342,” 90–91.

<sup>281</sup> English translation from, *Ibid.*, 92.

<sup>282</sup> See verse 22, quoted at length on page 150

and sinew, blood-soaked earth, and various ghouls. Warriors in these texts engaged in extraordinary acts of battle, such as in the *Madhurāvijaya* when the warriors simultaneously decapitated each other and then proceeded to heaven arm-in-arm or in the Chittaur and the Acaleśvara inscriptions where they roared like lions as they entered battle. Interestingly, this imagery is found in both Indic as well as Persian texts such as the *Tāj al-Ma'āsir* (after A.H. 614/A.D. 1217 or A.H. 626/A.D. 1229) and the *Futūḥ al-Salaṭīn* (A.H. 751/A.D. 1350).

The *Tāj al-Ma'āsir*, in particular, utilized metaphors of semi-precious stones—particularly ruby, carnelian, and coral—in depictions of battle. For example, Ḥasan-i Niẓāmī described Quṭb al-Dīn Aibak's defeat of the Gāhaḍavāla ruler (or at least his control of Banāras) in the following excerpts.

The sword caused a torrent of molten ruby to gush forth from the fountain of its enamel (its bluish edge). It scattered coral on its diamond-like surface. It dyed its bluish body red with blood. It washed its basil-like face with the water of anemones. It lent the colour of pomegranate flower, to its lily-like form, and scattered pomegranate seeds on its bluish ground...<sup>283</sup>

The metaphorically dense description of this battle extends over several pages of text and culminated with this final image of the battleground.

... The troops of the enemy were either dead or they fled. The hand of death provided them with the beds and pillows of the ground dust, and shrouds of their armours and cuirasses. Time turned the bright day of the polytheists and the misled into a dark night. The heads of the insurgents and soldiers of Hindustan dropped on the ground and the soil of the battlefield was besmeared with the tar and pitch of their corpses. Due to the piles of the limbs and members of their bodies it was difficult to move there. The level ground resembled hillocks and mountains. As the steeds trampled on the blood of the heart of the dead, their forelegs acquired the colour of the ruby of *Badadhshan*. In the midst of wounded bodies thorns and straws became red like carnelian and coral, and the soil was kneaded with the blood of the horseman. Anemone [the buttercup] sprouted in the expanse of the desert, and instead of green grass

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<sup>283</sup> Tāj al-Dīn Ḥasan-i Niẓāmī, *Tāj al-Ma'āsir*, trans. Bhagwat Saroop (Delhi: Saud Ahmad Dehlavi, 1998), 154. All subsequent citations refer to this translation.

madder grew on the soil. There was so much blood that the battlefield began to seethe with billows like the Caspian Sea, and an Euphrates and Tigris of blood could be seen flowing all over the site of combat. The torrent of blood flowing from Hindustan joined the Jaxartes and Bactrian streams in Persia. The moisture seeped down the earth and reached the fish (that supports the earth) and the vapours ascended beyond the moon and the Pleiades...<sup>284</sup>

Although neither passage incorporated allusions to soldiers as lion warriors, the image frequently appears throughout the *Tāj al-Ma'āsir* such as in Ḥasan-i Niẓāmī's description of the battle of Nahrwāla (Aṇahilapāṭaka, modern-day Patan) where "Each soldier of [the enemy] army was as stout hearted as a lion, as huge as an elephant, as dashing as a panther, as bold as a crocodile and a leopard, with a body as solid as steel like the body of a wolf and that of a tiger."<sup>285</sup> Unfortunately for the lion soldiers of Nahrwāda, the "lion-hunting Khusrau" commanded the Ghūrid army.<sup>286</sup>

'Abd al-Malik 'Iṣāmī included very little battle narrative of this *fathnāma* style, contrary to what Aziz Ahmad claimed,<sup>287</sup> yet still incorporated many of the literary images discussed above. 'Iṣāmī penned the following narrative on the revolt of Balban's slave, Tughril, in Lakhnautī (Bengal) when he met a contingent of the Sultanate army led by "Turmati."<sup>288</sup>

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<sup>284</sup> Translated by Bhagwat Saroop from Ḥasan-i Niẓāmī, *Tāj al-Ma'āsir*, 163–64.

<sup>285</sup> Translated by Bhagwat Saroop from Ḥasan-i Niẓāmī, *Tāj al-Ma'āsir*, 219.

<sup>286</sup> Translated by Bhagwat Saroop from Ḥasan-i Niẓāmī, *Tāj al-Ma'āsir*, 215. Note that almost all of these allusions are used by Ḥasan-i Niẓāmī when he described Shams al-Dīn Iltutmish's battle against Tāj al-Dīn Yildiz at Tarā'in, which Bhagwat Saroop referred to as Jalivar (*Tāj al-Ma'āsir*, tr. 310–20). For a history of these battles see Habib and Niẓāmī's *Delhi Sultanate (Comprehensive History of India)*, 156–70 (especially 168–70), 213–15 and Peter Jackson's *Delhi Sultanate*, 7–32.

<sup>287</sup> "It [the *Futūḥ al-Salaṭīn*] emphasizes throughout the epical superiority of the Turk over the Hindu. Essentially a historical narrative, told as a *razmīya* (war epic), it hardly ever misses a chance to weave in the *bazmīya* (court-epic) elements of romance..." from Aziz Ahmad, "Epic and Counter-Epic," 471. For an English translation of the *Futūḥ al-Salaṭīn*, see 'Iṣāmī, *Futūḥ's Salaṭīn or Shāh Nāmāh-i Hind of 'Iṣāmī*, 3 vols., trans. Agha Mahdi Husain (Aligarh: Asia Publishing House, 1967–77).

<sup>288</sup> Husain has noted in his translation of 'Iṣāmī's *Futūḥ al-Salaṭīn* that *turmat* "is a species of falcon which is noted for its great destructive power and is clever at the pursuit of other birds. Here *turmati* signifies a brave hunter..." (*Futūḥ's Salaṭīn*, 2: 293 n. 1). He refers to 'Turmati' in the section header as an "alias Jaran Khan" (*Ibid.*, 2: 292). Judging from what happens to Jaran Khan the Turmati, it seems that this is Aitegin-i Mūi-i Darāz (also known as Amīn Khān) discussed by Mohammad Habib and Khaliq Ahmad Nizami, *The Delhi Sultanate, (A Comprehensive History of India)*, 292–296 and Peter Jackson, *Delhi Sultanate*, 78.



Afterwards, the self-same powerful Tughril growled and shrieked like a furious lion. By means of one attack which threw the world into astonishment, he dislocated the enemy's centre. When Turmati noticed such a catastrophe, he turned his bridle and took to flight. He fled towards Awadh, the whole of his army being routed. When he arrived, thus broken, in Awadh, the king heard of this affair in the city of Delhi...<sup>289</sup>

The reference to Tughril as a "furious lion" indicates that the image was not solely associated with Hindu warriors. Tughril was finally killed by 'Alī who gained the epithet Tughril-Kush (the Tughril-slayer) and his companions, all of whom 'Iṣāmī calls the lion-vanquishers.<sup>290</sup>

One of the most vivid scenes 'Iṣāmī penned related to the massacre of rebel (Muslim) soldiers at the hand of Malik Jauhar. An uprising among the nobles stationed in the Deccan led to an outright rebellion with the coronation of Ismā'īl Mukh as Nāṣir al-Dīn Ismā'īl Shāh. Muḥammad bin Tughluq went to Daulatabad to personally oversee the end of this rebellion, when news of a second rebellion reached him. He appointed Malik Jauhar as the governor of Daulatabad and left for Gujarat. Malik Jauhar immediately turned to executing a number of the rebel prisoners in the Daulatabad jail.

While Jauhar took charge of Daulatabad, he shed a stream of Muslim blood. Some he killed craftily and some by torture without any demonstration. I am at a loss to describe how much blood he shed; only those who fled towards the sea escaped. It is remarkable that they were so afraid of the blood deluge that they sought shelter by running out to the sea. The earth in that area became soaked in blood and the rivulets all over swelled into streams of blood. Should you pay a visit to that land you would notice stains of blood in the soil even now.<sup>291</sup>

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<sup>289</sup> Translated by Agha Mahdi Husain from 'Iṣāmī, *Futūḥ al-Salaṭīn*, 2: 296.

<sup>290</sup> Husain's translation of 'Iṣāmī, *Futūḥ al-Salaṭīn*, 2:297. Another example of this allusion to warriors as lions occurred in 'Iṣāmī's description of Sultan Nāṣir al-Dīn Maḥmūd Shāh's A.H. 656/A.D. 1258 campaign against the Mongols in Uchch and Multan. The sultan commanded, "All the veteran warriors must set out to fight the enemy [i.e., the Mongols] like lions; they should skin the enemy heads and hunt down the contingents of the demons..." (Ibid., 2:271-72). In this latter example, the Sultanate soldiers are the lions and not the lion-vanquishers.

<sup>291</sup> Husain's translation of 'Iṣāmī, *Futūḥ al-Salaṭīn*, 2:297.

The allusion to streams of blood generally occurred in descriptions of the battlefield, such as in the *Madhurāvijaya* (IX v. 4, quoted above on page 154) when pools of blood existed to such an extent that they produced pearls. ‘Iṣāmī, however, described the torture and execution of Muslims at the hand of another Muslim using the same tropes that he used elsewhere when he described battles. This demonstrates once again that this vivid, grotesque imagery of battle was not confined to encounters between Hindus and Muslims—or even to battle narratives—but occurred in medieval texts from the different literary traditions of Sanskrit and Persian.

Two explanations exist for the occurrence of this imagery in Sanskrit and Persian literary traditions. The allusions may have reflected the images actually found in war. Hand-to-hand warfare was a bloody affair. Given the increased size of the armies in the medieval period—even when one considers the inflated numbers presented by the authors—the battleground probably was saturated with blood during the more intensive fights. Rivers of blood, waves of blood, rubies or carnelian, and pearls washing up out of the streams of blood were literary images and any commonality between allusion in Sanskrit and Persian literature came from the author’s attempt to describe the same scene of battle in literary terms.

These allusions could also have appeared in Sanskrit and Persian literature since these two literatures were both part of the Indo–Iranian language group. A philological study of the base metaphors in the Indo–Iranian languages is far outside of this dissertation’s scope. Although such an assertion seems like a stretch of the imagination; in fact, there is some basis for such a link. The *Tāj al-Ma’āsir* and *Futūḥ al-Salaṭīn* repeatedly reference Firdausī’s *Shāhnāma*, a collection of history and legend from pre–Islamic Persia that scholars have credited as the beginning of medieval/modern Persian literature. The *Shāhnāma* contained numerous stories that involved

people or events from the Indian subcontinent and these regions clearly shared a cultural space that they do not share today. However, these literary images with their grotesquely fantastical descriptions of blood and gore did not occur in either classical Sanskrit or Old Persian literature to the extent which they occur in medieval South Asian literature, which suggests they clearly belong to the medieval period rather than to ancient Sanskrit or Persian literature.

Even if the allusions did not appear in formal Sanskrit and Persian literature of an earlier age, they still may be linked through oral traditions. Many of the Rajput tales, including all three tales mentioned above, circulated as oral narratives before they were written as a text.<sup>292</sup> Modern scholars have viewed the oral and written traditions as two distinct and separate modes of narration. This distinction between oral and written sources did not apply to Sanskrit and Old Persian literature, which privileged oral composition and memorization over written texts. Oral and written narratives continued to compliment each other throughout the first half of the second millennium. Firdausī, like Muḥhato Naiṅsī of seventeenth-century Marwar, utilized a combination of written and oral sources when he composed his history of the pre-Islamic Persian kings.<sup>293</sup> Firdausī not only used oral narratives in the composition of

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<sup>292</sup> The epic of Pābūjī and Naiṅsī's *Khyāt* both come from the bardic traditions of Rajasthan. John Smith discussed the recitation and singing of the Pābūjī epic in Smith, *Epic of Pābūjī*, 1–68. Saran and Ziegler argued that Naiṅsī utilized both oral and written sources in the composition of his *Khyāt* (*Mertīyo Rāṭhōrs*, 1: 12–14 and especially page 1: 12 n. 16). Ann Grodzins Gold discussed the Hadi Rani tale and how it resonated with the interesting story of one female narrator of folktale, Shobhag Kanvar, in “Gender, Violence and Power,” 35–40. Although Gold based her translation of the Hadi Rani tale on a series of printed works (35), the story demonstrates not only that images of Rajput identity persist to this day, but how this Rajput identity was consciously manipulated to make Hadi Rani the paragon Rajput in contrast to her less than ideal Rajput husband.

<sup>293</sup> Firdausī's use of oral narratives as a historical source in his composition of the *Shāhnāma* remains a contentious issue as noted by Dick Davis in the introduction to his English translation of Firdausī, *Shahnameh*, xviii–xx. Olga Davidson has strenuously argued that Firdausī not only utilized oral narratives, but gained authority because he used both written and oral sources. Her argument for Firdausī's use of oral narratives is presented in the first two chapters of her book, *Poet and Hero in the Persian Book of Kings* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994), 19–53. Davidson's argument was based on

the *Shāhnāma*, his written version of these pre-Islamic tales actually entered into the Persian oral tradition.<sup>294</sup> It seems likely that the thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Sanskrit and Persian poets heard similar oral narratives and even attended oral performances and then later incorporated some of this popular imagery into their poetry.

#### THE RAJPUT IN PRE-SULTANATE INSCRIPTIONS

The notion that the Rajput social and warrior identity may come from the oral traditions preserved by bardic communities or from communities on the periphery of classical Indic society challenges the work of modern scholars who link the Rajput identity to the upper divisions of Brahminical society. Scholars have generally linked the titles *rājaputra*, *rāuta*, and *ṭhakkura* to a form of Rajput feudalism or a Rajput warrior status.<sup>295</sup> However, no scholar has examined these ‘feudal’ categories for the presence (or lack thereof) of the presumed Rajput identity.<sup>296</sup> As the following pages demonstrate, inscriptions from the eleventh to fourteenth century do not show the emergence of a new Rajput identity but rather the continuity of a classical political system.

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Mary Ellen Page, “*Naqqālī* and Ferdowsi: Creativity in the Iranian National Tradition,” (Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1977), 125–28, 152–61, 223–32.

<sup>294</sup> Page studied the *naqqāl* tradition by focusing on two living *naqqāls*, Ḥabīb Allāh Izadkhāstī and ‘Alī Ṣanākhān “*Naqqālī* and Ferdowsi,” 30–39. Olga Davidson discussed oral performances of the *Shāhnāma* in the third chapter of *Poet and Hero*, 54–72. Page translated *ṭumār* as “scrolls” while Davidson translated the term as “prompt books.” Page included a discussion, transcription, and translation from a *ṭumār* that clearly indicates it is a written text (“*Naqqālī* and Ferdowsi,” 129–51).

<sup>295</sup> For the link between these titles and Rajput feudalism see M. S. Ahluwalia, *Muslim Expansion in Rajasthan: The Relations of Delhi Sultanate with Rajasthan 1206–1526* (Delhi: Yugantar Prakashan, 1978), 31–36; Chattopadhyaya, “Origin of the Rajputs,” 79–82; Dasharatha Sharma, *Rajasthan Through The Ages*, 2 vols. (Bikaner: Rajasthan State Archives, 1966–1990), 1: 359–360. The *rājaputra*, *rāuta*, and *ṭhakkura* as a Rajput warrior can be found in Chattopadhyaya “Origin of the Rajputs,” 82–86; Brajdulal Chattopadhyaya, “Trade and Urban Centers in Early Medieval North India,” in *The Making of Early Medieval India* (1984; reprint, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1994) 142–48.

<sup>296</sup> Kapur did not discuss the military status of *rāuta* or *ṭhakkura* in either the Mewar military or administration, even though she focused on the “military and administrative apparatus” as well as how titles acted as modes of legitimization (*State Formation in Rajasthan*, 70–74; 155–70; 195–225).

The epigraphical record from the eleventh to the fifteenth centuries is far too extensive to examine in the following pages; therefore, I have selected and analyzed inscriptions according to a number of conditions. First, I have limited the analysis to inscriptions made before the sixteenth century and the establishment of the Mughal dynasty. By refusing to contrast the *ṭhakkura*, *rāuta*, and *rājaputra* from inscriptions with later textual sources such as Nainṣī's *Khyāt* of the seventeenth century or the *rāso* (bard) literature, I hope distance myself from the issues of historical anachronism that arise when one utilizes a later text as a primary source for an earlier period. Secondly, I have limited my examination of inscriptions to the geographic areas of Rajasthan, Gujarat, and Malwa. Focusing on these three regions not only reduces the number of inscriptions, but also minimizes the amount of regional variability that may occur in defining military and administrative terms. The rulers of Rajasthan, Gujarat, and Malwa frequently conducted military campaigns against each other and annexed territories from each other. Mercenaries, Military officers, and governing officials often moved from empire to empire, which either homogenized military and administrative ranks or made them easily understood from one kingdom to the next.

Finally, I do not attempt to decipher political (dynastic) history or the process of state formation within these regions. I have attempted to examine the use of the *rājaputra*, *rāuta*, and *ṭhakkura* titles in eleventh to fifteenth-century inscriptions. Scholars have often translated these three titles simply as Rajput, but to the best of my knowledge there has never been a study as to whether these titles carried the meaning of Rajput before the fifteenth century. More specifically, I have attempted to determine whether the *rājaputras*, *rautas*, and *ṭhakkuras* in these inscriptions possessed the Rajput social and warrior identity described in the beginning of this chapter, and if not, to determine what these terms meant from the eleventh to the fifteenth century in

order to contrast these inscriptions with some of the poetic literature written at the close of this period.

## Ṭhakkura

In his *Comparative Dictionary of Indo-Aryan Languages*, R. L. Turner noted the indeterminate etymology of *ṭhakkura*, speculating that the word derived from a tribal language.<sup>297</sup> In addition to the modern connotation of a Rajput, Turner listed a string of meanings most of which revolved around a position of power such as a lord, landowner, master, or village headman. The place of the *ṭhakkura* as either a regional administrator or the head of a village is confirmed by inscriptions.

The Nāḍlāi inscription of V.S. 1228/A.D. 1171 recorded the construction of a temple during the reign of the great Caulukya ruler, Kumārapāla. The bulk of the inscription is translated below:

in the victorious kingdom of Kumārapāla, in Kelhaṇa's territory of Nāḍol, Rāṇālakhamāṇa's (or Rāṇa Lakhamāṇa's) region of Voripadyaka, in *ṭhakkura* Aṇasīhu's village of Sonāṇa, Pāhiṇī the son of Jasadevi who is the wife of the engraver Mahaḍūa of Nāḍol, will cause a *maṇḍapa*, *akṣasa* and *ḍamā* to be constructed for the Bhivaḍeśvara temple.<sup>298</sup>

Inscriptions generally listed people in a hierarchical order, beginning with the highest position and ending with local administrative officials. Oddly, this inscription only mentioned two titles: *rāṇā-lakhamāṇa* and *ṭhā° aṇasīhu* (*ṭhakkura* Aṇasīha or Aṇasiṃha). The full titles are readily available from a number of other inscriptions and clearly indicate a hierarchical ranking: (*mahārājādhirāja*) Kumārapāla, (*mahārāja*) Kelhaṇa, *rāṇa* (= *rāja*) Lakhamāṇa and *ṭhakkura* Aṇasīhu. The *ṭhakkura*, therefore,

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<sup>297</sup> Ralph Lilley Turner, *A Comparative Dictionary of Indo-Aryan Languages* (London: Oxford University Press, 1962–66; Supplements 1969–85), 306.

<sup>298</sup> Translated by the author. The passage reads: *śrī-bhivaḍeśvaradevasya śrī-kumārapāladeva-vijayarājye śrī-nāḍūlyapūrāt śrī-kelhaṇarājye voripadyake rāṇā-lakhamāṇarājye svatisonāṇāgrāme ṭhā° aṇasīhusya svastināḍūle sutra-mahaḍūa bhārya jasadevi suta-pāhiṇī maṇḍapaḥ kāraṇīyaḥ akṣasāma-kāraṇīyaḥ ḍamā karttavā...* (*Ep.Ind.* 11.4.14, ll. 1-2).

referred to a position within a hierarchical structure of governance held by one who governed a village or district. Unfortunately the Nāḍlāi inscription failed to relate whether the *ṭhakkura* functioned as a governor, administrator, soldier, or in some other capacity.

A series of other inscriptions elucidate the *ṭhakkura*'s function. Another inscription in Nāḍōl, dated V.S. 1198/A.D. 1141, recorded *mahārājādhirāja* Rāyapāla's grant of "money, weapons, watchmen, and so forth" to a Brahmin community in order to curb a crime spree.<sup>299</sup> The grant absolved any royal official (*rānaka*) from any retribution that arose from harming a Brahmin thief.<sup>300</sup> The inscription ended with a phrase stating that the grant was "written/inscribed (*likhita*) by *ṭhakkura* Petha of the Kāyastha clan and the Gauḍa family, authorized by Ūnādhika, approved by the whole town/vicinity of Dhālopa."<sup>301</sup> This was not the only grant written or inscribed by a *ṭhakkura*. The Kīrāḍū inscription of V.S. 1209/A.D. 1153 ended by stating, "this (is) written/inscribed by the minister of peace and war, *ṭhakkura* Khelāditya."<sup>302</sup> The final two words of this inscription, however, clearly indicated that it was inscribed "by the *sūtradhāra* Bhāila,"<sup>303</sup> which clearly placed Khelāditya as the composer of the inscription and Bhāila as the engraver. *Ṭhakkuras* composed numerous inscriptions, particularly in northern India, and the presence of the *ṭhakkura* as a composer of inscriptions indicates that the *ṭhakkura* operated at least in part in the royal court although he resided and perhaps even functioned out of the village.<sup>304</sup>

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<sup>299</sup> Bhandarkar, "Nāḍōl Stone Inscription of Rāyapāla; [Vikrama-] Saṁvat 1198," *Ep.Ind.*, 11.4.9: 38.

<sup>300</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.4.9: 38.

<sup>301</sup> Translated by the author. The passage reads: *likhitaṃ śrī-gauḍānva[ya]-kāyastha-ṭhakkura-pethaḍena vāḍigasutena ūnādhikaṃ pramānamiti samasta-śrī-dhāloṇīya-lokasya mataṃ* (*Ep.Ind.*, 11.4.9, ll. 37-39).

<sup>302</sup> Translated by the author. The passage reads: *sāṃdhivigrahika-ṭha·khelādityena likhitamidam* (*Ep.Ind.*, 11.4.12, ll. 18-19).

<sup>303</sup> Translated by the author. The passage is: *sūtra·bhāilena* (*Ep.Ind.*, 11.4.12, l. 21).

<sup>304</sup> Based on Bhandarkar's *List*, Nos. 202, 203, 214, 215, 216, 217, 222, 225, 251, 269, 271, and so forth.

The title of *ṭhakkura* has often been seen as a hereditary title passed from father to son, but inscriptions suggest that the *ṭhakkura* gained his position from a ruler. The Bhinmāl inscription of V.S. 1306/A.D. 1249, for example, recorded a yearly donation of forty *dramma* coins made

In the victorious kingdom of *mahārājādhirāja* Udayasiṃha, in the territory governed by the *pañcakula* overseen by the village headman (*mahaṃta*) Gajasīha, [the donation of 40 coins was made] by both Mahaṇasīha and his brother — — — sīha, the sons of *ṭhakkura* Udayasīha of the Kāyastha *jāti* from Mathura.<sup>305</sup>

Although some characters are unreadable, it is clear from the instrumental dual case (*mahaṇasīhābhyāṃ*) that there were two sons, Mahaṇasīha and his brother ———sīha, who donated a sum of 40 coins. The inscription, perhaps acting as a type of legal document, went to great lengths to identify the donors by stating their relationship as siblings, their father’s name and status title, their *jāti* (sub-caste), and their ancestral home of Mathura.<sup>306</sup> Given that the inscription went to such lengths to identify the donors, I find it unlikely that the composer would have dropped the donors’ status title. I conclude, therefore, that Mahaṇasīha and his brother ———sīha, unlike their father, lost the title of *ṭhakkura*. While this is not definitive, it suggests that the status title of *ṭhakkura* was not hereditary and could be stripped (if it was a position) or lost (if it was a title) over time.

If the *ṭhakkura* was a position rather than a title passed from father to son, then it would explain the Jālōr inscription of V.S. 1353/A.D. 1296. This inscription recorded

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<sup>305</sup> Translated by the author. The passage reads: *mahārājādhirāja-śrī-udayasīmhadevakalyāṇavijayarājye tanniyukta-mahaṃ[gajasīha-pra]bhṛti-pañcakula-pratipattau māthurānvaya-kāyastha-jātīya-ṭhakura-udayasīha-putra — — — sīha [tathā] bhrātr-mahaṇasīhābhyāṃ* (*Ep.Ind.* 11.4.20, ll. 4–7). For a discussion of this inscription and the identification of *mahaṃ* as *mahaṃta*, see D. R. Bhandarkar, “Bhinmāl Stone Inscription of Udayasiṃhadēva; [Vikrama-] Saṃvat 1306,” *Ep.Ind.*, 11.4.20: 55–56.

<sup>306</sup> For lack of a better term, I have defined the word *jāti* as sub-caste, although it has a much more nuanced meaning today and much more elusive meaning in the premodern period. For a discussion of *varṇa*, *jāti*, and *kula*, see Cynthia Talbot, *Precolonial India in Practice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 50–54.



the establishment of a “bazaar or warehouse for storing goods to be exported” (*niśrā-nikṣepa-haṭṭa*) and stated that a portion of the rent (*bhāṭaka*) from the establishment of this market should be given to the Pārśvanātha temple.<sup>307</sup> The donor was the *sonī* Narapati, who gave a lengthy list of his genealogy and family members. This passage, one long compound-noun, does not translate literally into English.

Ṭhakura Āmbaḍa's son (was) ṭhakura Jasa (whose) son (was) *sonī* Mahaṇasīha (whose) wife (was) Mālhaṇi (and their) sons (were) *sonī*(s) Ratanasīha, Nākhī, Mālhaṇa, and Gajasīha. (*Sonī* Mahaṇasīha was also married to) Tihuṇā (and their) sons (were) *sonī*(s) Narapati, Jayatā, and Vijayapāla. Narapati and wife Nāyakadevī's sons (were) Lakhamīdhara, Bhuvanapāla, and Suhaḍapāla. Narapati's second wife (*dvitīyabhāryā*) (was) Jālhaṇadevī.<sup>308</sup>

This inscription contained an unusually thorough record of the family and is interesting because of its use of titles. To better understand the relations presented in the inscription, I have plotted the donor and his family as a family tree. What is readily

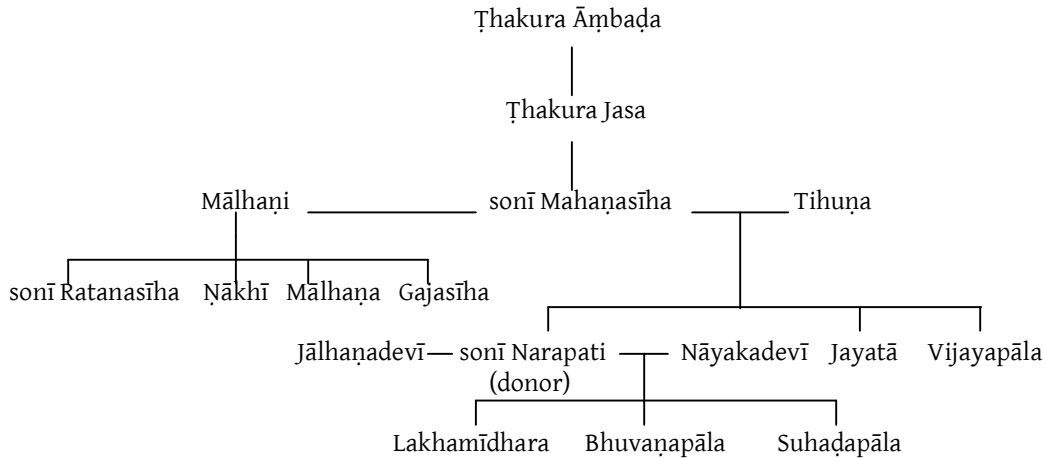


Illustration 1: Genealogy of *sonī* Narapati in the Jālōr inscription, V.S. 1353

<sup>307</sup> D. R. Bhandarkar, “Jālōr Stone Inscription of Sāmantasimhadēva; [Vikrama-] Saṁvat 1353,” *Ep.Ind.* 11.4.23: 60.

<sup>308</sup> Translated by the author. The passage reads: *ṭhakura-āmbaḍaputra-ṭhakura-jasaputra-sonī-mahaṇasīha-bhāryā-mālhaṇiputra-sonī-ratanasīha-nākhī-mālhaṇa-gajasīha-tihuṇāputra-sonī-narapati-jayatā-vijayapāla-narapati-bhāryā-nāyakadeviputra-lakhamīdhara-bhuvanapāla-suhaḍapāla-dvitīya-bhāryā-jālhaṇadevī-[iti]...* (*Ep.Ind.*, 11.4.23, ll. 10–19).

noticeable in this family tree is the presence of the *ṭhakkura* title in the first two generations and the adoption of the descriptor *sonī* for the next two generations. The names of the sons; therefore, it is impossible to determine if the term applied to the first son alone or was meant to be distributed to all of the sons (as D. R. Bhandarkar treats it below). At the very least, the title referred to Mahaṇasīha and what are presumably his eldest sons with each wife, Narapati and Ratanasīha (Ratansimha).

D. R. Bhandarkar, in his analysis of the inscription, commented on the adoption of the word *sonī*:

It is worthy of note that Narapati himself, his brothers and his father are called *sōnīs*. *Sōnī* cannot possibly mean a goldsmith here, as both the grandfather and the great-grandfather of Narapati are styled *ṭhakkura*. Now, *Sōnī* is a well-known clan amongst the three Bania classes of Mārṅwār. . . It is a well known fact that many Rājput tribes, for avoiding Muḥammadan oppression and so forth, became Jains, and merged themselves into the Bania classes. *Sōnigarā* appears to be the name of one of such tribes.<sup>309</sup>

D. R. Bhandarkar based his analysis on the assumption that the word *ṭhakkura* was a hereditary title that could not be lost and that the word *ṭhakkura* was also a title of social rank rather than an administrative position. The word *sonī* must therefore refer to a similar title, lineage, or clan that was passed from father to son, rather than an occupation. This led Bhandarkar to some etymological juggling in an attempt to read the word *sonī* as an abbreviated clan reference instead of the more common meaning of a gold merchant.

By accepting the above argument that the word *ṭhakkura* was not an inherited title, but an administrative position, one can see that Mahaṇasīha either chose not to become a *ṭhakkura* or did not receive such a position from the ruler and became a *sonī* (gold merchant). The inscription offers a number of references to gold that support the

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<sup>309</sup> D. R. Bhandarkar, "Jālōr Stone Inscription of Sāmantasimhadēva; [Vikrama-] Saṁvat 1353," *Ep.Ind.*, 11.4.23: 61.

reading of *sonī* as a gold merchant. First, the inscription recorded *sonī* Narapati's construction of a *niśrā-nikṣepa-haṭṭa*, a “bazaar or warehouse for storing goods to be exported” from which he would donate a portion of the rent he collected.<sup>310</sup> The construction of a bazaar or warehouse for export goods suggests that Narapati was actually a gold-merchant who constructed this bazaar to advance his business. Secondly, the inscription referred to Jālōr by the name of *suvarṇagiri*. The word *suvarṇagiri* referred specifically to the Jālōr fort instead of the surrounding town, but the literal meaning of *suvarṇagiri* as “the hill of gold” was clearly meant as an allusion to the family's position as gold merchants.

If we accept the inscription for what it says, then it would appear that the use of the term *ṭhakkura* in this fourteenth-century inscription differed from the modern conception of the *ṭhakkura*. The term *ṭhakkura* was an administrative position that was not inherited from one's father, but earned or acquired, possibly through appointment by a ruler. This is evident from the inscription that explicitly referred to Āmbaḍa and Jasa as Ṭhakura Āmbaḍa and Ṭhakura Jasa. Ṭhakura Jasa's son was *sonī* Mahaṇasīha. The inscription, again, clearly referred to Mahaṇasīha as *sonī* Mahaṇasīha. Thus it is the title of a *sonī* (gold merchant) and not the title of the *ṭhakkura* that was passed from Mahaṇasīha to his sons including *sonī* Narapati (the donor for this grant).

## Rāuta

According to R. L. Turner, the word *rāuta* entered Sanskrit through the Prākṛt words *rāī*, *rāu* that were further transformed through Middle Indo-Aryan into *rāyaūtta*, *rāutta*.<sup>311</sup> D.C. Sircar equated the *rāuta* with the *rājaputra* in epigraphy, writing that the *rāuta* was a title of nobility synonymous with the *rājaputra*, a fact certainly born out

<sup>310</sup> See D. R. Bhandarkar's comments on the meaning of a *niśrā-nikṣepa-haṭṭa* (Ibid., 11.4.23: 60).

<sup>311</sup> Turner, *Comparative Dictionary of Indo-Aryan Languages*, 618.

through its etymological link to the king (*rājan*) and to its function in inscriptions.<sup>312</sup> It is easy to understand, therefore, how the word *rāuta* became associated with the Rajput and this may explain why many scholars translated *rāuta* as Rajput.<sup>313</sup> Yet, this does not answer whether the Pre-Mughal *rāuta* is equivalent to the Rajput.

The Pre-Mughal meaning of *rāuta* can be gleaned from Persian Sultanate texts, where it appeared as the loanword *rāvat/rāwat*.<sup>314</sup> Minhāj al-Dīn Jūzjānī included the word *rāvat* in his *Ṭabaqat-i Nāṣirī* when he referred to the *rāvatān-i nāmādār* (the “famous Rāwats”).

During the period that Ulugh Khān-i-Aʿẓam had gone to Nāg-awr, he led the troops of Islām towards the territory of Rantabhūr, Bhundī, and Chitūr. The Rāe of Rantabhūr, Nāhar Dīw, who is the greatest of the Rāes, and th most noble and illustrious of the Maliks of Hind, assembled an army in order that perchance he might be able to inflict a disaster upon Ulugh Khān-i- Aʿẓam. Since the Most High and Holy god had willed that the renown of His Highness, Ulugh Khān-i- Aʿẓam, for victory, triumph, and success, should endure upon the records of time, the whole of that army of Rāe Nāhar Dīw, notwithstanding it was very numerous, well provided with arms, and elephants, with choice horses, and famous Rāwats, he put to the rout, and the heroic men sent great numbers of the enemy to hell.<sup>315</sup>

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<sup>312</sup> D. C. Sircar, *Indian Epigraphical Glossary* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1966), 272.

<sup>313</sup> Compare, for example, Bhatnagar’s translation of the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* to any printed version of the text. In one instance Bhatnagar included the word *rāuta* as a loanword in his translation while in another instance he translated *rāuta* as Rajput. This also has occurred in numerous inscriptions (as noted below), where scholars have translated *rāuta*, *rājaputra*, and Rajput interchangeably. For this reason, I have consulted the original transcription of the text, rather than the translation or commentary provided by the editor or epigraphist. Any scholar concerned with the question of differences between *rāuta*, *ṭhakkura*, and *rājaputra*, and *rājput* must similarly consult the original text since modern-day authors and translators freely interchange these words.

<sup>314</sup> The word RĀVT does not appear in F. Steingass’ *Comprehensive Dictionary of Persian* or S. Haim’s *New Persian-English Dictionary*, 2 vols. (Tehran: Librairie-Imprimerie Beroukhim, 1934). In Persian, the letter *vāv* may be either a long vowel (ō, ū, au) or a consonant (v/w). The Persian word *rāvat* or *rāwat* was the Persian spelling of *rāūt*. Persian speakers attempt to avoid double vowels and changed the letter *ū* to the letter *v*; thus, the letter *ū* in *rāūt* was replaced with the letter *v* to become *rāvat*. Another example of this change occurred with word *Hindūi* which became *Hindavī*.

<sup>315</sup> Noted by Peter Jackson, *Delhi Sultanate*, 9 n. 17 and found as a textual variant in Minhāj al-Dīn Sirāj al-Dīn Jūzjānī, *Ṭabaqat-i Nāṣirī*, ed. ‘Abd al-Ḥayy Ḥabībī, 2: 65 and *Ṭabaqat-i Nāṣirī*, trans. Raverty, 2: 828.

Amīr Khuṣrau also used the word *rāvāt* several times in the *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ*: “... the warlike *rāvats*...,” “... and the heads of the *rāvats* were like the egg of the alligator rolling about on the fish–strewn ground...,” “... everywhere the heads of the *rāvats* rolled back and forth...,” “... the Hindu *rāvats* were like waves washing over the arching domes....”<sup>316</sup> The word *rāvāt* occurred in passages that described battles and the word clearly referred to a military position or even a military aristocracy as implied in the *Ṭabaqat-i Nāṣirī* and the first quote from the *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ*. Sanskrit inscriptions from the Sultanate period also support the interpretation of *rāuta* as not only a soldier, but also member of a military aristocracy.

Four grants in Nāḍlāi made during the twelfth–century reign of Rāyapāla offer an unusual opportunity to examine the function of the *rāuta* in a single locale. The first inscription of V.S. 1189/A.D. 1133 recorded the donation of oil to either the Brahmins or a temple by two princes and the queen.<sup>317</sup> The donation of oil by the princes and queen was witnessed by the townspeople, including *rāuta* Ttimāṭā. The grant closed with the phrase “being witnessed by Lakṣmaṇa, the archer Posari, the [Brahmin?] Siriyā, the *rāuta* Ttimāṭā, the villagers as a whole, and the leader Nāgasiva.”<sup>318</sup>

Bhandarkar believed these five individuals formed the Nāḍola *pañcāyat* (governing

<sup>316</sup> All excerpts taken from Amīr Khuṣrau, *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ*, ed. Mohammad Habib: *rāvātān-i jangī* (84), *wa sarhā-yi rāvātān-i chūn baiza-yi nahang bar zamīn māhī pusht miḡhalaṭīd* (87), *ki har kujā rāvātī sar bāz piṣh āyīd* (89), *rāvātān-i hindū ki suvāragān ābī būdand gumbad kunān dar mīrasīd* (151). The allusion to *rāvats*' heads like the eggs of the alligator occurred in a section of the *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ* titled “Allusions to water animals.” In this passage the *rāvats*' heads are like the alligator's egg awash in what was a “flood of blood” (Wahid Mirza's term). After the battle, when the waters of blood receded, the Hindus' heads were rolling among the (Hindu) fish bodies that were flipping on their backs in agony (i.e., like the fish flips in agony when it is out of water). This allusion is reminiscent of the allusions in the previous sections where the heads of the warriors are like pearls in a river of blood. An English translation of this allusion can be found in Mohammad Wahid Mirza's translation of Amīr Khuṣrau's *Khazāin-ul-Futuh*, 48.

<sup>317</sup> *Ep. Ind.* 11.4.7: 35

<sup>318</sup> Translated by the author based on Bhandarkar's comments. The passage reads: *bhaṃ nāgasiva-pramukha-samasta-grāmīnaka rā· ttimāṭā vi· siriyaṅ baṅika posari lakṣmaṇa etānsākṣiṅa kṛtvā dattaṃ* (*Ep. Ind.* 11.4.7, ll. 3-5). For Bhandarkar's comments, see “Nāḍlāi Stone Inscription of Rāyapāla, [Vikrama–] Saṃvat 1189,” *Ep. Ind.* 11.4.7: 34–35.

council), a suggestion that seems reasonable.<sup>319</sup> Regardless of whether the *rāuta* was a member of the *pañcāyat* (as suggest by Bhandarkar), this indicates that the *rāuta* operated at the level of the village (as either a resident or someone charged with protecting/administering the village) rather than the region.

Three other inscriptions recorded donations made by the *rāuta* Rājadeva over two decades. The Nāḍlāi inscription in the reign of Rāyapāla, V.S. 1195/A.D. 1138, described the donation of income to a local temple. The donation was made “by the *ṭhakkura* Rājadeva, the son of *rāuta* Ūdharāṇa of the Guhila lineage,”<sup>320</sup> who was later referred to as *rāuta* Rājadeva.<sup>321</sup> The phrase “by the *bhoktāri*(?) *ṭh*· (*ṭhakkura*) Rājadeva” clearly indicated that *bhoktāri* (an administrator, from *bhokṭr*) applied to Rājadeva, although what he administered is unclear.<sup>322</sup> Continuing where the above phrase left off, Rājadeva’s inscription stated that “for his own merit, a twentieth-share is to be given by *ṭhakkura* Rājadeva to the deity [Nemīnātha] in perpetuity out of his own wealth which is (from) the tax (*ādāna*) of the bullock carts traveling back and forth along the path.”<sup>323</sup> Thus, Rājadeva received at least a part of his wealth from taxing trade and donated a portion of this tax to the Nemīnātha temple.

The *rāuta* Rājadeva made two additional donations recorded in inscriptions. In an inscription dated V.S. 1200/A.D. 1143 the same *rāuta* Rājadeva, who did not use the

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<sup>319</sup> Ibid., 35.

<sup>320</sup> Translated by the author. The passage reads: *gūhilānvya rāu· ūdharāṇa-sūnunā bhoktāri*(?) *ṭh· rājadevena* (*Ep.Ind.*, 11.4.8, ll. 7-9).

<sup>321</sup> *Ep. Ind.* 11.4.8, l. 21.

<sup>322</sup> The word *bhoktāri* does not exist in Sanskrit. It is probably an accepted local term that was incorporated into the inscription. I speculate that *bhoktāri* derived from *bhokṭr*, lit. “one who enjoys” or in this case “one who enjoys (i.e., administers, governs).” D. R. Bhandarkar mentioned the foreignness of *bhoktāri*, but offered no meaning in “Nāḍlāi Stone Inscription of Rāyapāla; [Vikrama-] Saṃvat 1195,” *Ep. Ind.* 11.4.8: 36.

<sup>323</sup> Translated by the author. The passage reads: *ṭh· rājadevena sva-puṇyārthe svīyā-ādāna-madhyāt mārgge gacchatāmāgatānām vṛṣabhānām śekeṣu yad-ābhāvyaṃ bhavati tan-madhyāt viṃśatitamo bhāgaḥ candrārka devasya pradattaḥ* (*Ep.Ind.*, 11.4.8, ll. 9-14). For a discussion of the word *ādāna*, see Dasharatha Sharma, *Early Chauhān Dynasties*, 235.

title of a *ṭhakkura* in this inscription, donated “one *viṃśopaka* coin from the value of the *pāilās* [a unit of weight] accruing to him and two *palikās* from the *palas* [= *pāilā*] of oil due to him from every *ghāṇaka* or oil mill.”<sup>324</sup> Unlike the previous inscription in which Rājadeva donated a portion of the tax he received from local trade, in this inscription he donated a portion of the tax on oil mills. Two years later in V.S. 1202/A.D. 1145 a donation was made “by the *ṭhakkura*, *rāuta* Rājadeva” in which “rupees two for each twenty *pāilās* loaded on bullocks and rupee one for each cart filled with commodities, coming under the class of *kirāṇas*” was given to a Mahāvīra temple.<sup>325</sup> In this inscription of V.S. 1202/A.D. 1145, Rājadeva donated a part of the tax he collected on trade.

The inscriptions of Rājadeva confirm the comments made above with regard to the *ṭhakkura*. As a *ṭhakkura* in V.S. 1195/A.D. 1138, Rājadeva donated a portion of taxes from bullock carts. His inscription of V.S. 1200/A.D. 1143 did not mention the title of *ṭhakkura* and here he donated part of his wealth collected from taxes on the oil mills rather than on trade. By the time of Rājadeva’s next inscription, two years later, he was a *ṭhakkura* again and once again made a donation of money collected from the taxation

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<sup>324</sup> D. R. Bhandarkar, “Nāḍlaī Stone Inscription of Rāyapāla; [Vikrama-] Saṃvat 1200,” *Ep.Ind.* 11.4.10: 41.

<sup>325</sup> The phrase “by the *ṭhakkura*, *rāuta* Rājadeva” is my translation of *rā° rājadevaṭhakureṇa* (*Ep.Ind.*, 11.4.11, l. 2). The Prākṛt in this inscription is truly broken and I have relied on D. R. Bhandarkar’s attempts to understand some of the more obscure words in the inscription. Bhandarkar noted a number of “rare and unusual words” such as *kirāḍaiū* and *gāḍa*. *Gāḍa* was used in the sense of a cart, which makes sense since McGregor has noted that the modern Hindi word *gārī* (cart) comes from \**gāḍḍa* from the Prākṛt word *gāḍḍi*. See Bhandarkar, “Nāḍlaī Stone Inscription of Rāyapāla; [Vikrama-] Saṃvat 1200,” 11.4.11: 42 and R. S. McGregor *Oxford Hindi-English Dictionary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 262. Bhandarkar wrote, “... *kirāḍaiū* is, I am told, the same as *kirāḍavā* or *kirāṇā*, employed to denote substances, such as gum, dry ginger, black pepper, coriander, and so forth” (*op. cit.*, 11.4.11: 42). McGregor defined the modern Hindi word *kirāṇā* as “things sold: groceries, spices” from *krayāṇaka* (*op. cit.*, 197). Turner defined *krayāṇaka* as “goods for sale” and listed the Prākṛt as *kiriāṇa* (*Comparative Dictionary of Indo-Aryan Languages*, 186). Alternately, *kirāḍaiū* may refer to *kirāru* “a Hindu shopkeeper” or *kirār*, *karār* “member of a tribe of Hindus who act as traders and moneylenders” (Turner, *Comparative Dictionary of Indo-Aryan Languages*, 162). The latter reference to a tribe or class of people is supported by the inscription’s reference to other tribes or guild merchants (*Ep.Ind.*, 11.4.11: 42). Regardless of whether the “class of *kirāṇas*” referred to a class of goods for sale (e.g., spices) or to a class of merchants, I interpret money collected for each cart as a tax on trade rather than production.

of carts and material goods (*kirāḍaūā* or *kirāṇas*). Whether Rājadeva lost his status at *ṭhakkura* can never be known since he did not specifically mention this in the second inscription.

Rajasthan inscriptions of the eleventh to fifteenth century generally referred to individuals by one title/position, either *rāuta* or *ṭhakkura*, instead of the two titles found in *rāuta* Rājadeva *ṭhakkura*'s two inscriptions. Rājadeva's inscriptions contrast with other inscriptions made by *rāutas* such as the Koṭ-Solaṅkiya inscription of V.S. 1394/A.D. 1337. The inscription recorded the donation of a well and orchard to a local temple by

*rāuta* Mūlarāja, the son of Jākhaladevi who is the wife of the *rāuta* Bāṃbī, the son of *rāuta* Soma, in the lineage of *rāuta* Mālhaṇa, at the time of the raising of the flag of the Pārśvanāthadeva (temple) in the presence of the *rāuta* Bālā and the (three) *rāutas*: Nīṃvā, Lūbhā, and Kumara.<sup>326</sup>

This Koṭ-Solaṅkiya inscription did not mention a single *ṭhakkura*, not even as a witness to enforce the grant. Instead, the inscription listed three generations of *rāutas*: the donor *rāuta* Mūlarāja, his father *rāuta* Bāṃbī, grandfather *rāuta* Soma, and forefather *rāuta* Mālhaṇa. At first glance this inscription would appear to indicate that the title and position of *rāuta* was passed from father to son. However, if the *rāuta* was a military aristocrat, then the title and position would have remained within a family over generations as the father taught his son not only the marital arts, but also used his

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<sup>326</sup> Translated by the author. The passage reads: *rāuta-mālhaṇānvaye rāuta-somaputra-rāuta-bāṃbī-bhāryā-jākhaladeviputrena rāuta-mūlarājena śrī-pārśvanāthadevasya dhvajāropanasamaye rāuta-bālā-rāuta-yā-kumara-lūbhā-nīṃvā-samakṣam* (*Ep.Ind.*, 11.4.24, ll. 2-5). In his synopsis of the inscription, D. R. Bhandarkar states that Mūlarāja hoisted the flag “in the presence of the *rāuta* Bālā, Luṃbhā, and Nīṃvā” (“Koṭ-Sōlaṅkiyā Inscription of Vaṇavīra; [Vikrama-] Saṃvat 1394,” *Ep.Ind.*, 11.4.24: 62). The inscription, as he transcribed it, reads *rāutabālārāutayākumarylūbhānīṃvāsamakṣam*. The word(s) *yākumara* is dropped in D. R. Bhandarkar's comments. Given the context, it seems that *rāuta-yā-kumara-...* is a compound where *yā* is the plural form of *yad*. The correct translation, therefore, would be ‘in the presence of Nīṃvā, Lūbhā, and Kumara who are *rāuta*’ as I have translated above.



connections in the court to retain the position for his offspring. Other inscriptions demonstrate a loss of *rāuta* status.

Five donations, appended to a temple inscription at Girvaḍ dated V.S. 1344/A.D. 1288, mentioned *rāutas*. The donations included:

- (a) One *dōṇakārī* [a measurement] field in the village of Chhanāra, donated by Dēvaḍa Mēlāka, son of Śōbhita of the Mahārāja-kula.
- (b) A *Ḍhīmadü*, i.e., *ḍhimaḍā* (well) in the village of Khīmāüli, by Vīrapāla, son of the *rā°* Vīhala.
- (c) In the village of Āüli, 8 seers of corn from each *arahaṭṭa* and 2 seers from each well, donated by villagers
- (d) In the village of Kālhaṇavāda, one seer of grain for each plough measure, and 10 *drammas* from each of the villages, by Nuḍimala, son of Gōhila.
- (e) For twelve *ēkādaśīs* [i.e., one part for every *ēkādaśī* (eleventh) parts], the revenue of *chōlāpikā* [bundle of grass] in the village of Maḍāüli and the custom-duty from the custom-house of Chandrāvati, by the *rā°* Gāṅgū and Karmasīha (-sīmha).<sup>327</sup>

Inscriptions that recorded donations often acted as a type of legal document. As shown in the donation listed on the previous page, inscriptions often included the names of people who witnessed and who may have enforced the terms of a donation (“in the presence of the *rāuta* Bālā and the (three) *rāutas*: Nīmṇvā, Lūbhā, and Kumara”). The inscriptions included titles and lineages to promote the status of individuals and to clearly identify individuals. On account of this, I tend to read the absence of a title such as *rāuta* in the inscription as a reflection that the title was either not held or lost.

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<sup>327</sup> Harihar Vitthal Trivedi, ed., “Girvaḍ Stone Inscription of the time of Pratāpasīmha” *C.I.Ind.*, 7.2: 273. I differ with Trivedi in interpreting the final donation. Trivedi seems to imply that the donation came from a tax “custom-duty” from the “custom-house.” While this could be a tax, it could also be a percentage of the sales made at the marketplace (Trivedi’s custom-house), or the donation of one (weighed or marked) bundle of grass for every twelve collected. Also, the inscription reads *ṣīmāüliḡrāme vīhala rā° vīrapā[le]na* and *maḍāüliḡrāme rā° gāṅgūkarmsī(sim)hābhyāṁ*. Trivedi wrote in his discussion of this inscription, “It [the abbreviation *rā°*] is a contraction of either *Rājaputra* or *Rāula*...” (Ibid., 277 n. 3). He wrote in the Ajhārī inscriptions of V.S. 1240, however, “The donor’s name is given as *Rā* (i.e., *Rāuta*) Jagaddēva, without any further details” (“Ajhārī Stone Inscription of the time of Dhārāvarsha,” *C.I.Ind.*, 7.2: 250). These five minor inscriptions are appended to a longer royal inscription. Given their brevity and lack of a royal genealogy combined with the fact that none of these names appears in the longer royal genealogy in the longer donation that immediately preceded it, I read *rā°* as an abbreviation for *rāuta*. *Rāutas* and *ḥhakkuras* acted as witnesses more often than *rājaputras* perhaps due to their local ties to the village or region.

Vīrapāla, who donated a well in the village of Khīmāulī, was the son of the *rāuta* Vīhala but was not a *rāuta* himself—a fact supported by the type of donation he made as will be discussed shortly.<sup>328</sup>

A better example for a change in social status occurred in the Māndātā inscription of V.S. 1331/A.D. 1274. Preserved on four copper plates, this inscription provided a lengthy account of the Malwa Paramāra rulers (vv. 12–55) before introducing the donor (vv. 55–86) and the details of the grant (vv. 86–134).<sup>329</sup> The composer of the inscription included the donor’s lineage complete with names and a short description of their achievements: *rāuta* Rāṭa of the Cāhamāna clan, his son Palhaṇadevavarman, his son Sallaṣaṇasiṃha, and his son (and donor) Anayasīṃha.<sup>330</sup> Rāṭa, the great-grandfather of the donor, was the only one in this lineage to have the status title of *rāuta*. The Cāhamāna clan name appeared before Rāṭa’s name (i.e., at the beginning of the lineage) but clearly applied to all members of his lineage. The *rāuta* status title may have been similarly distributive, acting as either a status title or marker of a warrior caste/*jātī* that applied to everyone in the lineage.<sup>331</sup> A later passage in the inscription, however, suggests that the term *rāuta* was a status title that applied to Rāṭa alone.

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<sup>328</sup> The loss of status titles can also be seen in Kakatiya Andhra recently discussed by Cynthia Talbot in *Precolonial India in Practice*, 61–72.

<sup>329</sup> Harihar Vitthal Trivedi, ed., “Māndhātā Copper-Plate Inscription of the Time of Jayavarman,” *C.I.Ind.* 7.2: 212. Trivedi listed the verses on the donor as vv. 55–56, but it is obviously a typographical error and the correct verses are 55–86.

<sup>330</sup> *cāhamāna-kule rāṭa rāutaḥ ...* (l. 75), *palhaṇadevas-tamād-abhavad-bhuja-daṇḍa-maṇḍalī-caṇḍaḥ ...* (l. 76), *salaṣa(kha)ṇasiṃhas-tasmāt-tanyo ...* (ll. 76–77), *tasmād-anyasiṃho-[']bhūt-kalāvān-iva ...* (l. 79). The final phrase, “from him was born Anayasīṃha (who was) like the moon-born,” probably referred to Śiva and the numerous donations Anayasīṃha made to Śiva temples in the verses that immediately followed. For the achievements of Anayasīṃha’s ancestors listed in the inscription, see Harihar Vitthal Trivedi, ed., “Māndhātā Copper-Plate Inscription of the Time of Jayavarman,” *C.I.Ind.*, 7.2: 215.

<sup>331</sup> Cynthia Talbot addressed this exact problem in her analysis of Kakatiya titles as either status titles or caste categories in *Precolonial India in Practice*, 58–61.

... two shares [of the donated land go to] the *kṣatriya sādhanika* Anayasimhavarma who is the son of *sā°* Salaṣaṃ(kha)ṇasiṃhavarma who is the son of *sā°* Palhadevavarma who is of the flourishing Cāhamāna clan.<sup>332</sup>

As Cynthia Talbot has noted, “Whereas the documentary portion of donative inscriptions—specifying the exact nature of the object gifted, as well as its purpose and its recipient—was largely technical and thus not amenable to much variation, the representation of a donor’s identity in an inscription was undoubtedly dictated by the donor’s wishes.”<sup>333</sup> The fact that the composer referred to Rāṣa as a *rāuta* in the earlier part of the inscription but called the donor as well as all of Rāṣa’s other descendants *sādhanika* (generals) suggests that the *rāuta* was a status title that was not necessarily passed from father to son. The link between *rāuta*, which is derived from *rājan* (king) and probably had a connotation of royalty or aristocracy, was most likely a higher title than *sādhanika*; therefore, that Rāṣa’s descendents lost their *rāuta* status when they either became too far removed from the royal lineage or fell out of service with the ruler.

Inscriptions frequently mentioned the *rāuta* in connection with towns or villages, which indicates that the *rāuta*’s status and authority were limited to smaller localities such as the village or town. As a resident in or near the town or village, the *rāuta* understood and probably participated in local governance. The *rāuta*’s local authority combined with an implied regnal authority led to the *rāuta*’s appearance as a witness in many donative inscriptions. Rājadeva’s continued patronage of temples in Nāḍlāi probably indicated that he received land in or close to the town. Just as Rājadeva apparently lost his status title of *ṭhakkura*, others lost their status title of

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<sup>332</sup> Translated by the author. The passage reads: *cāhamānakule pravarddhamānāya sā° palhadevavarmmaṇaḥ putrāya sā° salaṣaṃ(kha)ṇasiṃha-varmmaṇaḥ putrāya sādhanika-anayasimhadevavarmmaṇe kṣatriyāya paddvayaṃ iti* (“Māndhātā Copper-Plate Inscription of the Time of Jayavarman,” *C.I.Ind.*, 7.2: 224 ll. 125–127).

<sup>333</sup> Talbot, *Precolonial India in Practice*, 49.

*rāuta*. The loss of this title indicates that the *rāuta* was not a caste or *jātī* distinction for the *kṣatriya* warrior or an occupational title for a warrior, since one cannot lose his caste and since some of those who lost their *rāuta* status such as Anayasimha still retained an occupational role in the military. The *rāuta* in the Sultanate period was a status title gained and sometimes lost and not equivalent to the Rajput social and warrior identity.

### **Rājaputra**

The preceding pages showed how *ṭhakkura* and *rāuta* acted as status titles that combined social rank with political function. The titles of *ṭhakkura* and *rāuta* were transferred from father to son on some occasions and completely lost on other occasions. The great epigraphist D. C. Sircar defined *rāja-putra* as “originally ‘a prince’; title of princes and subordinate rulers; but later a title of nobility especially in the modified forms Rāvata, Rāuta, etc.; sometimes also used in the sense of ‘a Rājput’ often explained as ‘a horse-man’.”<sup>334</sup> The term *rājaputra*, a combination of the words *rāja* (king, ruler) and *putra* (son), obviously carried the denotation of a prince, although as Sircar noted, the status of *rājaputra* often carried a sense of (royal) nobility. Many scholars have claimed that the Rajput of the Mughal and Modern Period descended from the nobleman of this period based on an etymological link between the words *rājput* and *rājaputra*.<sup>335</sup> Since the status title of *rājaputra* carried a connotation of royal nobility, the exact nature of what constituted a *rājaputra* in the Sultanate Period has made this category the most difficult status title to define.

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<sup>334</sup> Sircar, *Indian Epigraphical Glossary*, 272.

<sup>335</sup> According to the rules of Apabhraṃśa and medieval Hindi, the Sanskrit word conjunct *-tr-* in the word *putra* would be transformed in Apabhraṃśa to *-putta*. The double consonant is shortened with a lengthening of the preceding vowel, producing *-pūt* in medieval Hindi. For a simple guide to this grammar, see Madhusudan Mishra, *A Grammar of Apabhramsa* (Delhi: Vidyanidhi Prakasan, 1992).

Two more inscriptions found at Lālrāi demonstrate how the *rājaputra* title was applied to princes. D. R. Bhandarkar discovered both inscriptions in a destroyed Jain temple and both related donations made in the year V.S. 1233/A.D. 1176. One of the inscriptions recorded a donation of barley given

... jointly by the queen, Śrī Mahivaladevī, (and) the sons of Kīrtipāladeva, the *rājaputra* Lākṣa(kha)ṇapālha and the *rājaputra* Abhayapāla who governed (*bhokta*) Sināṇava occurring in the kingdom of the King of kings Kelhaṇadeva in Naḍūla.<sup>336</sup>

The second inscription found at Lālrāi, also dated V.S. 1233/A.D. 1176, mentioned *rājaputra* Lākhaṇapāla and *rājaputra* Abhayapāla who governed Saṃnāṇaka, which was obviously the same town of Sināṇava mentioned in the previous inscription.<sup>337</sup> The father of *rājaputra* Lākhaṇapāla and Abhayapāla, Kīrtipāla, was the younger brother of the ruling king Kelhaṇa. This made Lākhaṇapāla and Abhayapāla nephews to the reigning king, who apparently bestowed the title of *rājaputra* upon the two brothers.<sup>338</sup>

The application of *rājaputra* to someone other than the king's son also occurred during the reign of Samarasimha, another son of Kīrtipāla.<sup>339</sup> The Jālōr inscription of

<sup>336</sup> Translated by the author. The passage reads: *śrī-kīrtipāladeva-putrai sināṇava-bhokta-rājaputra-lākṣa[kha]ṇapālha-rājaputra-abhayapālaiḥ rājñī-śrī-mahivaladevī-sahitaiḥ...* (*Ep.Ind.*, 11.4.15, ll. 2-6). For a discussion of this grant, see D. R. Bhandarkar, "Lālrāi Stone Inscription of Kēlhaṇadēva: [Vikrama-] Saṃvat 1233," *Ep.Ind.*, 11.4.15: 49.

<sup>337</sup> D. R. Bhandarkar, "Lālrāi Stone Inscription of Lākhaṇapāla and Abhayapāla; [Vikrama-] Saṃvat 1233," *Ep.Ind.* 11.4.16: 50-51. The relevant part of the inscription reads: *saṃnāṇaka-bhoktā rājaputra-lākhaṇapāla-rājaputra-abhyapālau tasmin rājye ...* (*Ep.Ind.*, 11.4.16, ll. 2-3).

<sup>338</sup> Kelhaṇa and Kīrtipāla were not on cordial terms and Kīrtipāla eventually broke from Kelhaṇa's kingdom to establish the Jālōr Cāhamāna dynasty (Sharma, *Early Chauhān Dynasties*, 161-64).

<sup>339</sup> Kīrtipāla became increasingly independent from Kelhaṇa and established a new dynasty centered on Jālōr, which he captured from the Caulukyas sometime around V.S. 1238/A.D. 1181, just a year before his death. The regnal dates for Kīrtipāla and Samarasimha are based on inscriptions. Kīrtipāla's last inscription was in V.S. 1238/A.D. 1181 and Samarasimha's first inscription of V.S. 1239/A.D. 1182. D. R. Bhandarkar published the only two known inscriptions from Samarasimha's reign, the "Jālōr Stone Inscription of Samarasimhadēva; [Vikrama-] Saṃvat 1239 (*Ep.Ind.*, 11.4.18: 52-54) and the "Jālōr Stone Inscription of Samarasimhadēva; [Vikrama-] Saṃvat 1242 (*Ep.Ind.*, 11.4.19: 54-55). Samarasimha's son, Udayasimha, was first mentioned in an inscription dated V.S. 1262 (Sharma, *Early Chauhān Dynasties*, 167).

It is interesting that Samarasimha was not mentioned in either of the Lālrāi inscriptions of V.S. 1233/A.D. 1176, even though the inscriptions referred to his brothers Lākhaṇapāla and Abhayapāla. Lākhaṇapāla and Abhayapāla made their donation in Lālrāi with Kelhaṇa's wife (Mahivaladevī), which suggests that Lākhaṇapāla and Abhayapāla remained loyal to Kelhaṇa while Samarasimha followed his

V.S. 1239/A.D. 1182 recorded the construction of a pavilion (*maṇḍapa*) at a Jain temple by Yaśorāja and Jagadhara. Inscriptions followed a formulaic pattern that began with a *praśasti* (praise, panegyric) naming the ruler, the current king, and his regnal lineage. Royal inscriptions often included a verse or two on the deeds of each king and this particular inscription included an unusual reference “to a time when *rājaputra* Jojala was acting as an overseer of the kingdom (*rājyaciṃtaka*).”<sup>340</sup> This term could either mean that Jojala protected the kingdom from bandits, an act mentioned in the inscription, or that he was instrumental in conquering Jālōr and establishing the kingdom with Kīrtipāla in the previous year and perhaps with the transition of power to Samarasimha. According to Dasharatha Sharma, Jojala was the maternal uncle of Samarasimha and the reference to Jojala as *rājaputra* in the inscription indicates that he descended from a royal lineage in another dynasty.<sup>341</sup> It is just as likely, however, that he was not a king’s son and that his status as a *rājaputra* came from his place in the court as Kīrtipāla’s brother-in-law, Samarasimha’s uncle, and the kingdom’s *rājyaciṃtaka*.

The Nāṇa inscription of V.S. 1237/A.D. 1180 also indicates that people gained *rājaputra* status from their position rather than their birth. This stone inscription was discovered in a temple only a few kilometers from the Lālṛāi inscriptions and was made only four years after the Lālṛāi inscriptions of V.S. 1233/A.D. 1176.<sup>342</sup> A parcel of land previously given to a Brahminical community came under dispute and “*rājaputra* Rājasimha, a general in the army and the ornament (*tilaka*) of the great Paramāra

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father in establishing the new dynasty. For more historical information, see Bhandarkar, “History of the Mārṅwār Chāhamānas,” *Ep.Ind.*, 11.4: 70–74 and Sharma, *Early Chauhān Dynasties*, 151–66.

<sup>340</sup> Translated by the author. The passage reads: *rājyaciṃtake jōjalarājaputre ityeva kāle pravarttamāne . . .* [beginning of the next line is lost] (*Ep.Ind.*, 11: 53 l. 2).

<sup>341</sup> Dasharatha Sharma, *Early Chauhān Dynasties*, 165.

<sup>342</sup> Trivedi, “Nāṇa Stone Inscription of the Time of Dhārāvarsha,” *C.I.Ind.*, 7.2: 247–249.

family (of/at) [Dā]vaḍā,” confirmed that the land belonged to the Brahmins.<sup>343</sup> Rājasimha disappeared from both the epigraphical and historical record, although Trivedi conjectured that the word [dā]vaḍā might be wrong for Devarāja, the founder of the Bhinmāl Paramāra kings, and indicated that the Rājasimha belonged to the Bhinmāl lineage.<sup>344</sup> The inscription clearly identified Rājasimha as a Paramāra rather than a Cāhamāna; however, the author failed to mention Rājasimha’s immediate ancestors, which implies that Rājasimha was not the son of a prince, but rather a member of the Paramāra nobility. Rājasimha received the status title of *rājaputra* from his position as a general (*sāhaṇī* from *sādhanika*) or even a “conqueror of generals ([*sāi*]ṇasahaṇī),” rather than any royal link.<sup>345</sup> Thus, the phrase *rājaputra* Rājasimha *sāhaṇī* paralleled the phrase *rāuta* Rājadeva *ṭhakkura* discussed above and *rājaputra* like *rāuta* acted as a status title instead of a princely marker.

A fragmentary inscription found on a memorial stone from the Malwa Paramāra kingdom dating somewhere between A.D. 1141–1157 also linked the status title of *rājaputra* to military commanders.<sup>346</sup> The inscription recorded the death of

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<sup>343</sup> Translated by the author. The passage reads: *saṃvat 123[7] svasti [dā]vaḍā-mahā-pramāra-kula-tilaka-rājapū(pu)tra-[sāi]ṇasahaṇī-rājasī['](sim)ha-sāhaṇī... (C.I.Ind., 7.2: 249 ll. 1–6).*

<sup>344</sup> Trivedi, “Nāṇa Stone Inscription of the Time of Dhārāvarsha,” *C.I.Ind.*, 7.2: 248. If Trivedi is correct in this conjecture, then Rājasimha could belong to one of two Paramāra dynasties that included a ruler named Devarāja: the Bhinmāl Paramāra and the Jālōr Paramāra dynasties. Both dynasties ended in the twelfth century with establishment of Kīrtipāla’s Jālōr Cāhamāna dynasty. For a description of these Paramāra dynasties, see Pratipal Bhatia, *The Paramāras, c. 800–1305 A.D.* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1970), 182–189.

<sup>345</sup> Trivedi mentioned these titles in his discussion of the inscription where he translated *sāhaṇī* (from *sādhanika*) as a general and *sāiṇasāhaṇī* as an emperor, although he later noted in his transcription of the inscriptions that the reading of *sāiṇasāhaṇī* was questionable (Trivedi, “Nāṇa Stone Inscription,” *C.I.Ind.* 248 and 249 ll. 4–5, n. 6). I believe I have followed Trivedi’s footsteps by translating *sāiṇasāhaṇī* as a conqueror of generals by reading the compound as being derived from *saiḥina-sādhanī* with *saiḥina* being derived from *sahatā* (Turner, *Comparative Dictionary of Indo-Aryan Languages*, 768). Alternately, the phrase may be translated as a ‘general of generals’ indicating that *rājaputra* Rājasimha commanded the entire army.

<sup>346</sup> The word *rājaputra* could indicate a military commander and/or a nobleman and/or a member of the royal family. In *Precolonial India in Practice*, Talbot interprets similar titles in medieval Andhra according to broad categories that could reflect either a social title or an occupation, with Talbot favoring an the designation of an occupation more than a hereditary (55–61). In this inscription, it seems that *rājaputra* is

*rājaputra Śrī Vijayasimha* who obtained victory like the incarnated god of battle over the *rājaputra Śrī Viddiga* of the Rāṣṭrakūta family who was utterly destroyed and vanquished by Śrī Vijayasimha, the son of the younger brother of *mahārājaputra Śrī Tejasimhadeva*, the son of *mahārājaputra Śrī Pīthanadeva*, the son of *mahārājaputra Śrī Ajayapāladeva* in the family of Śrī Adhidroṇācārya [in service of ?] the celebrated great-prince Śrī Lakṣmīvarmadeva who bore the royal insignia of the Paramāra dynasty.<sup>347</sup>

This inscription reflected the turmoil of the Malwa Paramāras during the twelfth century as they faced threats on multiple fronts and eventually became subservient to Kumārapāla of the Caulukya kingdom. The Paramāra ruling elite either adopted or were forced to adopt the title of *mahākumāra* in their inscriptions until they regained their independence from the Caulukyās.<sup>348</sup> Vijayasimha probably experienced a similar loss of status during this eclipse of Paramāra power, losing his family’s traditional title of *mahārājaputra* (the great-*rājaputra*) for the lesser title of *rājaputra*. There is no evidence that Vijayasimha’s ancestors were ever part of the royal family; in fact, there is a complete lack of evidence for the Adhidroṇācārya family as any subsidiary branch of the Paramāras. The *mahārājaputra* title in this inscription marked Adhidroṇācārya and his successors as nobility rather than royalty.

Individuals occasionally lost their *rājaputra* status title, such as in the Kadmāl plates of V.S. 1140/A.D. 1083. The final lines of an inscription usually listed the names of the individuals involved in its execution: the name of the inscription’s composer, engraver, and the like. The Kadmāl plates ended with the statement, “the (*dūtaka*) here

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a military commander, although it certainly could be a military commander who came from a noble or royal family.

<sup>347</sup> Translated by the author. śrī-param[ā]rānvaye svastaparikriyāvīrājamana || mahākumāra-śrī-la[smī (kṣmī)]-varmmadeva-pra[khyā?]tā [śrī-adhi?]droṇācārya-anvaye mahārājaputra-śrī-ajayapāladeva-[putra]-mahārāya(ja)putra-śrī-pīthanadevastatputra-mahārājaputraśrī-tejovarmmadevasa(s) tatkaṇiṣṭha-bhrātr[vyā]-śrī-vijayasimhena saṁhatya ca saṁdatya || rāṣṭrakūṭa-anvaye rājaputra-śrī-viddigena saha saṁjāta-yuddhesva(ṣva)rivijayaṁ(h) kra(kṛ)tamiti(t iti ||) kṛtiriyam [rā]ma-putra-[śrī]-vijayasimhasya || ... [what follows is fragmentary]... (“Bhopāl Pillar Inscription of the Time of Mahākumāra Lakshmvirman,” C.I.Ind., 7.2, ll. 1–12).

<sup>348</sup> For more on this period of Paramāra history, see Praitpal Bhatia, *The Paramāras*, 127–135.



is Raṇadhavala, the son of Cāhamāna *rājaputra* Sagaṃdā. (The symbol is the mark) of the king of kings Vijayasimha.”<sup>349</sup> D.C. Sircar did not discuss the background of either Raṇadhavala or *rājaputra* Sagaṃdā in his article, and I once again interpret the inclusion of the *rājaputra* status title for Sagaṃdā and the absence for his son as an indication that Raṇadhavala did not hold the *rājaputra* title. Many possibilities exist as to why a Cāhamāna *rājaputra*’s son served the Guhila king Vijayasimha: Raṇadhavala became too far removed from the royal lineage and lost his royal status, he fell out of favor with the Cāhamāna king, he chose to serve the Guhilas or better fortunes existed with the Guhilas, he entered Guhila service through a matrimonial alliance, and so forth.<sup>350</sup> His fall from *rājaputra* status is emphasized by his service as a royal messenger (*dūtaka*). While a royal messenger could be an important task that required a trustworthy ally, this particular grant described Maṇḍalika Vijayasimha’s donation of a fifth of all proceeds that came from a parcel of land and a tenth of all income and drainage from the land with a tenth to go to Vijayasimha.<sup>351</sup> This donation of land was hardly a negotiation of state matters and would have befitted a *ṭhakkura dūtaka* more than a *rājaputra dūtaka*. For whatever reason, Raṇadhavala lost his *rājaputra* status.

The Pālḍī inscription of V.S. 1173/A.D. 1116 also ended with a non-Guhila serving a Guhila king. The inscription, which recorded the construction of a temple by a Brahmin and his student, closed by stating: “Salakhaṇarā, the son of the *rājaputra* Ūpalarā of the Solaṅki family, is the trustee (*goṣṭhika*) for the temple.”<sup>352</sup> The

<sup>349</sup> Translated by the author. The passage reads: *dūtako 'tra Cāhamāna-rājaputra-sagaṃdā-suta-raṇadhavalaḥ iti mahārājadhiraṅga-śrī-vijayaṃhasya* which is immediately followed by a symbol (*Ep.Ind.*, 31.33, ll. 39-40).

<sup>350</sup> Translated by the author. The inscription clearly stated that Vijayasimha was a Guhila: *śrī-guhadattaḥ prabhavaḥ śrī-guhila-vaṃśabhyā(sya)na ...* (*Ep.Ind.*, 31.33, l. 3) and D. C. Sircar’s comments in “Kadmal Plates of Guhila Vijayasimha, V.S. 1140,” *Ep.Ind.*, 31.33: 238–243.

<sup>351</sup> Sircar, “Kamal Plates of the Guhila Vijayasimha, V.S. 1140,” *Ep.Ind.*, 31.33: 244.

<sup>352</sup> Translated by the author. Akshaya Keerty Vyas published a description and transcription in, “Paldi Inscription of Guhila Arisimha, V.S. 1173,” *Ep.Ind.*, 30.3: 9. The inscription reads: *atra deve goṣṭhikaḥ saulaṃkika-vaṃśīya-rājaputra-śrī-ūpalarā-suta-śrī-salakhaṇarā*, (*Ep.Ind.*, 30 ll. 15-16).

inscription recorded a grant made by the Guhila ruler Arisimha, the son of Vijayasimha in the Kadmāl inscription, to a Śaivite temple. The *goṣṭhika*, a trustee or an executor of a grant, had no official connection with the royal court; more often, he was an influential member of the community in which the grant occurred such as a Brahmin, a member of the *pañcāyat*, *ṭhakkura* or *rāuta*. The reference to Salakhaṇarā as the son of a *rājaputra* Ūpalarā neither implied that Salakhaṇarā was a *rājaputra* nor that he served a royal court. The reference to Salakhaṇarā's lineage, and probably his being a Solāṅki, served only to identify him in a legal document.

Inscriptions have provided scholars with the dates, places, names, and lineages necessary to identify royal families; however, inscriptions are limited in both number (particularly in the northern regions when compared to the southern regions of the subcontinent) and in the information they conveyed. This is evident when one attempts to examine the term *rājaputra*, which has three apparent meanings: the son of a king, a distant relative of a king, or a status title for nobility with no relationship to the king.

The Pālḍī inscription of V.S. 1173/A.D. 1116, like the Kadmāl plates, challenges the notion that *rājaputra* is a hereditary title within a royal family. Instead, the Paldi and Kadmāl inscriptions suggest that *rājaputra* refers to an administrative and/or military position that was not necessarily hereditary. The traditional meaning of *rājaputra*, the literal son of a king, was retained through the eleventh to fifteenth century. The Lālṛāī inscription of V.S. 1233/A.D. 1176 and the Jālōr inscription of V.S. 1239/A.D. 1182 both referred to nephews and a maternal uncle as *rājaputra*, indicating a figurative meaning in addition to the literal meaning of king's son.<sup>353</sup> As the circle

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<sup>353</sup> One could read *rājaputra* as a prince and argue that uncles and brothers represent princes of the blood. The fact that Jojala was a maternal uncle, however, strongly questions the applicability of such a concept.

expanded around the king, the term *rājaputra* was applied outside of the royal family. The Nāṇa inscription of V.S. 1237/A.D. 1180 and Vijayasimha's memorial stone inscription of A.D. 1141–1157 both mentioned *rājaputras* who came from outside the royal family and even the ruling clan, while the Kadmāl copper plates and the Pālḍī inscription of VS. 1173/A.D. 1116 both referred to men who seemed to have lost the *rājaputra* status title of their forefathers. Whether the individuals in these last four inscriptions descended from royal families cannot be ruled out. Nevertheless, a fair amount of evidence suggests that the *rājaputra* title was open to members outside the ruling family.

## CONCLUSION

The study of Rajputs before the sixteenth century has focused on the red herring of Rajput origins. The work of Brajdu Lal Chattopadhyaya a quarter of a century ago and the more recent work of Nandini Sinha Kapur resisted the red herring of Rajput origin and focused on the social connections between Rajput clans in localized state formation during the medieval period. To the best of my knowledge, no scholar has examined the presence of Rajput identity before the sixteenth century, even though such an identity is often presumed to exist. Rather, scholars have traced the Rajput identity through Mughal and modern texts and simply assumed that the Rajput identity before the sixteenth century conformed to the identity found after the sixteenth century. Mughal and modern texts contain some of the earliest Rajput tales and these tales provide a starting point for determining what constituted the Rajput identity.<sup>354</sup> The Rajput tale contained four attributes: the Rajput's fidelity to vows and

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<sup>354</sup> It may be argued that the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* and *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh*, composed during the fifteenth century, were also Rajput tales. The next chapter will examine both of these texts in greater detail. Another objection often raised is that the twelfth-century *Prthvirāja Vijaya* and *Prthvirāj Rāso* were also Rajput texts. The *Prthvirāja Vijaya* may indeed have been a Rajput tale and would be extremely valuable; unfortunately, the end of the *Prthvirāja Vijaya* where Prthvirāja battled and defeated the Ghūrid army is

battles, his extraordinary acts on the battlefield, the Rajput female's extraordinary feat of immolating herself in fire (either as *jauhar* before the battle or as *satī* after the battle), and the Rajput tale's tragic-heroic plot.

None of these four attributes appeared in the inscriptions of the *ṭhakkuras*, *rāutas*, and *rājaputras*, even though scholars treat these terms as being synonymous with Rajput identity and often translate these terms into English simply as Rajput. The *ṭhakkura*, *rāuta*, and *rājaputra* acted as status titles from the eleventh to fourteenth century. These status titles primarily (although not exclusively) identified individuals according to an occupational or administrative position. An individual either inherited this title from his father, earned it, or had it appointed by a ruler. While inscriptions provide the historian with dynastic lineages, they generally lack the genealogy necessary to trace entire families; therefore, it is impossible to determine whether the *rājaputra* status title applied to members outside of the royal family or how often people who were not of royal blood obtained *rājaputra* status. If the *rājaputra* title was limited to descendants of royal families—even in cases in which the person left kin, clan, and kingdom to serve another ruler—then the *rājaputra* title was the only status title of the three examined to be restricted in such a manner. The status titles of the *ṭhakkura* and *rāuta*, which were more common than *rājaputra*, reflected social positions in rank and function. There is little evidence that any these titles were imbued with a social identity. These titles reflected a social elite and the general population never inherited or inherently identified itself according to some *ṭhakkura*, *rāuta*, or *rājaputra* identity. The status titles of *ṭhakkura*, *rāuta*, and *rājaputra*, therefore, were not

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lost and the contention that the *Prthvīrāja Vijaya* is a Rajput tale relies on speculation. The *Prthvīrāj Rāso*, contrary to popular belief, was not a twelfth-century text. While the final written form of the *Prthvīrāj Rāso* certainly drew from the bardic tradition that may have extended back to the reign of Prthvīrāja III, the written *Rāso* was produced during the Mughal period. Cynthia Talbot is currently researching the Prthvīrāja story including the *Rāso* as a Mughal text. I direct the reader to the fruits of her labor.

synonymous with a Rajput social identity, since the Rajput identity applied to all members of society from kings and lords down to craftsmen and cobblers.

The Chittaur inscription of V.S. 1339/A.D. 1283 and the Acaleśvara inscription of V.S. 1342/A.D. 1285 both contain passages on extraordinary feats of battle, one of the four Rajput attributes previously mentioned. The inscriptions both describe scenes of the king's prowess in battle. The battle imagery in these inscriptions, moreover, follows a series of literary images medieval authors utilized in poetic texts. For example, battle imagery in these thirteenth-century inscriptions paralleled descriptions contained in the roughly contemporaneous poetry of Gaṅgādevī's *Madhurāvijaya* (A.D. 1370s). The battle imagery in these two inscriptions is also reminiscent of imagery found in the Persian *Tāj al-Ma'āsir* (after A.H. 614/A.D. 1217 or A.H. 626/A.D. 1229) and the *Futūḥ al-Salaṭīn* (A.H. 751/A.D. 1350). It would seem that the two different literary traditions of Sanskrit and Persian shared a common set of battle images. One explanation for such a commonality might be the oral performances of the bardic communities that most likely traveled across boundaries (both literary and territorial). Poets may have incorporated some of the bard's battle imagery (much of which apparently focused on battles) in their respective literary traditions. One might ask, however, why the Rajput's extraordinary feats occurred in only two inscriptions of the many discussed above or why these feats occurred in two inscriptions that were from a relatively minor kingdom in the thirteenth century.

The presence of these extraordinary feats of battle in only two thirteenth-century inscriptions probably reflects the process of state formation during this time. As mentioned in the first chapter, a powerful emperor or monarch controlled a political system in which conquered rulers were often reinstated, provided that they paid due respect and revenue to their overlord. In theory, this enabled a strong

emperor to rule over a pan-Indic empire, even if his actual rule was recognized in name only. As the king of kings power weakened, however, subservient rulers saw an opportunity to become autonomous once again. They increased their political status by constructing public works, donating land buildings to temples, investing titles and positions such as *ṭhakkura* or *rāuta* to prominent families, and lauding their military power as they annexed more land and revenue into their kingdom. Political power and symbolic power were—and still are—intimately linked.<sup>355</sup> An emperor would have viewed a subservient king's inscriptions of military prowess as a direct challenge. The extraordinary feats ascribed to the Guhila kings occurred in the Chittaur and Acaleśvara inscriptions precisely because the Guhila rulers wanted to declare their independence. It is not coincidental that the Guhilas produced these inscriptions immediately after their conquest of Chittaur, a conquest that elevated them from five centuries as subservient lords to regional rulers.

The inclusion of extraordinary feats in the Chittaur and Acaleśvara inscriptions also suggests that a significant part of the Rajput identity could have come from both the little tradition and the great tradition. Scholars generally link the Rajput identity to the *kṣatriya* warrior of classical Indic society. The Rajput identity, according to these scholars, trickled down from the social elite to the lower classes and to those living on the fringe of civilization. These inscriptions could be read in a way that would suggest the exact opposite: that Rajput identity developed, at least in part, among the more marginalized segments of Indic society and was gradually appropriated by the elite. Such a reading would account for the link between the Rajput tale and bardic tale, the presence of a Rajput attribute in two inscriptions of the Guhilas who traditionally

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<sup>355</sup> Premodern historians will recognize that I have just described what Hermann Külke referred to as the *sāmanta* system. For a discussion of this system, see Hermann Külke and Dietmar Rothermund, *History of India*, 127–38.

occupied a politically subservient position, and the prominence of Rajput tales along the Marwar frontier.<sup>356</sup> The Rajput identity, therefore, may have been a negotiation between two traditions—a great tradition and a little tradition—meeting and fusing to create a new social and warrior identity. The fusion of the great and little tradition also appears in two fifteenth-century Rajput tales, the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* and the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* (possibly the first text to use the actual word *rājput*).

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<sup>356</sup> The epic of Pābūjī, the *Khyāt* of Naiṇasī, and Hadi Rani's tale all came from the region of Marwar, which bordered the Thar Desert and was arguably considered to be the western frontier for this region.

## Chapter 5

### The Muslim as Exemplary Rajput: Reading the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* and *Kānhaḍade Prabandh*

This may seem quite a heretical thing to say, but I suggest that, according to the ways of the North Indian military labour market, in the pre-Mughal period, ‘Afghan’ as well as ‘Rajput’ were soldiers’ identities rather than ethnic or genealogical denotations.

Dirk H. A. Kolff, *Naukar, Rajput & Sepoy*<sup>357</sup>

Western Hindūstān in the twelfth to fourteenth centuries witnessed the decline of the traditionally dominant dynasties, the establishment of regional dynasties, and the rise of a new sultanate in Delhi. For the previous two centuries, the Caulukya kings in Gujarat and the Paramāra kings in Malwa had dominated the region. The Cāhamāna and Guhila dynasties, which for centuries existed as feudatories of the Caulukyās and Paramāras, established their presence as new political entities in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries respectively. As the Cāhamāna and Guhila kingdoms emerged in the West, a new kingdom emerged in the North. The Khaljī dynasty of the Delhi Sultanate was established at the close of the thirteenth century and began a series of campaigns across Western Hindūstān. Amīr Khuṣrau commemorated these campaigns in his *Khazā’in al-Futūḥ*, previously discussed in chapter two. While these campaigns solidified ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Khaljī’s imperial claims in Delhi, they laid the basis of what would become Rajput social identity that was expressed for the first time in the Rajput tales of the fifteenth century.

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<sup>357</sup> Dirk H. A. Kolff, *Naukar, Rajput & Sepoy: The Ethnohistory of the Military Labour Market in Hindustan, 1450–1850*, 57–58. See also Stewart Gordon who wrote, “One of the longest-standing and most fruitless discussions in Indian has been over the origin of the Rajputs. The word itself, from rajaputra, means only ‘son of a king’ and gives no indication of place, caste, or other identifying markers” in *Marathas, Marauders, and State Formation in Eighteenth-Century India*, (1994; reprint, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998), 183.



The Rajput tale incorporated the *kṣatriya* warrior ethos of the previous century into a new (Rajput) warrior ethos. As discussed in the previous chapter, this Rajput tale consisted of four aspects: 1) fidelity to vows or oaths; 2) the performance of extraordinary acts in battle, often against overwhelming odds; 3) the performance of *satī* or *jauhar* by the women; and 4) the emplotment of the Rajput tale as tragic–heroic. Inscriptions and texts written in the decades that preceded and followed the Delhi Sultanate conquest of the Western Hindūstān clearly contained the first three aspects as part of the *kṣatriya* warrior ethos. The Rajput ethos, therefore, did not originate as a result of Sultanate conquests, but rather incorporated elements from traditional *kṣatriya* warrior ethos. The *kṣatriya* warrior ethos in these Sanskrit inscriptions and texts contained one or two of the four aspects noted above; in contrast, the Rajput tale combined all four aspects of the warrior ethos.

The previous chapter also noted that the fourth aspect of this warrior ethos, the tragic–heroic emplotment of the hero or heroine’s death, did not occur in Sanskrit inscriptions or literary works. Sanskrit literary tradition and Sanskrit literary criticism both prohibited the death of the hero in *mahākāvya* poetry.<sup>358</sup> The tragic–heroic emplotment, in which the audience anticipated and then celebrated the hero’s death, occurred in both the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* and *Kāñhaḍade Prabandh*. These two fifteenth-century texts share a number of similarities and differences. Nayacandra Sūri composed the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* in Sanskrit during the (early) fifteenth century. His text described the fall of the Ranthambhor fort (in Eastern Rajasthan) to ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Khaljī in A.D. 1301. Padmanābha composed the *Kāñhaḍade Prabandh* in the middle of the fifteenth century. The text, written in the late medieval vernacular language of Old

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<sup>358</sup> This will be discussed later in the chapter. Bhāmaha (fourth or fifth century A.D.) and Daṇḍin (seventh century A.D.) both stated that the poet may not kill the *nāyaka* (protagonist) in *mahākāvya* poetry.

Gujarati/Old Western Rajasthani, narrated the fall of Jālōr in Southern Rajasthan to ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Khaljī in A.D. 1311. The *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* included the word *rājput* (as opposed to *rājaputra*) for the first time. Even though the authors composed these two texts in two different languages about sieges in two different parts of Rajasthan, these two texts are the oldest written works to include all four aspects of the Rajput tale.

The *Hammīra Mahākāvya* and *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* contained two possible explanations for the tragic–heroic death of the hero. The authors wrote the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* and *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* a century after the events they described. Neither author mentioned a source for their historical material, but it seems almost certain that these tales circulated in the oral repertoire of bards. The tragic–heroic plot found in the Rajput tale may come from a non–Sanskrit literary oral tradition such as the bardic tradition. This bardic tradition most likely followed a vernacular literary tradition that existed in classical and post–classical Hindūstān of the first millennium. Sanskrit literary critics mentioned the presence of vernacular literatures and their popularity, but focused on Sanskrit works. The literary conventions of this earlier vernacular literature remain unknown.

The tragic–heroic plot also may have reflected the reality of Delhi Sultanate conquest. The Delhi Sultanate conquest interrupted the traditional networks of social and political control. A search for authority, similar to the Sultanate search for authority after the Mongol conquests, may have reformulated the previous *kṣatriya* warrior ethos into a new Rajput identity. The Rajput tale didactically promoted this new Rajput social identity instead of the traditional warrior identity based on *varṇa* and class. The Rajput identity became open to the entire society and people such as lowly merchants, who were well outside of the traditional warrior’s *varṇa* and class, claimed a Rajput warrior identity. The adoption of a Rajput identity among non–traditional

people may be seen in the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* and *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* when two Muslims, Mahimāsāhi and Fīrūza, not only became Rajput but exemplified the Rajput's fidelity, extraordinary feats, performance of *satī*, and tragic–heroic death.

#### THE HAMMĪRA MAHĀKĀVYA

The *Hammīra Mahākāvya* described the Delhi Sultan 'Alā' al-Dīn Khaljī's siege of the Ranthambhor fort (Raṇastambha) and his defeat of its ruler, Hammīra Cāhamāna, in A.D. 1301. Scholars know very little about Nayacandra Sūri or his *Hammīra Mahākāvya*. Nayacandra Sūri composed the text over a century after the campaign he described. According to a colophon in one manuscript, "The present copy was made for the purpose of reading by Nayahaṃsa, a pupil of Jayasiṃha Sūri, at Firuzpur in the month of Śrāvaṇa of the Saṃvat year 1542 (A.D. 1496) [w.f. A.D. 1486?]." <sup>359</sup> The composition of the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* probably preceded Bhāṇḍau Vyās's A.D. 1481 Old Rajasthani poem, *Hammīrāyaṇ* that closely followed the story as presented in the *Hammīra Mahākāvya*, <sup>360</sup> although both authors have composed their work independently from the same oral history. Old Rajasthani texts began to appear around A.D. 1450. <sup>361</sup> Nayacandra Sūri, however, chose to compose the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* in Sanskrit, instead of the vernacular languages of the region and this choice suggests that Nayacandra Sūri composed the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* before A.D. 1450.

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<sup>359</sup> Nilkanth Janardan Kirtane, "The Hammīra Mahākāvya of Nayachandra Sūri" (1879; reprint, introduction in Nayacandra Sūri, *Hammīramahākāvya*, ed. Muni Jinavijaya, Jodhpur: Rājasthān Prācyavidya Pratiṣṭhān, 1993), ii. This date of Saṃvat 1542 (A.D. 1496) is repeated in Chandra Prabha, *Historical Mahākāvyas in Sanskrit* (New Delhi: Shri Bharat Bharati, 1976), 291. The Sanskrit colophon in Muni Jinavijaya's printed version of the text gives the date the manuscript was copied as *saṃvat 1542 varṣe*, "in the Saṃvat year 1542" (*op. cit.*, 144). The word *saṃvat* when written alone in this fashion often—but not always—means Vikrama Saṃvat. If this is a Vikrama Saṃvat year, then the Christian year of A.D. 1496 is off by a decade and should read A.D. 1486.

<sup>360</sup> For a brief description of Bhāṇḍau Vyās's *Hammīrāyaṇ*, see Hiralal Maheshwari, *History of Rājasthānī Literature* (New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 1980), 54-55. Dasharatha Sharma favors the *Hammīrāyaṇa* account over the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* in his analysis of Hammīra Cāhamāna in *Early Chauhān Dynasties*, 123-33.

<sup>361</sup> Maheshwari, *History of Rājasthānī Literature*, 21.

Nayacandra Sūri narrated the royal lineage and exploits of Hammīra's better-known ancestors in the first through fourth cantos.<sup>362</sup> The most famous of these ancestors was Pṛthvīrāja Cāhamāna who defeated the (Muslim) Ghūrid army in A.D. 1191, but died the following year in a second battle against the same army. These chapters described minor skirmishes between the Cāhamāna rulers and Muslim forces as well as Pṛthvīrāja's two larger battles against the Ghūrid army. The chapters foreshadowed and mirrored the final battle between Hammīra (a direct descendent of Pṛthvīrāja Cāhamāna) and Sultan 'Alā' al-Dīn Khaljī (whose Delhi Sultanate empire inherited the mantle of Ghūrid conquest and rule). This foreshadowing continued in the fifth canto when Jaitrasimha lectured his son, Hammīra, on the virtues of good government and right conduct. As discussed below, Hammīra's misplaced trust and lack of good government played a large role in his downfall.

Having presented Hammīra's illustrious genealogy and having foreshadowed his downfall, Nayacandra Sūri then wrote the story of Ranthambhor's fall. According to the ninth canto of the *Hammīra Mahākāvya*, when Hammīra ascended the throne upon Jaitrasimha's death, he immediately embarked upon a *digvijāya* (a cosmological and military conquest of the world, or in this case nearby kingdoms) to establish himself as a king of kings. Succeeding in his conquests and returning to Ranthambhor, Hammīra engaged in a religious sacrifice. At this time Ulugh Khān, the brother of the Delhi Sultan 'Alā' al-Dīn Khaljī and a general in his army, attacked an outlying region of Hammīra's kingdom. Hammīra could not engage Ulugh Khān directly on account of the

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<sup>362</sup> For a more complete summary of the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* see: Kīrtane, "The Hammīra Mahākāvya of Nayachandra Sūri;" Dasharatha Sharma, *Early Chauhān Dynasties*, 123–33; Dasharatha Sharma, "Hammīr Mahākāvya mē aitihya sāmgrī," in *Hammīramahākāvya*, ed. Muni Jinavijaya (Jodhpur: Rājasthān Prācyavidya Pratiṣṭhān, 1993), 22–46 and especially pages 29–37; and Chandra Prabha, *Historical Mahākāvya in Sanskrit*, 291–319. One who can read Hindi has two advantages: Sharma's article referenced above, which is arguably the best of these summaries, and a Hindi translation, *Hammīramahākāvya: Hindi Anuvād*, trans. Nathūlāl Trivedi "Madhukar Śāstri" (Jodhpur: Rājasthān Prācyavidyā Pratiṣṭhān, 1997).

religious sacrifice and sent his ministers, Bhīmasiṃha and Dharmasiṃha, to repel the Delhi Sultanate army. Bhīmasiṃha and Dharmasiṃha succeeded in defeating Ulugh Khān and their army celebrated as they returned to the Ranthambhor fort. Ulugh Khān used the distraction of the celebration to rout the army and killed Bhīmasiṃha. Hammīra, upon learning of Bhīmasiṃha's death, chastised Dharmasiṃha for being blind and impotent to Ulugh Khān's attack and followed this verbal abuse with the order to have him physically blinded and castrated.

The blind, castrated, and chastised Dharmasiṃha befriended Rādha Devī, a dancer in Hammīra's court. Learning about the kingdom's financial difficulties through Rādha Devī, Dharmasiṃha sent a message to Hammīra that if he was reinstated as a minister to the royal court, he would solve the kingdom's lack of revenue. Hammīra reinstated him and Dharmasiṃha mercilessly taxed the population. Only Bhojā, Hammīra's former treasurer who served as a general on Dharmasiṃha's reinstatement, realized the harm Dharmasiṃha was causing. Hammīra, however, upon hearing Bhojā's charge against Dharmasiṃha rebuked him and dismissed him from the royal court. Bhojā and his brother left for Delhi and Hammīra installed Ratipāla in his place as general of the army.

The tenth canto describes Bhojā's meeting with Sultan 'Alā' al-Dīn Khaljī in Delhi and the Delhi Sultanate's first attack on Ranthambhor. Bhojā arrived in Delhi and immediately informed the Sultan about the strain Dharmasiṃha's taxes were placing on the people. He urged the Sultan to use Ratipāla, whom Hammīra had appointed in his place, as a spy and saboteur. 'Alā' al-Dīn immediately dispatched his brother Ulugh Khān and Bhojā to lead an army against Hammīra. Hammīra, however, sent his entire army led by the "the eight warriors" and they defeated Ulugh Khān a second time. While Hammīra praised Ratipāla, the newly promoted general and commander of this

army, four Mongols (including one named Mahimāsāhi) who had recently joined Hammīra’s court noted that Bhojā remained unpunished for his treachery. They asked to lead an expedition against Bhojā and succeeded in capturing Bhojā’s brother and some territory the Sultan had granted to Bhojā along the kingdom’s frontier. While Bhojā escaped capture, he lost everything: his brother, his land, and his rank in the Sultan’s service. ‘Alā’ al-Dīn, meanwhile, organized a third military expedition against Hammīra. He personally led the army, accompanied by Ulugh Khān and his minister Nuṣrat Khān.

With the approach of such a large military force, Hammīra prepared the Ranthambhor fort for a prolonged siege. The eleventh canto of the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* relates how Hammīra once again won the first battle against the Sultanate army. Sultan ‘Alā’ al-Dīn’s minister, Nuṣrat Khān, died in this battle and the Sultanate army retreated to a position near the fort. The canto ends with ‘Alā’ al-Dīn leaving Delhi to oversee the siege of Ranthambhor fort. The twelfth canto describes a number the formal greetings ‘Alā’ al-Dīn and Hammīra exchanged and their mutual desire to fight the other in battle.

The thirteenth canto begins with Rādha Devī, the dancer of the royal court mentioned above, ascending the Ranthambhor ramparts (apparently as a makeshift stage) to entertain Hammīra’s army.

While dancing, she bent her body backwards as if it were a bow  
her heel touched the braided hair and brought the bow to life.  
She obtained a high place in the court and often overlooked the royal court,  
just as a monkey gains height and watches by climbing up and down the vine.  
Breaking the rhythm of the music with the thought clapping her hands,  
she turned her back upon the Śaka lord on the low-ground behind her.  
The Śaka lord said to the superintendent of the court  
“Which archer is able to draw the bow and shoot her?”  
His brother [Ulugh Khān] said “King! Uḍḍān Singh, a prisoner,  
who was captured earlier is equaled by no other here.”

At once the Śaka lord summoned him. Having broken the shackles,  
 he dressed him in both clothes and armor, flattery and rewards.  
 With his body thus prepared, taking up a bow unlike any other,  
 that wicked one immediately shot her like the hunter shoots a doe.  
 With the striking of an arrow, she swooned mortally wounded.  
 She fell on the ground before the fort as if struck by lightning from heaven,  
 for a moment struck with embarrassment.  
 Mahimāsāhi thought about the vulnerability of the archer’s heart.  
 When the (dancer’s) pierced body had been taken away, he said to Hammīra:  
 “If the earth-lord commands me, then I will hit the enemy  
 with an arrow like Dhanañja shot at Rādha.  
 The king said, “When he is killed with whom will I fight in battle?  
 Don’t kill him, Mahimāsāhi, (rather) you should kill the archer Uḍḍān.”  
 With the Śaka lord forbidden as a target  
 Mahimāsāhi, with a depressed mind, cursed and shot an arrow.  
 Immediately that Śaka-lord, trembling on account of (Uḍḍān Singh’s) death,  
 moved the camp further back, abandoning the position in front of the moat.  
*Hammīra Mahākāvya*, XIII, vv. 25–38<sup>363</sup>

As will be discussed later, this passage contains a trope. On the surface, this passage displays the skill of both warriors as well as their parity as opponents. This scene sets the groundwork for the text’s climax: the heroic battle between two equals. Hammīra stopped Mahimāsāhi from slaying Sultan ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Khaljī because he wished to meet and defeat the Sultan in personal warfare. So Mahimāsāhi changed his target to Uḍḍān Singh. This act equated Mahimāsāhi and Uḍḍān Singh as archers while avenging the death of Rādha Devī.

Mahimāsāhi, a Mongol and recent convert to Islam who found refuge with Hammīra, played an interesting role throughout the text. This passage reversed the expected ethnicity of the archers with respect to their masters. Scholars know of many instances in which Hindus fought for Muslim rulers and Muslims fought for Hindu

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<sup>363</sup> Since the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* has not been translated into English, all translations are my own. I would like to express a deep gratitude to Patrick Olivelle for the time he spent reviewing many of these translations. In spite of Professor Olivelle’s excellent instruction, any mistranslation of a verse rests with me alone. All translations are based on Nayacandra Sūri, *Hammīramahākāvya*, ed. Muni Jinavijaya (Jodhpur: Rājasthān Prācyavidya Pratiṣṭhān, 1993).

kings;<sup>364</sup> the question remains, however, as to how this historical reality was reflected in the literary imagination of medieval Indic authors. Aziz Ahmad clearly stated that Hindus and Muslims in medieval South Asian literature composed two separate and distinct societies with different languages, religions, customs, and so forth. One would expect therefore that a Turkish, Afghan, or Persian archer (or at least someone with an identifiable Persianate name) would have killed the dancing Rādha Devī and that a Hindu Rajput warrior would avenge her death. The above passage from the *Hammīra Mahākāvya*—a text that Aziz Ahmad cited and discussed as a Hindu epic of resistance—reversed the expected roles. The reversal of roles in this passage challenges Aziz Ahmad’s construction of Muslim conquest and Hindu resistance as well as the notion that medieval South Asian literature reflected two separate and distinct Hindu and Muslim societies. This is only the first in a series of fascinating and unexpected reversals.

Realizing he was a tad too close to the fort, Sultan ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Khaljī relocated his camp outside the range of Mahimāsāhi’s bow. He now changed tactics and ordered the miners to dig a tunnel beneath the wall of the Ranthambhor fort while he ordered others to fill bags with sand and throw these in the moat. Hammīra successfully foiled both of these plans. Having failed three times in his siege of Ranthambhor, ‘Alā’ al-Dīn

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<sup>364</sup> The *Qubusnāma* and *Siyāstnāma* both praised Maḥmūd of Ghazna for his use of Hindus in the army. The most shocking example of this seems to be Maḥmūd’s use of multi-ethnic troops, including Hindus, in his army. For a discussion of the ethnic composition of Maḥmūd’s army, see C.E. Bosworth, *The Ghaznavids: Their Empire in Afghanistan and Eastern India, 994-1040*, 107–114. The reverse situation, in which Muslims fought for Hindu rulers also occurred. The *Kalpa Sutra* and *Kalakācaryakathā* both contain episodes that depict Muslims fighting for Jain kings or monks. Art historians have worked extensively with these manuscripts since they were illuminated in a style that combined Jain and Persianate styles of miniature painting. See Saryu Doshi, “Sahi Figures in Jain Painting: The Widening Context,” in *Indian Painting: Essays in Honor of Karl J. Khandavala*, ed. B. N. Goswamy (New Delhi: Lalit Kala Akademi, 1995); Karl Khandavala and Moti Chandra, *New Documents in Indian Painting: A Reappraisal* (Bombay: Prince of Wales Museum, 1969); Sarabhai Manilal Nawab, *Masterpieces of the Kalpasutra Paintings* (Ahmedabad: S. M. Nawab, 1956). For a fascinating study of Muslim tombstones in Cambay, including some of Muslims who died fighting against the Delhi Sultanate, see Elizabeth Lambourn, “A Collection of Merits.”



now heeded Bhojā's advice. As previously mentioned, Hammīra dismissed Bhojā from the court for speaking out against Dharmasimha and elevated Ratipāla to his position. Bhojā and his brother left for Delhi, where they informed the Sultan that Hammīra's one weakness laid in his trust of Ratipāla and urged the Sultan to entice Ratipāla into betraying Hammīra.

Having considered this, the watery blackness came incarnate like death.  
The Śaka ruler wanted to form an alliance any way possible.  
The Śaka king then summoned Ratipāla by means of a messenger.  
Hammīra also thought, "What does the Śaka-lord have to say?"  
When Ratipāla departed to bring about the alliance,  
Raṇamalla became furious, (saying/thinking) "Having two hands is pointless."  
When Ratipāla came there, that deceitful Śaka lord  
rose at once and made (Ratipāla) sit in his own seat.  
and he deceptively pleased (Ratipāla) by showing him respect and giving gifts.  
People are fooled by deceivers or they are fooled in continual delusion.  
He sent away the assembly and accompanied only by his brother,  
He said to Ratipāla,

"I am Allāvādīn,<sup>365</sup> the lord of the Śaka family  
by whom many forts—even unconquerable forts—have been conquered.  
If at this moment I go away without making your fort my own,  
then how long until my fame is like vine surrounded by the flame?  
Even the thousand-eyed is unable to take (this fort) by force.<sup>366</sup>  
You, however, have fortunately come to us. Our wish has been fulfilled.  
Act quickly and I will adhere to the following agreement:  
This kingdom will be your very own. I only desire victory (not the fort).  
Let your conduct be bad conduct, your handmaid be treachery  
let your every step be an untruth, let your attendant be anger."

In this way, evil entered into Ratipāla's mind  
which itself was like a fort that is difficult to capture.  
Kali, seizing the fort-like mind of Ratipāla,  
became a vulture desirous of taking over Raṇastambha.  
Having been led to the female apartments, the Śaka-lord saw to his pleasure  
and to instill confidence he made him drink and have sex with his sister.  
Then that wicked one agreed to everything the Śaka lord said.  
Having departed, he reported to (Hammīra) words that would rouse conflict.

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<sup>9</sup> Allāvādīn is the Sanskrit spelling of the name 'Alā' al-Dīn.

<sup>366</sup> The thousand-eyed one is Indra, the conqueror of forts in the Vedas.

“O king, the Śaka lord who is egotistical like Lañka (said)  
“Why doesn't the foolish Hammīra give his daughter to me?  
Am I not Allāvādīn? Why won't he give her to me?  
If he gives the daughter to me, then I won't take the other doe-like women.  
What does it matter to me if a few warriors have died in battle?  
Doesn't the centipede, even in breaking two or three legs, still move about?  
Does he think the treasury will be depleted through these expeditions?  
Does the ocean dry up when the rain cloud takes water from it?”

(Hammīra said), “Enough! The way a person acts shows what he will become.”  
Having admonished him in this way, he said, “I am leaving.”  
(He thought), “I suspect that Raṇamalla is angry for some reason.”  
He knew for certain that (Raṇamalla) carried a strong pride and boastful nature.  
Accompanied by five or six people, he went to his [Hammīra's?] residence.<sup>367</sup>  
Appeasing him immediately, (they asked), “How great could that Śaka lord be?”  
When (Hammīra) had quickly left to appease Raṇamalla,  
Ratipāla came out (of the royal palace) alongside Vīrama.  
From his mouth came the smell of (drinking) alcohol,  
from his arms came the scent of embracing another's woman.  
It became evident that he had not met with just the enemy lord.  
Vīrama notified the king who was in seclusion.

“As the words came out of his mouth, the odor of alcohol came with them.  
From this I know he has become wicked. He is clearly aligned with the enemy.  
Drinking alcohol never creates family, character, intellect,  
modesty, self-respect, devotion to the lord, truth, or purity.  
On account of (drinking alcohol), three (bad things) occur:  
behaving improperly, going to illicit women for sex, eating prohibited foods.  
It is as if a ṛṣi [sage] drank wine, pleased himself with a prostitute,  
consumed cow-flesh, and broke the liṅga [alt., broke the staff].  
If (Ratipāla) is killed by the sword like a lamb,  
then that Śaka-lord has engaged in a meaningless act.”

“Having listened to his words and having contemplated them for a moment  
He [Hammīra] said these famous and rather direct words.  
Sometimes the sun rises in the west.  
'(Ratipāla) has been killed; the fort's destruction come about from fate'—  
How is it possible to stop people from gossiping on these matters?

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<sup>367</sup> Verses 130–38 clearly indicates that Hammīra did not arrive at Raṇamalla's house at this time. It seems that he had set out to meet with Raṇamalla “with five or six people” but was then sidetracked or delayed. When Vīrama comes to Hammīra (a few verses below), the king is clearly alone. This section of the text abounds with vague references on whether words and actions were being said or thought, who was being appeased (Hammīra or Raṇamalla), and how Hammīra left with five or six people, but then is in seclusion when Vīrama spoke to him, only to pick up the five or six people again in verses 130–38.

A fool—even one attended by a retinue—(is) not respected.  
 (People will say), ‘He has killed Ratipāla without considering (the facts).’  
 (They would say), ‘While he is alive in the fort, won’t the Śakas delay?  
 When the lion is around, does anyone play in his cave?’  
 Through this victory (in battle) our future will follow Hanuman’s path.  
 Ratipāla’s path will be his upcoming death here on earth.  
 We should stop this talk. What will happen will happen.  
 How can one stop preventing the future with these Rāvaṇa-like people?’  
*Hammīra Mahākāvya*, XIII, vv. 68–104<sup>368</sup>

Betrayal is a common theme in the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* as illustrated in these passages. Dharmasiṃha, blinded and castrated, betrayed Hammīra by instituting a heavy tax to raise dissent. When Bhojā tried to warn Hammīra about Dharmasiṃha’s plans, Hammīra dismissed him from the court. Seeking refuge in Delhi, Bhojā betrayed his former ruler when he urged ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Khaljī to attack and to court Ratipāla. ‘Alā’ al-Dīn finally followed Bhojā’s advice and Ratipāla betrayed Hammīra, sowing dissent and causing defections among Hammīra’s soldiers. Just as Bhojā realized Dharmasiṃha’s plan to ruin Hammīra, Vīrama also realized that Ratipāla had debased himself while meeting with the Sultan and left Hammīra’s service. Hammīra responded to Vīrama just as he did to Bhojā: he facilitated those betraying him while he ignored those loyal to him.

As the small meeting of five or six ministers broke for the evening, Ratipāla departed and continued to follow the Sultan’s advice to “Let your conduct be bad conduct, let your handmaid be treachery, let your every step be an untruth, let your attendant be anger” (*Hammīra Mahākāvya*, XIII v. 78). Ratipāla’s tactics have already produced some of the desired results as Devalla Devī entered the court to speak to her father.<sup>369</sup> Hearing that the siege will end if she married ‘Alā’ al-Dīn, she begged her

<sup>368</sup> Translated by the author from Nayacandra Sūri, *Hammīramahākāvya*, ed. Muni Jinavijaya.

<sup>369</sup> It is tempting to identify Hammīra’s daughter, Devalla Devī, with Deval (or Duwāl) Rānī in Amīr Khusrau’s *Devāl Rānī va Khizr Khān*. This identification would be in error, as Amīr Khusrau clearly states that Devāl Rānī was the daughter of Bhojā (III), the king of Gujarat.

father to arrange the wedding. Hammīra, although touched by his daughter's sentiment, refused to permit the wedding. With this matter settled, Hammīra left for Raṇamalla's house along with the five or six attendants that escorted him earlier.

Unknown to Hammīra, Ratipāla has already arrived there.

At this time, Ratipāla who was sowing dissent quickly went to Raṇamalla's house and spoke to him.  
“Brother! Why are you sitting so happily? Run away quickly!  
The king (Hammīra) approaches to arrest those who used to loyally serve him.”  
(Raṇamalla asked), “How could such treachery come about in a single night?”  
Ratipāla once more cooed with these enticing words,  
“If he along with five or six people approaches your house in the evening, then (you will know) the truth of my words.” Having said this, he left.  
Just then he saw the sight of the earth-lord (Hammīra) approaching.  
He became convinced. He fled from the fort and joined with the enemy.  
Ratipāla also departed from the fort (that is) lofty like the sky and heavens and fell into the Śaka-lord's house that is like the abode of hell.

Having seen their actions, (Hammīra) thought “Shame on this age of Kali.”  
The king asked Jāhaḍa, “How much food is there in the warehouse?”  
[Jāhaḍa thought]“If I say, ‘Nothing (*nāstīti*), then surely he will sue for peace.”  
Thinking, “I will continue to exist (if there is) a lack of provisions,” he said,  
“There's nothing.”

Even this foolish servant acted in the best interest of the enemy.  
Did Jāhaḍa not understand what this simple declaration meant?

*Hammīra Mahākāvya*, XIII, vv. 130–138<sup>370</sup>

Jāhaḍa's response, cowardly and self-serving, is discussed in detail at the end of this chapter. Jāhaḍa falsely claimed that the Ranthambhor fort lacked the provisions for sustained siege; this lie, however, did not produce the intended result. Instead of suing for peace, Hammīra decided in a fitful night of sleep that the women would perform *jauhar* (self-immolation in the fire) while the warriors prepared to enter battle. As dawn broke, Hammīra sent for Mahimāsāhi.

Then that earth-husband, having arisen at dawn, summoned  
his own brother, the lord (Vīrama), and Mahimāsāhi:

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<sup>370</sup> Translated by the author from Nayacandra Sūri, *Hammīramahākāvya*, ed. Muni Jinavijaya.

“We wish to liberate our lives. We are doing so to protect our homes. This is the dharma of the *kṣatriyas*. Not even at the end of time is it alterable. He alone is a *kṣatri* who, at the end of life, is able to roar (like a lion). Is it not said that king Suyodhana [Duryodhana] is an example in this regard? You are from a different region. They are not besieging to put you in harm. Wherever you wish to go—anywhere you say—we will lead you there.”

(It was as if Mahimāsāhi) was stuck in the heart by the king's words. He swooned with dizziness (and) with anger as if hung from a great height. The talkative Mahimā(sāhi) simply said, “Then let it be so,” and left for home. He picked up the sword and slew his entire family, then returned and said:

“My wife (has) many regrets about departing from you and your brother. This beloved of Allah said with a sobbing voice ‘(Bring) the beloved to me. The beloved who is so great that for years we have lived in this refuge.’ We remembered our enemy’s contempt, (but more so) our happiness here—hundreds of thousands of joyous moments attained by your graciousness such that we didn’t know whether the sun was rising or setting. ‘To not see you at this moment!’ she said. ‘If only the king would come, it would ease the regret and our minds will be content.’”

(Hammīra and Vīrama) were pleased and they soon arrived at the house. They were awash with suffering and regret by the deaths they saw. The king (thought) he had been requested (to come) by Mahimāsāhi’s wife. Leaning upon his brother's arm and shoulder, he went toward the house. Approaching the house [from the courtyard?] the king entered the house at last. It was like the *Kuruṣetra*.<sup>371</sup> He immediately noticed the (severed) arms and legs that along with the children’s heads—even the females—bobbed in a sea of blood. The king, upon seeing this sight, fainted onto the earthen floor. He cried streams of tears when he realized his impact on the families of others. Sobbing, he croaked these words to Mahimāsāhi:

O head of the Kamboja family! Whose house is filled with such a famous family!  
O you born of goodness like no other! O hero of opulent sorrow!  
O whose house is one filled with the *kṣatriya* vow! O devotee of the twice-born!  
In what manner will we, even in giving our lives, be free from your debt?

*Hammīra Mahākāvya*, XIII, vv. 148–164<sup>372</sup>

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<sup>371</sup> The *Kuruṣetra* was the battleground upon which the epic battle of the *Mahābhārata* occurred.

<sup>372</sup> Translated by the author from Nayacandra Sūri, *Hammīramahākāvya*, ed. Muni Jinavijaya.

This passage about the Mongol Muslim Mahimāsāhi stands in stark contrast to the previous passages on the (Hindu) royal ministers Dharmasiḥa, Bhojā, and Jāhaḍa. Hammīra offered Mahimāsāhi and his family safe passage, stating that the upcoming battle was between himself and the Sultan and did not concern Mahimāsāhi. As discussed above and in the text, this was simply not true. Mahimāsāhi and three other Mongol Muslims came to Ranthambhor in order to seek asylum from the Delhi Sultanate. Mahimāsāhi even recalled this when he quotes his wife as saying, “Bring the beloved (Hammīra) to me. The beloved who is so great that for years we have lived in this refuge.” Mahimāsāhi then explained how they remembered their enemy’s contempt and their happiness at Ranthambhor. Nevertheless, Hammīra sent Mahimāsāhi away to gather his family and to seek refuge away from the battle. Mahimāsāhi’s desire to fight with Hammīra was so strong that it was as if Mahimāsāhi was stuck in the heart by Hammīra’s arrow-like words. Returning home he slew his wife and family and returned to the court with the ruse of requesting Hammīra’s presence on behalf of his wife. Hammīra and Vīrama arrived at the house to behold the sight of Mahimāsāhi’s slain family and they now swooned and fainted. Hammīra recognized Mahimāsāhi’s act of slaying his family and reversed his previous decision: he now allowed Mahimāsāhi to fight alongside the Rajputs.

Hammīra may have swooned and cried since this is the first time a warrior displayed loyalty over personal gain, but a more important event occurred when Mahimāsāhi was transformed from a warrior who could not fight in the upcoming battle to a (Rajput) warrior who exemplified fidelity as well as martial prowess. Nayacandra Sūri highlighted this transformation through his placement of this scene in the text. Nayacandra wedged Mahimāsāhi’s act of slaying the family after Hammīra’s decision to have *jauhar* performed and before his description of the women’s *jauhar*.

Mahimāsāhi's act was clearly *jauhar*-like in effect: the honor of his wife and even his daughter was preserved when he slew them with his sword. Again, this was not *jauhar* nor would the medieval reader have expected such an act from a Muslim, but its position in the text following Hammīra's decision and preceding the actual *jauhar* of Hammīra's wives and daughter, clearly linked Mahimāsāhi's slaying of his family to the act of *jauhar*. Hammīra recognized Mahimāsāhi's act as *jauhar*-like, praised his virtue and loyalty, and then permitted him to fight in the upcoming battle like a Rajput.

Mahimāsāhi's slaying of his family immediately preceded the *jauhar* of Hammīra's family. This section, like previous sections, began with Hammīra searching for Jāhaḍa, the minister in charge of the granary and treasury.

Having viewed the amount of food at the storehouse,  
the earth-lord then returned (and) asked Jāhaḍa, "How much is there?"  
The king spoke based on his own knowledge, "I have gone (to the storehouse.)  
May both destruction and rebuke fall you, who caused death of the families.

Then that pragmatic (king), with the well-disciplined mind,  
Offered the door to liberation in the fire to the beloved residents.  
That one whose greatest dharma is in giving, revered as Vishnu/Krishna,  
the liberator of sorrow, sat for a moment by himself on the Padmasāra's bank.  
The chief (queen) Auraṅga Devī, who was one of the heavenly ornaments,  
she (and) the upright and righteous ones bathed there and bowed to the king.  
The gold earrings in their ears shone at night  
like the world-conquering *cakras* [discs] of the lovers Kṛṣṇa and Kandarpa.  
Pure as a bud (the queens) were more splendid than the musky *tilaka*-flower.  
The arrow (placed) on the bow by Cupid in this world united the three worlds.  
The dangling pearl glittered in the nose of another (queen)  
like the glittering water drop on the sesame plant.  
A great vine of pearl garlands shone on their chest.  
They fell and hung like a string of laughter from both corners of the mouth.  
(The pearls) strung in a necklace draped on a blue *dukūla* cloth  
were like the arm that quivers with love and a small amount of anticipation.  
Some of the women were surrounded by a rainbow [Indra's bow]  
(coming from) the beams of light of past action from the fingers of both hands.  
The *cakora* bird's face felt with fear the destruction of the broken (necklace).  
The ankle (bracelets) on the feet of the other (queens) shone with agitation.  
The resigned king, having cut the largest of his braids,

dispersed it to them as if he formed his love into the braids.  
 His daughter Devalla Devī embraced him in her arms,  
 weeping and sobbing continuously, she left with great difficulty.  
 (Hammīra) said if a daughter wants to be better, then she (should be) like you.  
 (Your) greatness rises like the (greatness) Gaurī (showed) to Janaka.  
 If that dying (warrior) in heaven having the form of a hunter is hunting,  
 then show yourself before him by committing (*jauhar*).  
 The beauties pondering that braided hair made the commitment in their heart.  
 They thought about entering the formidable fire [like] a blazing Dhanañjaya.

*Hammīra Mahākāvya*, XIII, vv. 169–185<sup>373</sup>

As Hammīra prepared to initiate the rites of *jauhar* he sought out Jāhaḍa. This time, however, Hammīra personally visited the granary and knew the true state of the provisions. This, of course, leads to the question of why Hammīra did not simply wait out the siege instead of resorting to *jauhar* and death on the battlefield. Nayacandra Sūri did not address this point; instead, he quickly described the last meeting between Hammīra, the queens, and his daughter. Nayacandra Sūri justified this act of *jauhar* by having the women state that they needed to die before the men in order to fend off their husband’s attention to the *apsaras* (celestial nymphs awaiting the warrior in heaven).<sup>374</sup> The *jauhar* was followed by a description of the ensuing battle. As in most of the other translated passages, this passage began again with Hammīra meeting Jāhaḍa.

“Vīrama is loyal,” (he thought), so he placed Jājadeva in charge of the kingdom, (even though he had been) chastised by Vīrama on the ill-reported danger. Having conferred the kingdom to (his brother) Jājadeva, the king was pleased. The sleepy king was dreaming, “Where (should) the treasures be hidden?” The Padmasāra [a lotus pond] came in a dream and spoke to the sleeping king: If the treasure is thrown inside me, the dying will not reveal it to the *mlecchas*. Ratipāla and the others, all of them who left in treachery— They are like deer; I am like the fort— I cannot be injured by them (the enemy).

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<sup>373</sup> Translated by the author from Nayacandra Sūri, *Hammīramahākāvya*, ed. Muni Jinavijaya.

<sup>374</sup> This is in verse 186, which is not translated in the passage above because the verse was written in a meter different from the other verses of the chapter. This suggests the verse was composed at a later date and inserted into the narrative.



Due to the command of the sleepless king, Jāhaḍa gathered all the valuables and (threw) it in the lake.” He [Jāhaḍa] said to him, “[Now] what should I do?” Virama, (previously) spoken to by Hammīra, on [Hammīra’s] command he severed [Jāhaḍa’s] head as if it were a gourd and tossed it aside on the ground.

Then at night on Sunday, the sixth bright day of the month of Śravaṇa, anxious for gaining fame in heaven and beholding his wives in heaven, the king devoted himself to glorious battle with nine warriors who incarnated the warrior-ethos so much that they were like proud kings. Having heard the utterance, “Hammīra has come,” the valorous Śaka lord, as well as the army, engaged the enemy there [before the fort]. One warrior was in front of his king, he was Vīrama the diadem of the warriors. He shone like the magnificent Campa lord of the Kaurava kings. That diadem of the heroes with drawn bow produced a shower of arrows that momentarily created a panic within the enemy army. The enemy (was like) a herd of trembling black antelope from the lion-roars. The one known as Singh, like the lion, pounced on the enemy here. The one justly known as Ṭāka Gaṅgādhara, who (now lives) below, (threw) disarray onto the opponents with arrows of burning fire. The one rightly called Rājada, or the one of natural beauty, bore the *cakra*. The shining mouths of that lotus paid its respect to the Yavanas by withering. The four also shone: their Mudgala (Mongol) arrows shone with power. (In response) the four divisions (of the enemy army) regrouped to defeat them. In the circle (of enemies), Kṣetrasiṅgh fulfilled the duty of the Paramāra family and led more than a hundred of the (enemies) as guests to Pretapati [Yāma].<sup>375</sup> He bore the mace against the enemy like a reflection of (Yāma’s) messenger.<sup>376</sup> The Śakas trembled with fear when the warriors roared like lions. What sort of goddess is Śrī, such that the king desires to marry her? Vīrama came to heaven before the king in order to see. The heroes even in heaven (were) like the despondent amīrs (*hammīrāḥ*). They went to heaven before the king, wishing to remain close at hand.

When Mahimāsāhi appeared to fall on account of the enemy lords, the earth-lord Hammīra then girded himself for battle. (The enemy was) cleansed by a shower of arrows that streamed forth. There should be no fear, however, (that) this is the end of this story. As Hammīra (possessed) self-control, he killed nearly a hundred thousand. As the sword slashed the enemy, the battlefield looked like a bloody pond. The Śakas on all sides were surrounded by Hammīra’s fire-arrows, that they thought, “We are surrounded by the hot rays of the sun.” That brave one leapt into the herd of the enemies.

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<sup>375</sup> Yama is the Hindu god of death.

<sup>376</sup> Yama’s messenger, *yāmadūtaka*, carries a mace.

The army of antelope sought the safety of friends against that conquering lion.  
 Whether an elephant driver, foot soldier, cavalryman or charioteer,  
 he struck with that (sword) in such a way [as if] he were painted by masters.  
 The hero (was) a cloud at the end of the hot season, raining a shower of arrows.  
 The king tormented the thirsty mouths of the enemy.  
 Through the strong cascade of arrows he confounded the rutting elephant  
 and the one who mounted it, causing their death with his frenzy (*mada*).<sup>377</sup>  
 Ratipāla and the other soldiers cried out in terror.  
 The arrows of (Hammīra) traveled far and scattered the enemy.  
 The earth-king cut the archer, the bow, and the string surpassing even Arjuna  
 in enemies, in learning, and in knowledge of the bow.  
 The people abandoned their life on hearing the twang of his bowstring.  
 The enemy didn't even have time to feel the pain of his arrow.  
 The sword flashed in his hand. It looked like a harvested field of sesame plants  
 from the enemy heads, the deceased bodies, and the uprooted (ground).  
 The bodyguards of that Śaka-king shot a volley of arrows.  
 (Hammīra's) face turned away in a flash, like the prostitute from the poor man.  
 How many breasts did the king cause to fill with arrows?  
 How much *dūrva* and *lāva* grass [shafts] were stuck in their breasts?

*Hammīra Mahākāvya*, XIII vv. 190–221<sup>378</sup>

This passage began with the execution of Jāhaḍa, the last to betray Hammīra and the individual Hammīra (or Nayacandra Sūri) ultimately blamed for the fall of Ranthambhor. As Hammīra and his warriors entered battle, each warrior fell to the Delhi Sultanate soldiers. The last three soldiers to fall were Vīrama, Mahimāsāhi, and Hammīra. Vīrama died to prepare heaven for Hammīra's arrival. Mahimāsāhi fell in battle, but did not die; unconscious from his wounds, Mahimāsāhi proved his loyalty once more at the end of the text. Hammīra, now the last remaining warrior, fought valiantly and finally died on the battlefield. The order of these deaths, in which Mahimāsāhi fell *after* Vīrama is significant. Nayacandra Sūri placed Mahimāsāhi second in the text next to Hammīra and arguably the greatest among the warriors. When Uḍḍān Singh shot and killed the dancer, Rādha Devī, Mahimāsāhi retaliated by slaying Uḍḍān Singh. When Ratipāla defeated the Delhi Sultanate's expedition led by Ulugh

<sup>377</sup> *Mada*, literally means "rut;" thus, Hammīra was also in a battle frenzy like a rutting elephant.

<sup>378</sup> Translated by the author from Nayacandra Sūri, *Hammīramahākāvya*, ed. Muni Jinavijaya.

Khān and Bhojā, Mahimāsāhi chastised Hammīra for not punishing Bhojā. He and the other Mongol warriors raided Bhojā's territory and captured his brother. Ratipāla, Raṇamalla, and Jāhaḍa betrayed Hammīra the very moment their loyalty was needed the most, but Mahimāsāhi once released from Hammīra's service slew his family to prove his loyalty to Hammīra. As Hammīra's soldiers succumbed to the enemy soldiers in the ensuing battle, Mahimāsāhi outlasted them all and fell just before Hammīra.

Scholars seem to dismiss Mahimāsāhi's presence in the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* as an interesting footnote or an oddity of the text. A close reading of the text shows that Mahimāsāhi was much more than an interesting footnote—he was an integral part of the story. This contradicts Aziz Ahmad's reading of medieval South Asian literature as two distinct and separate traditions: (Muslim) epics of conquest and (Hindu) epics of resistance. Aziz Ahmad specifically mentioned the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* as an example of the latter; yet, the presence and the active role of Mahimāsāhi in the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* suggests that the categories of epic and resistance in medieval South Asian literature were not as separate and distinct as Aziz Ahmad believed. One might claim that the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* was a unique text in this regard. Such claims, however, would be erroneous since another fifteenth-century text parallels the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* in some unexpected but interesting ways. An analysis of both texts leads to some striking discoveries.

#### THE KĀṆHAḌADE PRABANDH

Padmanābha composed the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* sometime around A.D. 1455.<sup>379</sup>

The text, therefore, was roughly contemporaneous with the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* which

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<sup>379</sup> V. S. Bhatnagar, translator's introduction to *Padmanābha Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh: India's Greatest Patriotic Saga of Medieval Times*, trans. V.S. Bhatnagar (New Delhi: Aditya Prakashan, 1991), vii; Maheshwari, *History of Rājasthāni Literature*, 53; and listed as A.D. 1456 in I. M. P. Raeside, "A Gujarati Bardic Poem: The *Kāṇhaḍade-Prabandha*," in *The Indian Narrative: Perspectives and Patterns*, ed. Christopher Shackle and Rupert Snell (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1992), 138.

was composed sometime in the first half of the fifteenth century. Like Nayacandra Sūri who composed the *Hammīra Mahākāvya*, Padmanābha composed the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* nearly a century and a half after the events he described. It seems likely that Padmanābha (like Nayacandra Sūri) also used oral accounts and bardic tales that circulated over this century as the basis for his tale. Padmanābha, however, chose to compose the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* in the vernacular Hindavī language of Old Gujarati/Old Western Rajasthani. Padmanābha, therefore, followed a vernacular literary tradition rather than the Sanskrit literary traditions that Nayacandra Sūri followed.

The *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* described ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Khaljī’s raid against the Somanātha temple (discussed previously in chapter two) and his siege and conquest of the Jālōr fort in southern Rajasthan. Padmanābha began the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* with the Delhi Sultan ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Khaljī’s military raid of Gujarat in A.D. 1299.

At that time, the ruler of Gurjaradharā was Sāraṅgadeva. He humiliated Mādhava Brāhmaṇa, and this very fact became the cause of conflict. Mādhava, who was the favourite Pradhāna of the Rājā, was inconsolably offended. He gave up food, and vowed that he would not take meals on the soil of Gujarāt, till he had brought the Turks there...<sup>380</sup>

Mādhava set out for Delhi, taking with him many priceless presents. After crossing difficult passes and many regions (*deśa*), he, at last, entered Yoginīnagara (Delhi). First he met Sultān’s Minister (Diwān), through whom the Sultān learnt the truth of the whole matter about Mādhava. Alāvādīn was a mighty Sultān indeed whose sovereignty extended over many regions (*deśa*).

Mādhava presented a drove of mares (*lāsa*) to the Emperor. Amīrs and Umarās present there then submitted to the Sultan:

“Gujarat’s senior Pradhāna (*Muqardam*), Mādhava by name, pays obeisance to the Pātsāh.”

The Sultan took notice of the foreign Pradhāna, gave him due honour, and asked:

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<sup>380</sup> Translated by V. S. Bhatnagar from *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandha*, 2. All quoted passages to the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* refer to this translation unless otherwise noted. The reader should note that V. S. Bhatnagar often inserts himself into his translation of the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh*.

“Tell me how is Gujarat?” How are the conditions in Dīvagarh and Māngrol? and also in Jhālāvāḍa and Sorāṭha: the Rāuts of these places are said to be brave.”

Upon this Mādhava Brāhmaṇa submitted in humble tones:

“The *kshatriya dharma* has vanished from there. Rāo Karṇade has become insane and has developed infatuation for his body. Daily he takes aphrodisiacal Vachhanāga, and struts about with an unsheathed sword in hand! No bodyguard dares to be near him. At meal time, apprehensive for their safety, the cooks (*sūār*) put before him wooden spoons and serving vessels, but not of metal, lest he strikes them down in anger. The Rāi first humiliated me. Then he killed my brother Keśava, and even took away his wife and kept her in his palace. Such a provocation is beyond toleration! I will wage war against Gujarāt and pray you to send an army with me for the purpose. I will attack the Hindūs, drive them into jungles, killing and enslaving them! Your Majesty, consider me of brutal and dangerous disposition! Either I will conquer Gujarāt by force or perish.”<sup>381</sup>

Mādhava and Ulugh Khān led the Sultanate army into a number of battles, sacking Aṇahillapaṭṭana and nearby towns until they arrived at the Somanātha temple on the Gujarati seashore. A fierce battle occurred at the Somanātha temple.

... The chiefs, in charge of the defense of Lord Somanātha (Maḍhavi Chaurāsī), stayed on in the temple precinct.

Suddenly, there was a loud clamour, and elephants came rushing on even as the Rājput̃s got ready to meet the blows from all sides. Mad for fight, each one more keen than the other to return life to its great giver, as if it were some borrowed thing, the brave warriors rushed forward and surrounded the armour wearing Habśhīs. In a fierce mood they carried destruction among the enemy ranks, humbling their vain pride. They slew Mādhava Muhta also who was the root cause of the catastrophe.<sup>382</sup>

Once again the theme of betrayal appears in a Rajput text. The ruler insulted Mādhava Brāhmaṇa, just as Hammīra insulted Bhojā, and Mādhava sought retribution by aligning himself with the Delhi Sultan and leading an expedition against the king. Even though the campaign was successful in looting the capital, towns, and the Somanātha temple, Mādhava died before he could enjoy his rewards.

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<sup>381</sup> Translated by V. S. Bhatnagar from Padmanābha, *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandha*, 2–3.

<sup>382</sup> Translated by V. S. Bhatnagar from Padmanābha, *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandha*, 9.

The Delhi Sultanate army entered Gujarat by marching east of the Aravalli range in Rajasthan; however, the army returned by marching northwards (west of the Aravalli range) and into the territory of Kāṇhaḍ De, ruler of Jālōr. At this juncture, the Persian and Hindavī sources diverge in their accounts. According to the Hindavī *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh*, Somanātha's consorts appeared to Kāṇhaḍ De in a dream and informed him that the Delhi Sultanate army was transporting the Somanātha *liṅga* through his lands. Kāṇhaḍ De attacked Ulugh Khān, recaptured the *liṅga*, and reinstalled it in the Somanātha temple as well as other regional temples. The Persian sources described a rebellion that occurred in the Sultanate camp after this campaign. When Ulugh Khān began to collect the sultan's share of the loot from the soldiers, four "New Muslims," a Persian term that clearly referred to Mongols, led a rebellion. Ulugh Khān barely escaped this rebellion, but managed to gain control of his troops and turned them against the four Mongol rebels. These four Mongols, including the one who would become known as Mahimāsāhi in the *Hammīra Mahākāvya*, sought refuge with Hammīra Cāhamāna of Ranthambhor.

In retaliation for Kāṇhaḍ De's attack, Sultan 'Alā' al-Dīn Khaljī led an army against Jālōr. The Sultan and his army arrived in Siwāna, a region to the northeast of Jālōr, which was ruled by Kāṇhaḍ De's relative Satala.<sup>383</sup> The Sultanate army won a number of small skirmishes in nearby towns. Since Satala could not defeat the Sultanate army on the battleground, he retreated to the Siwāna fort and prepared for a siege.

It was thus that the Hindū ruler of Siwānā defended the fort while the Sultān continued to press the siege, both firm on their resolve. But after seven years long siege, the fort was at last wrested from the Chauhāna ruler, though only after a terrible fight.

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<sup>383</sup> Amīr Khuṣrau described the Sultanate conquest of Siwāna in the *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ*. A discussion of this campaign may be found in chapter two.

In the fort, during the siege, song and dance performances were held daily, and melodious strains of *Vīṇā* and the beat of *Mṛidaṅga* were heard and savoured. Everyday festivities were held and the dancers (*Pāula*) danced. Ever new festal celebrations were held. *Sātala* would sit in the oriel, adorned with three gold finials, with *chāmars* being waved on both sides. There, seated on a throne in his camp, the *Pātasāh* would observe the spectacle. Once, order was given to summon the archers. The Emperor said, “Anyone amongst you who would knock down that performance on the fort will be amply rewarded!”

There was one amongst the archers, *Habākhū Mīr*, a bond servant (*bandā*) of *Malik Imād-ul-Mulk*, so skilled that even if he shot an arrow blindfolded, it was no miss. The arrows shot from his bow could bring down a living thing two *kos* distant! He took the bow in his hand, took aim, and let flew the arrow. It hit the young dancer: the blood spurted from her body like a fountain, and she fell down dead on the ground! The happy scene was rudely disturbed. *Sātala Chauhāna* was angrier than ever and he called an archer whose arrow never missed the mark.

*Rāma Singh Rāut* (*Rājput*), provoked and wrathful, requested for *bīḍā* to be given to him as he exclaimed:

“Our honoured Lord *Sātala Singh*, by virtue of your might and glory I will destroy the camp of the *Mlechchhas*!”

So saying he took an arrow and fitted it to the bow-string. As the arrow leapt from the bow with a loud twang of the string, it pierced *Mīr Habā Khān*’s shoulder, shearing it off, and then thrust into the *Sultān*’s throne. Seeing the Turk’s body lying on the ground, the *Sultān* immediately shifted from that place. Fear of death gripped all and sundry that more arrows might come bringing death and destruction.<sup>384</sup>

This scene should seem familiar. It seems quite plausible that dancers and musicians performed in besieged forts to raise morale of the troops. Performing on ramparts provided a raised stage for the dancers and simultaneously insulted the enemy by highlighting the ineffectiveness of their siege. While performances on the ramparts may have occurred, the Sultanate archer shooting the dancer and the *rāut* equaling this feat suggests a literary trope rather than a historical reality. These episodes in the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* (HMK) and the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* (KP) paralleled each other to a remarkable degree. *Uḍḍān Singh* (HMK) and *Habākhū Mīr* (KP), whose skills are unmatched in the Sultanate camp, both shot the dancer with a single arrow.

<sup>384</sup> Translated by V. S. Bhatnagar from *Padmanābha, Kāṇhaḍade Prabandha*, 40–41.

The dancer in both texts fell to the ground. Hammīra (HMK) and Satala (KP) both sought out the only archer able to equal this feat. Mahimāsāhi (HMK) and Rāma Singh Rāut (KP) kill their counterparts in the Sultanate army with a single arrow, replicating their adversary’s martial ability. Both episodes concluded with Sultan ‘Alā’ al-Dīn prudently deciding to move his camp a bit further from the fort.

Aziz Ahmad mentioned many Hindu epics of resistance in which Muslim Sultans invested a fort and sought to obtain a beautiful Hindu princess. The *Padmāvat* remains the best known of these tales. The tale begins when ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Khaljī heard about the of the beauty (*jamāl*) of Ratan Singh’s queen, Padminī.<sup>385</sup> Desiring to glimpse her and confirm her beauty, the Sultan traveled to the Chittaur fort. Padminī, however, refused to present herself to a Muslim and remained in seclusion. After much negotiation, a deal was reached in which the Sultan waited below her balcony and viewed her reflection in a mirror. ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Khaljī, now infatuated, had to possess her and laid a siege against the Chittaur fort. As the end approached, Padminī and the other women performed *jauhar*. The *Hammīra Mahākāvya* presented a variation of this theme in Ratipāla’s (false) request on behalf of the Sultan to marry Hammīra’s daughter Devalla Devī. The *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* contained an unusual twist to this type of tale, when Fīrūza, the daughter of ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Khaljī approached her father and said:

“My dear father, I have a request to make: Vīramade is blithe and attractive. In beauty, appearance, and age, in all these he is equally adorable. You arrange to marry me to Kāṇhaḍade’s prince.”

The Patshah answered:

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<sup>385</sup> The identification of Padmāvat’s beauty with the word *jamāl* was quite intentional. The *Padmāvati* was not a historical tale (contrary to a good portion of present-day scholarship that wants to believe otherwise). As noted in chapter four, *jamāl* (beauty) was one of the three attributes of the Divine found in Sufi tales and the *Padmāvati* was actually written as a Sufi tale. An analysis and translation and discussion of its Sufi elements (including the concept of *jamāl*) can be found in Muḥammad Jaisī, *Padmāvati*, trans. A. G. Shirref, Bibliotheca Indica, no. 267 (Calcutta: Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1944). A brief grammar, portion of text, and translation can also be found in Lakshmi Dhar, *Padmāvati: A Linguistic Study of the 16th Century Hindi (Avadhi)* (London: Luzac and Co., 1949).



“My good daughter do not be mad and talk like that. You are mistaken in your enthusiasm for him (Vīrama). You know well that marriage between a Hindū and a Turk does not take place. In Yoginīnagar (Delhi) there are Muslim princes and distinguished Khāns. Whomsoever you like amongst them, I will call him and you may marry him.”

But the princess replied:

“My dear father, I pray you kindly listen to me. There is a great difference between the Hindūs and Turks: Hindūs alone know how to enjoy good things of life, like Indra. They are wise in speech and conversation—sweet and intelligent at the same time. They have such a variety of food preparations and they bedeck themselves with finery and ornaments in a most beautiful and graceful manner. I have no desire to wed a Turk even if I may have to remain unmarried throughout my life. Either, my dear father, I will marry Vīramade, or else I shall end my life!”

When the Princess spoke these words, frank and alarming, the Sultān immediately sent for Golhaṇa Sāh and told him in many ways what precisely to tell Kānhaḍade. The Sultān bade him to proceed to Jālōr immediately and convey this message to Kānhaḍade Rājā: “O Kānha, end this conflict by nuptials between your son and my daughter.”<sup>386</sup>

Entering the Jālōr fort, Fīrūza revealed to Kānhaḍ De and Vīram De that she was Vīrama De’s wife in six previous lives. In her last (sixth) life, she performed sorcery on a cow fetus and on account of this sin was reborn as a Turk. Vīram De accepted their previous marriages yet refused to marry her since she was a Turk; furthermore, he vowed never to look upon her face again. Fīrūza, rejected and dejected, returned to Delhi.

The Jālōr fort, like the Ranthambhor fort, fell due to an act of treachery from one of the Kānhaḍ De’s soldiers.

Earlier, when Sīh Malik was kept in confinement in the fort prison, he had made acquaintance with the driver of the ladies carriage. He now sent for him. Vīkā, the *Sejavāl* [guard], agreed for a secret meeting with Sīh Malik at Nīṭaraḍakanī reservoir. At midnight, they secretly met at the appointed place. Vīkā said, “Do not think of retiring from Jālōr. I will tell you the right thing, a certainty it would be. If the Emperor promises to grant me the fort, I will reveal the secret of the fort and let the troops in.”

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<sup>386</sup> Translated by V. S. Bhatnagar from Padmanābha, *Kānhaḍade Prabandha*, 56–57.

With Rūdau Bhāila (a relation of Vīkā) as guarantor, solemn agreement was made. “If you do as told, then a *farmān* [order] bestowing the fort upon you will be given soon,” the Malik said as he left the rendezvous.<sup>387</sup>

Such burning avarice had possessed the *Sejavāl* that he did not feel any feeling of remorse for committing such a heinous crime. Indeed, if we seriously think, we will find nothing so base or lowly as greed, and in fact I will even worship one who dies untainted by greed.

That very night, Sīh Malik gave a close long gown (*qābāh*) to the *Sejavāl* and held out promise of many other rewards, besides giving him gold *tankās* [coins]. Thereafter, he asked the troops to get ready and set them on the move. He was now confident that he would capture the fort in a short time.<sup>388</sup>

There, at the rear side of the fort, the *Sejavāl*, after reassuring Malik Kamāluddīn, was guiding the Turkī army, which followed him. By midnight, the Malik had brought up his troops on the fort with great speed.

Leaving the enemy troops there, Vīkamaśī walked swiftly to his house and broke the news to his wife. But Hīrā Devī, his wife, burst out angrily:

“Thou base and contemptible fellow!” She cried, “What face thou wilt show tomorrow! Base creature! *Thou hast brought calamity upon one by whose kindness we have lived so long in comfort and plenty* [Emphasis added]. For thine own selfish self, thou hast destroyed the fort, casting off all sense of shame! While others were busy in defending the fort night and day, here a wild cat has lapped up their milk!”

That lady standing there was pouring out her anger when she saw the enemy troops ascending the fort. Unable to control herself, she struck her husband with a *trambālū* killing him then and there. His lifeless body fell upon the ground—such strength had filled the limbs of that lady.

Hīrā Devī left the place and went inside the fort. She went straight to Rāval Kānhaḍade and told him respectfully:

“Our lord, kindly do pay heed to me! The *Sejavāl*, my husband, has betrayed the fort.”<sup>389</sup>

Most sieges succeeded through acts of betrayal. Vīkā’s betrayal in admitting an advance guard of Sultanate forces, while reprehensible in the text, was not surprising in its historical context. The inclusion of the wife’s chastisement of Vīkā is far more interesting. Hīrā Devī, his wife, displayed the Rajput identity far more than Vīkā and

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<sup>387</sup> Translated by V. S. Bhatnagar from Padmanābha, *Kānhaḍade Prabandha*, 88–89.

<sup>388</sup> Translated by V. S. Bhatnagar from Padmanābha, *Kānhaḍade Prabandha*, 89.

<sup>389</sup> Translated by V. S. Bhatnagar from Padmanābha, *Kānhaḍade Prabandha*, 90–91.

even killed her husband for his betrayal of the fort. One should also note her words, “Thou hast brought calamity upon one by whose kindness we have lived so long in comfort and plenty” (4.202), a virtual paraphrase of Mahimāsāhi’s indirect quotation from his wife asking for “The beloved who is so great that for years we have lived in this refuge” (*Hammīra Mahākāvya*, XIII.155).

As the Sultanate army breached the outer city walls of Jālōr, Kāṇhaḍ De’s soldiers met the Sultanate army in battle.

On the slopes, Kāndhal and his five hundred warriors made a furious attack on the enemy. After killing a large number of Mlechchhas, all these troops fighting on the fort fell before the very eyes of Kāṇhaḍade.

Shortly afterwards, at that very place, Kānha Ulīchā, in the right spirit of a true Kshatriya (*riṇavata*), determined to do or die, led the attack on the Turks. It was midday time when he fell, stricken by wounds, after destroying a large number of the enemy troops. In the evening it was Sobhita who donned the weapons. There was a dreadful fight; weapons clashed and clanged and a large number of warriors were cut down. The fighting went on till evening when Sobhita received a mortal blow, but even as he fell on the ground, he ceased not to strike the enemy.

At midnight, Jaita Devḍā fought the Turkish troops. After killing the Mlechchhas right and left and humbling their pride, he fell down under the enemy blows.<sup>390</sup>

Kāṇhaḍ De’s soldiers gradually lost ground and retreated further toward the palace at the center of the fortified city. Realizing the end was near, the women prepared for *jauhar* as the men prepared to meet their deaths in the forthcoming battle.

There, in that palace, Jaitalade, Bhāvalade, Umāde and Kamalāde, Kāṇhaḍade’s queens, began to prepare for the *Jauhar* rite, having made up their minds about it. A large number of their female servants and girls also decided to perform *Jauhar*. So was the mind of Kāṇhaḍade’s subjects. They came and said, “Our beloved Lord, come what may, we will not leave you (and will accompany you to heaven).”

First the Brāhmaṇa (Somachanda Vyāsa) gave his blessings to all. Thereafter they sought the Rāval’s (Kāṇhaḍade) permission to bid adieu to this life. The kith and kin, dear ones, and close acquaintances came and touched his feet. The

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<sup>390</sup> Translated by V. S. Bhatnagar from Padmanābha, *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandha*, 92.

retainers and servants of the Rāuts too were not ready to leave the Rāval. All the Sūdras—craftsmen classes—came and performed *juhāra* and then returned to prepare for *Jauhar* in their homes. The *Jauhar* fire was kindled in almost every home....<sup>391</sup>

The queens, at this time, were casting off their ornaments in the Jhālar *bāoḍī*. Nothing was being kept in the fort: everything was being dropped—rubies, pearls, jewels, gold, silver and the entire treasures in the deep waters, as per Rāval’s orders.

The elders in the Chauhāna clan, who were highly respected and who understood the matters of state, sent for Prince Vīramade and performed his coronation. As he touched his mother’s feet, she blessed him, wiping her tears:

“In our clan, may thine fame last till eternity, ever bright and shining! For millions of years, the glory of thine kingdom may endure!”

Sandalwood, Agar, Tulsī, Bīlī, Āmlī—all sacred wood, were brought for the pyre. After bath, the queens made offering to the Sun God.

As the queens entered the *Jauhar* fire, loud lamentations arose. All were reciting Hari’s name from the innermost depths of their hearts. Such was the *Jauhar* scene, of immeasurable pathos! “Truly, kith and kin, son, wife, wealth, and youth, all are nothing but illusion. The day the fate becomes adverse, they all are of no purpose. Oh God! Whom to blame: what a day to witness! Tears of blood are not running down from our eyes! Our hearts have turned of stone no doubt.” Such were the feelings of the multitude there.

Fifteen hundred and eighty-four *Jauhar* fires were lit that day in the Jālor fort! After the queens, the women-folks (of all the castes) entered the *Jauhar* fires. “Who can check the cruel march of fate dictated by the *karmas*? So, do not be assailed by anguish. One does achieve salvation by following the path of *bhakti* and realises God by giving to charities. Hence remember God Sārangapāṇi,” so people said as they saw their women-folk enter the fire.<sup>392</sup>

The description of *jauhar* in the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* contains similarities and differences with the *Hammīra Mahākāvya*. Both descriptions of *jauhar* began with a farewell to the ruler and husband from the wives, daughters, and people performing the act. Prior to the actual act of *jauhar*, the ruler in both texts ordered the kingdom’s treasures to be thrown into the tank. While throwing the treasures in the tank could be a form of psychological resistance, the frequency of this practice in medieval history suggests a basis in reality. The act of disposing treasure in tanks probably served as

<sup>391</sup> Translated by V. S. Bhatnagar from Padmanābha, *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandha*, 93.

<sup>392</sup> Translated by V. S. Bhatnagar from Padmanābha, *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandha*, 94.

more of an annoyance than an effective stratagem of hiding and preserving loot. Aware of this practice, the Sultanate army emptied tanks to recover treasure in both forts. A striking contrast between the two texts lies in the scale of the *jauhar*. According to the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh*, fifteen hundred and eighty-four *jauhar* ceremonies were performed in Jālōr compared to the description in the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* in which only the royal family performed *jauhar*.

The final battle began in the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* much like it did in the *Hammīra Mahākāvya*, with the promise of *apsaras* (celestial nymphs) waiting in heaven for the warriors and a mounting tension between the *apsaras* and the wives for the deceased heroes.

With one mind and heart, resolved to fight to the last drop of blood, the Rāuts now set out for the final round of conflict, even as the *apsarās* in the heaven were choosing in heart of their heart their consorts from amongst them, though they would join them only after this life.<sup>393</sup>

Padmanābha began his description of Kāṇhaḍ De's final battle by noting which warriors fled from the fight. Nayacandra Sūri noted the flight of Ratipāla and Raṇamalla from the Ranthambhor fort to the Sultanate army, but Padmanābha described a much larger desertion among Kāṇhaḍ De's ranks.

... Chāchā and Sālha engaged the enemy with great vigour and braved their repeated blows but, in the end, they left their positions to save their lives. Muhtā, Kunḍaliyā and Tāvarī put up a good honest fight but Lūṇḍhau Selahuta and Chaurāsīā Rājput̄s left the ranks and escaped. Similarly, Arsī Mer, Vijesī, Sāngā Selār, Salūṇa joined by Jesala, Lakshmaṇa, Lūṇau and Nirvāṇa, they all escaped and quickly vanished. Rīchhāvata and Pattā, who were considered formidable warriors, even they fled away. Similarly Arjun, Vīhal, Mūlarāj, besides Somā Dhāndhala who was regarded as a valiant fighter, also escaped. The same was heard about Bāpalade and Maḥīḍau and Ghūghalū Sāhṇī, the incharge of the stables. After the flight of Lolai and Narasī, the Rāthors too fled away from the scene of the fighting. On seeing that the troops were losing,

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<sup>393</sup> Translated by V. S. Bhatnagar from Padmanābha, *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandha*, 95–96.

Jagasī begged for his life and took to flight. On the flight of Karamasī and Rayaanī, Phūṭariyās too went away, taking defeat for granted.<sup>394</sup>

A much longer passage, too long to be quoted in its entirety, listed and glorified the soldiers who stayed and died in battle with Kāṇhaḍ De. As the soldiers died, they left the Jālōr battle and entered the amorous battle between apsaras and wife in heaven.

I have learnt from earlier accounts that among those who remained close to Kāṇhaḍade in the battle till the last, fifty sacrificed their lives. Lots of Hindūs fought in this manner, bravely, till the very end. Rāval's bodyguards also plunged themselves in battle and fought to the last. Jaitakaraṇa, who fought with great devotion against the Turks, fell along with Rāo Kāṇhaḍade. The Rāuts who donned arms, and fought against the Turks wrought havoc among the Mlechchhas and killed them to their hearts' content.

Those who fought devotedly for their master's cause, and fell from repeated blows but did not leave the battlefield, earned abiding fame in all the nine *Khaṇḍas*. Those who laid down their lives in battle (*dhārātīrtha*), they all went to heaven (*amaraloka*). Their women-folks too, renouncing hearth and home, followed them to heaven, where the nymphs were disputing with them to make their husbands as their own and the Rāuts wearing garlands of ambrosial flowers were entering into wedlock with them with great fondness.

The Rāuts who did not follow their master and saved their lives earned great infamy. By whose kindness they had decked themselves with gold ornaments and fine silk dresses, now considering his work as troublesome burden, they left the fort and saved themselves! Woe to them!

In the sky, the carrion birds, wings flapping, crashed into each other and then fell down wounded on the ground.<sup>395</sup>

Interestingly, Padmanābha returned to those who deserted Kāṇhaḍ De and the Jālōr fort at the end of this passage. He contrasted quite frankly the rewards and rebukes that awaited one who died honorably in battle and one who dressed in women's garb to flee from the fight.

Padmanābha provided the reader with an additional surprise: Kāṇhaḍ De did not die in this battle. Instead, Kāṇhaḍ De returned to the palace where he met with his *guru*

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<sup>394</sup> Translated by V. S. Bhatnagar from Padmanābha, *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandha*, 96–97.

<sup>395</sup> Translated by V. S. Bhatnagar from Padmanābha, *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandha*, 98–99.

one last time before he returned to the battle. Padmanābha provided more of an epithet than a description of Kāṇhaḍ De's death.

Rāval Kāṇhaḍade destroyed the pride of Ulugh Khān and freed Rudra (Śiva) from his clutches. One who killed Bālī, though he had committed no crime, and also Śisupāla, who lightened the burden of the earth by destroying the Mlechchhas, on Wednesday Vaiśākha Sudi 5, S. 1368 (1311 A.D.), a day portentous for the annihilation of the enemy, the protector of the entire universe who took incarnation in Kaliyuga to fulfill his word, that Ādi Purusha (Kāṇhaḍade) returned to his eternal abode.<sup>396</sup>

Why didn't Padmanābha depict a glorious and valorous death for Kāṇhaḍ De similar to Nayacandra Sūri's description of Hammīra's death in the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* or the heroic battle scenes of numerous Sanskrit and Hindavī texts? Although one may ask such a question, any answer clearly lies in the realm of speculation and outside the realm of history. Instead of speculating on Padmanābha's rather sparse description of the hero's death, one may instead examine Padmanābha's next and far more interesting narrative.

As the Sultanate army breached the outer walls of Jālōr, defeated Kāṇhaḍ De's best warriors, and emerged victorious over Kāṇhaḍ De himself, the narrative of the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* turned to the death of Vīram De, the son of Kāṇhaḍ De and the husband in six previous lifetimes of Sultan 'Alā' al-Dīn Khaljī's daughter, Fīrūza. Facing eminent defeat, the former prince and now king prepared for the final battle by following the same ritual as described twice in the preceding pages: his wives who were now the queens prepare for *jauhar* (apparently theirs was not one of the fifteen hundred and eighty-four *jauhar* fires previously mentioned) and Vīram De prepared to die in battle.

Vīramade, in the interest of the dynasty, ruled for three and half days. His queens, all of noble lineage, now prepared for *Jauhar*. They took bath,

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<sup>396</sup> Translated by V. S. Bhatnagar from Padmanābha, *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandha*, 99.

distributed charities, and visited the temple. Accompanying their lord in death, they said, “By performing *Jauhar*, we will bring glory to the families.” Their female companions, all lovely and beautiful, looked on tearfully as the queens walked up to the bastion and, controlling their tears, they addressed their beloved Jālor mountain...

Thinking that the Turks would try to capture him alive, Vīramade spoke rousing words to his men and thrust a curved dagger (*Kaṭāri*) in his waist band, and tied it fast. Filled with burning ardour, Rāval Vīramade put on the armour and secured it firmly over his body. That peerless warrior mounted his horse and gave out an angry roar as he advanced against the Turkish army; this filled the Rāuts with the same angry passion. Who could bear the mighty blows of their weapons! Knowing that heavy burden had fallen upon their young prince, they plied their weapons well and put up a splendid fight. The praise of the valorous deeds of the warriors were being sung on both the sides as the Hindūs and the Turks engaged in hand to hand combat. The Hindūs succeeded in driving back the Turks, slaughtering them as they retreated. Right till the midday the Rāi continued the fight against the Turkish army. At last, after slaying a large number of Mlechchhas, Vīramade fell, having received several sword cuts and thrusts from the enemy blades.

The Turks were keen to capture Vīramade alive but now all the Maliks assembled and they went up the fort to see the Rāi’s body. They looked at his beautiful figure appreciatively.<sup>397</sup>

Padmanābha portrayed Vīrama De’s death in a heroic manner. This passage sharply contrasted with Padmanābha’s description of Kāṇhaḍ De’s death only a dozen verses earlier. Vīram De intentionally wounded himself before entering battle and ensured that he would die in the coming struggle. Nevertheless, he overcame this disadvantage and led the army that drove back the Sultanate forces before he finally succumbed to the enemy’s sword. Vīram De’s self-inflicted wound guaranteed his death on the battlefield; yet, the act was also reminiscent of Ḍhēbo’s self-disembowelment to feed the vultures in the epic of Pābūjī before he defeated the enemy Khīcī warriors.<sup>398</sup> As discussed in the previous chapter and as will be discussed below, both of these acts exemplified the Rajput’s extraordinary death on the battlefield.

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<sup>397</sup> Translated by V. S. Bhatnagar from Padmanābha, *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandha*, 100–101.

<sup>398</sup> See the section, Three Modern Rajput Tales, in the previous chapter.



The *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* did not end with Vīram De's death. Instead Padmanābha shifted the narrative from Jālōr to Delhi. Aware that the end was near, Fīrūza, the daughter of Sultan 'Alā' al-Dīn Khaljī sent her servant to Jālōr with instructions to place Vīram De's head in a basket of scented flowers and return to Delhi.

The maid took out a priceless jeweled basket containing flowers of *Sandal*, *Agar*, and *Ketkī*, and tenderly put Vīrama's head in it, his face looking so bright and lovely as the flower of *Champā* or *Kevaḍā*. Thus, taking all care, she set out for Delhi with Vīrama's head.

In a short time she reached Yoginīpur (Delhi). The Emperor learnt all the news and he was grieved in heart of his heart. No sooner the news spread, people came to see Vīrama's head.

Dadā Sanāvar, the maid, placed the head in a round gold tray. The Emperor's daughter and the ladies of the *haram* also came to have a look at the head. They saw Vīramade's face: the brightness of a true Kshatriya which shone on the face was too dazzling for the onlookers. It was like the newly risen Moon on Pūrṇimā without its dark spots, his large eyes like lotus flowers, and forehead bright and radiant. The ladies of the Sultān's *haram* exclaimed in wonderment: "Has Allāh (Kirtāra) created even such men in this world?" They felt great grief that death had overtaken such a Prince.

The Princess, the Sultān's daughter, remembering Vīrama's vow, said, "Earlier, the Chauhāna had vowed that he would never look at my face. Now, today at least, he will have to break his word!"

Those who are brave and of good lineage do not give up their plighted word even after death. The moment the Princess came in front of Vīrama's face, it turned away!..."<sup>399</sup>

In this passage, Vīram De went beyond the exemplary death on the battlefield and entered the realm of the miraculous; yet, he performed this miraculous act through his fidelity to Rajput principles (bravery and good lineage) and fulfilled his vow even in death.

Fīrūza similarly fulfilled her role in death. In spite of being rebuked by Vīram De's continuously turning head, she nevertheless prepared to commit *satī*. Such a practice was extremely rare for a Muslim and would have been unique among the nobility of the Khaljī court. The basis for such an extreme act in the *Kāṇhaḍade*

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<sup>399</sup> Translated by V. S. Bhatnagar from Padmanābha, *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandha*, 101-102

*Prabandh* stemmed from Fīrūza’s previous marriages to Vīrama De in six former lives. Even though she was not married to Vīrama De in her current life, Fīrūza fulfilled her duty as a (Rajput) woman born into a Turkish existence. Fīrūza claimed her place as Vīrama De’s wife in the heavens by engaging in *satī* on earth.

#### REREADING THE *HAMMĪRA MAHĀKĀVYA* AND *KĀṆHAḌADE PRABANDH*

The nature of Rajput warrior and social identity emerges in the fifteenth century only when one compares the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* and *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh*, studies the emplotment of these historical narratives, and places these texts in their larger literary and social context. The validity of such a comparison hinges upon an understanding and appreciation of the similarities and differences between the texts. According to Aziz Ahmad, the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* and *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* were both “epics of resistance” that narrated the valorous efforts of the Rajputs to curb Sultanate expansion. Most Indians and many history books today have identified the Rajputs as defenders of Hindu culture and religion against Muslim onslaught. The categories that Aziz Ahmad created for medieval South Asian literature and the nationalist historiography of the twentieth century (to which Aziz Ahmad belongs) have both failed to capture the nuances of the literature and history within the texts as well as the emerging Rajput identity. The remainder of this chapter examines and compares the literary traditions of these texts, their themes, and their motifs, to show how these fifteenth-century authors began to fashion a Rajput social and warrior identity within medieval society.

If historiography is the intersection of history and literature,<sup>400</sup> then any meaningful historiography of South Asian texts must begin with an analysis of literary

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<sup>400</sup> I’ve adopted this approach from Gabrielle Spiegel, although she never made this exact assertion. “My book does attempt to do both history and literature. Like any work located on the margins of two fields, it straddles the gap between them and, inevitably, treats each with less thoroughness and complexity

and textual traditions. This concept, taken primarily from the work of Gabrielle Spiegel, leads to an analysis of the “social logic of the text.”<sup>401</sup> The social logic of the text refers to the literary process as a reflection of the social circumstances in which the author lived. Texts reflected the society in which the author lived, in which the text was produced, and in which the text circulated. The historian may utilize literary criticism to understand the structure of the text, the author who created the text, and the society to which the author and creation belong. In doing so, however, the historian or literary critic must keep at the forefront the awareness that these texts were products (what Spiegel refers to as literary artifacts) of a past society. The texts contained literary conventions, motifs, schemata and tropes understood by the audience for which they were written rather than the audience reading them today.

Rao, Shulman, and Subrahmanyam referred to the written and understood literary conventions embedded at the time of a text’s production as “texture.”<sup>402</sup>

According to Rao, Shulman, and Subrahmanyam

Readers or listeners at home in a culture have a natural sensitivity to texture. They *know* when the past is being treated in a factual manner. Signals and markers of many subtle kinds and qualities abound in every text; they are also amenable to analytical formulation... But much depends on the integrity of the relation between the teller or writer and his audience; if this relationship breaks down, or the text is in some way displaced into a new mode and a new audience, textural expressivity is lost.<sup>403</sup>

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than a book more narrowly trained on one or the other. But historiography itself has always fallen between these two stools” from *Romancing the Past*, 9.

<sup>401</sup> For a more learned discussion of the social logic of the text, see Gabrielle Spiegel, *Romancing the Past*, 1-10 and her chapter, “History, Historicism, and the Social Logic of the Text,” in *The Past as Text: The Theory and Practice of Medieval Historiography* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), 3-28.

<sup>402</sup> Rao, Shulman, Subrahmanyam, *Textures of Time*. The concept of “texture” and its role in literary and historical studies is the overall theme of the book and each chapter analyzes the texture of a historical-literary work. People outside of South Asian studies would probably benefit most by reading the introduction in which the concept of texture is first introduced and the conclusion in which the authors discuss texture and loss thereof within three “historical” texts.

<sup>403</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.

The notions of a social logic of the text and texture both advance a metahistorical reading of the text.

Haydon White argued in *Metahistory*, *Tropics of Discourse*, and *Content of the Form* that history and historical writing were forms of literature and that one understood the historical text upon identifying the metahistorical modes of emplotment, argument, and implication within the work.<sup>404</sup> Metahistory framed the author's transmission of history within a text. An author's text may impart new facts and information, ideas and interpretations to the reader. Yet on a grander scale, the narrative of a historical work—in its totality—was transmitted through an unwritten yet implied and understandable metahistory.

The attempt to identify the emerging concept of Rajput in the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* and *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* relies on an understanding of the social logic of the text, texture, and metahistory. The following paragraphs will analyze the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* and *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* first by engaging in a study of texture: how the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* and *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* compared and differed in terms of composition, literary tradition, and historical emplotment. The *Hammīra Mahākāvya* and *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* are paradoxically comparable and incomparable. While the recognition of texture in these two texts does not resolve this paradox, it significantly lessens it. After discussing the texture of the two texts, the analysis will then turn to the social logic of text. The *Hammīra Mahākāvya* and *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* both revealed the emergence of a Rajput social and warrior identity. This identity did not fully form until the sixteenth century; yet, once these two fifteenth-century texts are placed in the social context of the fifteenth century they disclose a reformulation of social and

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<sup>404</sup> Hayden White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973); *Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978); *The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987).

warrior identity within the communities to which the authors belonged and the texts circulated. This emerging Rajput social and warrior identity resulted in the formation of a new metahistory: the conveyance of the Rajput tale in a Tragic-Heroic emplotment.

#### TEXTURE IN THE *HAMMĪRA MAHĀKĀVYA* AND *KĀṆHAḌADE PRABANDH*

Padmanābha composed the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* in Old Gujarati–Old Western Rajasthani around A.D. 1455. The *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh*, as the title suggests, was written in the *prabandh* (biographical) style of Prākṛt and Apabhrāṃśa literature. Scholars have referred to Prākṛt and Apabhrāṃśa as vernacular forms of Sanskrit and place them in a position subordinate to the Sanskrit language. This seems to be a modern judgment or misconception, since Bhāmaha and Daṇḍin both noted that *mahākāvya* may be composed in the Sanskrit, Prākṛt, or Apabhrāṃśa language.<sup>405</sup> Prākṛt and Apabhrāṃśa, therefore, existed beside the Sanskrit literary tradition. The *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* linguistically transitioned from the previous Apabhrāṃśa language to the later vernacular languages of Gujarati and Rajasthani. As such, the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* lacked some of the characteristics commonly found in Sanskrit texts—most notably the protagonist’s (*nāyaka*) dalliances with women in water, but also descriptions of the seasons, landscape, sun and moon typically found in Sanskrit literature. Padmanābha opened the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* with a brief salutation and virtually no discussion of Kāṇhaḍ De’s ancestors, unlike the *Hammīra Mahākāvya*. Padmanābha also included long lists of various types of horses, weapons, armor, tribes and kingdoms, and so on. While these lists occurred in Sanskrit texts, they were much more common in vernacular texts. Padmanābha composed the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* in metrical verse, although this

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<sup>405</sup> Indeed some texts contain both languages. Kālidāsa’s play, *Abhijñanaśakuntalā* more commonly referred to as *Śakuntalā* is perhaps the most well known example. Oddly, however, this play also reinforces the stereotype that Prākṛt and Apabhrāṃśa are vernacular languages since the learned men in the play all speak Sanskrit while women and the uneducated speak in Prākṛt.

also differs from Sanskrit and employed meters such as *dhrupada*, *dhūla*, *pavāḍu*, and *rāga rāmagirī* common in Apabhrāṃśa and later vernacular works.

The *Hammīra Mahākāvya* and *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* offer two contrasting yet similar textures. Nayacandra Sūri composed the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* sometime in the fifteenth century and scholars have generally accepted a date of mid-fifteenth century for the text's composition. The *Hammīra Mahākāvya*, as a Sanskrit *mahākāvya*, follows the conventions of Sanskrit poetry. Bhāmaha (fourth or fifth century A.D.), generally considered as the father of the *alaṅkāra* school of Sanskrit literary criticism, and Daṇḍin (seventh century A.D.) wrote two of the earlier and more influential commentaries, composition guides, and literary critiques of the Sanskrit *mahākāvya*. Daṇḍin's definition of the *mahākāvya* largely followed Bhāmaha's definition,<sup>406</sup> quoted later in this chapter. The following quotation comes from Daṇḍin's *Kāvyaḍarśa*:

A Mahākāvya is a composition in cantos [*sarga*], and it is thus defined; it should begin with a benediction or salutation or a reference to the subject-matter; its subject should be one taken from history or otherwise real; the attainment of one of the ends of human existence should be its aim; the hero clever and noble; as embellishments it should contain descriptions of a city, the sea, mountain, the seasons, sunrise, moonrise, sport in the gardens or water, drinking scenes, love-delights, separation or wedding of lovers, the birth of a son, a council, an embassy, a march or a battle or a victory of the hero; it should not be concise, and should be full of sentiments and feelings. Its cantos should not be too long, its metres sonorous, its transitions (from one canto to another) well-arranged, and with a change of metres at the close. Such a poem, suitably ornamented with figures, and a source of delight to the people will last for ages.<sup>407</sup>

Whether consciously or not, Nayacandra Sūri closely followed Daṇḍin's form for praiseworthy *mahākāvya*. The *Hammīra Mahākāvya* began with a series of benedictions that spanned the first eight verses and then continued to narrate Hammīra's lineage

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<sup>406</sup> For a learned yet much debated examination and comparison of Bhāmaha and Daṇḍin's works, see P. V. Kane, *History of Sanskrit Poetics*, 4th ed. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1971), 78-133.

<sup>407</sup> C. R. Devadhar, ed. *Raghuvamśa* in *Works of Kālidāsa*, 2 vols. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1984), vii. The quotation is from *śloka*s 14-19 and may be found in Daṇḍin, *Ācārya Daṇḍī-Kāvyaḍarśa*, 4 vols, trans. Yogeśvaradattaśarmā (Delhi: Nag Publishers, 1999), 1: 66-81.

over the first three *sargas* (cantos) with the fourth *sarga* describing his father, Jaitrasimha. The fifth through seventh *sargas* contained descriptions of the youthful Hammira: his education and training in warfare and “descriptions of the seasons, and sports and festivities in which Hammira engaged.”<sup>408</sup> The ninth *sarga* contained depictions of the Ranthambhor fort, the surrounding countryside, and Hammira’s conquests of rulers in that countryside. The battles, interspersed at times with vivid descriptions of women, occurred throughout the remainder of the text. As for the goal to attain “one of the ends of human existence,” one could argue that the *Hammira Mahākāvya* inspired the audience to adopt the Rajput warrior ideal of dying in battle and receiving the reward of *mokṣa* (liberation) in *svarga* (heaven). All of this indicates that Nayacandra Sūri adhered to the *mahākāvya* model in the composition of the *Hammira Mahākāvya*.

Nayacandra Sūri and Padmanābha composed the *Hammira Mahākāvya* and *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* in the fifteenth century; yet the texts have two different textures since they were produced in two different literary traditions. A medieval audience may have dismissed Nayacandra Sūri’s description of Hammira’s frolicking with the queens in the fountain just as they may have dismissed Padmanābha’s long lists of horse, armor, and armaments in the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh*. The medieval audience probably would have recognized that poets included these tropes or lists solely to fulfill literary expectations and that the images reflected a literary imagination rather than reality. A more tantalizing notion is whether Aziz Ahmad’s epic of resistance reflected a medieval texture within the text, recognized by a medieval audience as a required component of the literary traditions, rather than a reflection of medieval society. As Rao, Shulman, and Subrahmanyam warn, if the texture between poet and audience broke, the

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<sup>408</sup> Kirtane, “The Hammira Mahākāvya of Nayachandra Sūri,” vi.

meaning of the text could be interpreted in a new manner. The concept of resistance, as advanced by Aziz Ahmad, may be a literary fiction that the medieval audience recognized but did not confuse with the act of resistance itself.

One trope with two possible readings in the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* and *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* suggests the loss of texture in the reception of the text. The first reading of this trope involves shooting the dancer who is dancing on the rampart walls. A medieval audience would recognize this trope as well as the cultural and literary meaning correlative to it. A further study of fifteenth-century vernacular texts may elucidate the meaning of this trope; such a study, however, is beyond the range of this dissertation. As such, only a topical examination may be made here concerning two possibilities. First, the medieval audience may read this trope as a sign of martial equality and prowess. The slaying of the Hindu dancer and the counter-slaying of the archer places the military prowess of both sides on an equal footing: Uḍḍān Singh was matched by Mahimāsāhi, Habākhu Mīr was matched by Rāma Singh Rāut, and by extension ‘Alā’ al-Dīn was matched by Hammīra and later by Kāṇhaḍ De. The Sanskrit literary critic Bhāmaha, quoted below, advocated elevating the *pratināyaka* (antagonist) to become an equal and thus a worthy match for the *nāyaka* (protagonist). The slaying of the dancer on the fort ramparts reflected an unstated literary convention understood by the medieval audience rather than a historical event. The *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh*, in particular, contained numerous contests of martial prowess in which Hindu and Turkish soldiers display their martial abilities.

A second possible reading of this trope, which may also be included in the first reading and signal a trope with multiple readings, is to view the entire episode as a manner of personal honor. This analysis relies first on recognizing that the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* and *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* largely stripped women of agency, transforming



them into objects of honor (at best) and pawns in a male dominated game of honor (at worst). The dancer on the rampart insulted ‘Alā’ al-Dīn when she turned her back on him and Uḍḍān Singh responds by killing her. In order to reclaim honor, Mahimāsāhi retaliates by killing Uḍḍān Singh.

A suggestion that the trope of shooting the dancer represented an attempt to strip or regain honor may seem a bit far-fetched at first; however, other examples on the role of women in the texts support such a reading. In the *Hammīra Mahākāvya*, for example, Hammīra refused to give his daughter Devalla Devī to Sultan ‘Alā’ al-Dīn in marriage on three separate occasions. His first refusal came in response to a Sultanate messenger who wanted either custody of the Mongol rebels or a marriage alliance between the two kingdoms. The second refusal occurred when Ratipāla returned from meeting Sultan ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Khaljī and stated that the Sultan would end the siege if Hammīra gave Devalla Devī to him in marriage. The third occasion occurred when Devalla Devī learned of ‘Alā’ al-Dīn’s offer and urged her father to allow the marriage. Hammīra not only denied her request, saying that she was too young to enter into marriage, he rebuked the women of the court for even suggesting that she should make such an offer. A similar response came from Vīram De, the prince of the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh*, who recognized his past marriages to the sultan’s daughter Fīrūza, yet still refused to marry or to acknowledge her on account of her being a Muslim in this life. Nayacandra Sūri and Padmanābha did not bestow agency on Devalla Devī, Fīrūza, or the rampart dancing Rādha Devī; instead, these women acted as pawns of honor, which when properly manipulated, led to personal honor and a Rajput identity for the men in the text.

The *Hammīra Mahākāvya* and *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* both acted as didactic texts that defined proper and improper Rajput behavior. Betrayal, fealty to the ruler, and

fighting even in circumstances of certain death were common themes in these texts. The obvious betrayal in the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* was Ratipāla’s seditious acts under the orders of ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Khaljī and his eventual flight with Raṇamalla to the Sultanate camp; yet, the keeper of the storehouse and treasury, Jāhaḍa, was far more illustrative of betrayal. At first glance, Jāhaḍa was a passing character in the narrative of Ranthambhor’s fall. However, a simple dismissal of Jāhaḍa as a minor character would be wrong. As a literary marker, Jāhaḍa repeatedly appeared at the beginning of scenes and his presence continually foreshadowed some new piece of gloom for Hammīra. Jāhaḍa, however, was more than a literary marker—he illustrated what happened to those (Rajputs) who betrayed their ruler and their duty as warriors.

Jāhaḍa first appeared when Hammīra learned of Ratipāla and Raṇamalla’s flight to the Sultanate camp. According to Kīrtane’s 1879 *Indian Antiquary* article, arguably the most authoritative English source on the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* today:

The king, thus deceived and bewildered [by Ratipāla and Raṇamalla’s actions] came back to the palace, and sending for the Koṭhāri (the officer in charge of the royal granaries) inquired of him as to the state of the stores, and how long they would hold out. The Koṭhāri [i.e., Jāhaḍa], fearing the loss of his influence, if he were to tell the truth to the king at that time, falsely answered that the stores would suffice to hold out for a considerable time. But scarcely had this officer turned his back when it became generally known that there was no more corn in the state grinders. Upon news reaching the king’s ears, he ordered Vīrama to put the false Koṭhāri to death, and to throw all the wealth he possessed into the lake [tank] of the Padma Sāgar.<sup>409</sup>

While Kīrtane’s passage was generally correct, it contained a number of seemingly minor inaccuracies that significantly changed the role of Jāhaḍa. According to the *Hammīra Mahākāvya*, when Hammīra asked Jāhaḍa about the provisions, Jāhaḍa thinks

*vadāmi yadi nāstīti tadā saṁdhir-bhaved dhruvam  
bhāvvyarthabhāvād dhyātveti jagau na kiyad-iti-asau*

*Hammīra Mahākāvya*, XIII v. 137

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<sup>409</sup> Kirtane, “The Hammīra Mahākāvya of Nayachandra Sūri,” 79.

The question here is where one should place the Sanskrit marker for quotation (iti). I interpret the first line as one quotation, with a secondary quotation embedded within it, and a third quotation at the end of the second line. Thus,

[Jāhaḍa thought] “If I say, ‘Nothing (*nāstīti*), then surely he will sue for peace.’”  
Thinking, “I will continue to exist (if there is) a lack of provisions,” he said,  
“There’s nothing.”

Jāhaḍa did not say, as quoted by Kīrtane, that there was ample grain when in fact there was none; rather, he said there was no grain in the storehouse when in fact there was grain, in an attempt to force Hammīra to end the siege so that he would not have to fight in the looming battle. Saying there was no grain, when in fact there was, in order to prevent a battle in which he might have died was deceptive and cowardly. After Mahimāsāhi’s family was killed and before Hammīra’s wives and daughter committed *jauhar*, Hammīra personally visited the storehouse and found the provisions. He confronted Jāhaḍa and blamed him for the downfall of the fort before the women commit *jauhar* and the men march out to battle. After the women commit *jauhar*, the padmasāra (lotus-pond) came to Hammīra in a dream and told Hammīra to deposit the valuables within it for safekeeping. Hammīra then ordered Jāhaḍa (not Vīrama as Kirtane states) to throw the valuables in the lake

*atha nirnidrabhūpālādeśāt sarvaṃ sa jāhaḍaḥ  
prakṣipyā sāraṃ kāsāre tam-ūce kiṃ karomi-aham  
ukto nideśaṃ dehīti śrīhammīreṇa vīramaḥ  
kūṣmāṇḍavac-chiras-tasya chittvā bhūmau vyalodayat*

*Hammīra Mahākāvya, XIII vv. 194–195<sup>410</sup>*

Due to the command of the sleepless king, Jāhaḍa gathered all the valuables and (threw) it in the lake.” He [Jāhaḍa] said to him, “[Now] what should I do?” Vīrama, (previously) spoken to by Hammīra, on [Hammīra’s] command he severed [Jāhaḍa’s] head as if it were a gourd and tossed it aside on the ground.

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<sup>410</sup> Note that this verse is broken and does not conform to canto’s meter.

On the morning of the final battle, Jāhaḍa unknowingly fulfilled his final act as the minister in charge of the storehouse, when he threw all the valuables (which in a siege could very well have included foodstuffs) into the lotus-pond (the Padmasāra). Having fulfilled his service to the king, Vīrama then executed him for causing the downfall of the fort (*Hammīra Mahākāvya*, XIII v. 170). The execution of Jāhaḍa only makes sense if he betrayed Hammīra and the Rajputs.

Jāhaḍa's fate was the same for all the characters of the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* who betrayed the king or acted in a dishonorable way. Nayacandra Sūri described a series of people who died or fell into destitution after betraying Hammīra. The dancer, Rādha Devī, who befriended the blinded and castrated Dharmasiṃha and aided in his reinstatement within the court, was shot with an arrow while dancing on the fort's ramparts. Bhojā, who spoke out against Dharmasiṃha's practices only to be insulted and dismissed, later led part of the Delhi Sultanate army against Ranthambhor. Defeated and forced to retreat to Delhi, he went virtually insane upon learning that Mahimāsāhi and the other Mongols captured his lands and imprisoned his brother. Jāhaḍa's lie about the provisions and his attempt to avoid the upcoming battle led to his execution. Lastly Ratipāla, seduced by 'Alā' al-Dīn Khaljī (as well as his sister), sowed sedition within the Ranthambhor fort. He appeared once more in the epilogue of the *Hammīra Mahākāvya*. Even though 'Alā' al-Dīn promised to give Ratipāla the fort, he killed Ratipāla and Raṇamalla on account of their disloyalty, reasoning that if they turned against Hammīra, then they would turn against him as well. The lesson in these passages was that death and disgrace followed one who betrayed the ruler or his fellow Rajputs.

This lesson also occurred in the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh*. Mādhava Brāhmana, after being dismissed by the Gujarati king Sāraṅgadeva, departed for Delhi. Much like Bhojā

from the *Hammīra Mahākāvya*, Mādhava returned and led a Sultanate expedition along with Ulugh Khān. The Sultanate army successfully defeated Sāraṅgadeva and sacked his capital, moving steadily toward the Somanātha temple. The soldiers protecting the Somanātha temple managed to slay Mādhava, who brought the Sultanate army down upon them, before the temple fell to Ulugh Khān. Two other episodes found at the end of the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* also mirrored the *Hammīra Mahākāvya*. When Vīka informed his wife that he admitted the Sultanate forces led by Malik Kamāluddīn into the fortified city, she rebuked him for the ingratitude he showed toward the king and then killed him. Padmanābha similarly heaped scorn upon those soldiers who fled from Kāṇhaḍ De's service when the final battle of Jālōr commenced. These soldiers did not die and apparently escaped from the besieged fort unharmed.<sup>411</sup> After he narrated the deaths of the soldiers who obtained a valorous death defending the Jālōr fort, Padmanābha returned to disparage the deserters one final time. Padmanābha and Nayacandra Sūri made clear in the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* and the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* that betrayal of the sultan and flight at the time of battle led to dire consequences for the individual, while fidelity and valor led to fame.

In addition to betrayal and flight from battle, these texts also discussed the converse act of fidelity to the ruler and valor on the battlefield. An example of this may be found in Vīrama, the brother of Hammīra, whose fidelity to Hammīra led to his valiant death on the battlefield. The night before the final battle, after the *jauhar* ceremony and just prior to Padmasāra (lotus-pond) visiting Hammīra in a dream, Hammīra passed the rule of Ranthambhor on to his youngest brother.

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<sup>411</sup> The *Khazā'in al-Futūh* claimed that a similar betrayal and flight occurred during the siege of Siwāna. Amīr Khuṣrau compared these soldiers to crows and the Sultanate army to falcons who pursued them. Khuṣrau also played on Kamāl al-Dīn's nickname as the wolf (*gurg*) in hunting down these traitors. See the second and third chapters of this dissertation for Amīr Khuṣrau's description of this siege.

“Vīrama is loyal,” (he thought), so he placed Jājadeva in charge of the kingdom. (Even though he had been) chastised by Vīrama on the ill-reported danger. Having conferred the kingdom to (the brother) Jājadeva, the king was pleased.

*Hammīra Mahākāvya*, XIII, vv. 190–91<sup>412</sup>

Hammīra passed his kingship on to Jājadeva, instead of Vīrama, and the passage clearly explained why Hammīra did this: Vīrama was faithful to Hammīra and Hammīra rewarded this faithfulness by allowing him to fight in the upcoming battle.

A more interesting example may be found in the story of Mahimāsāhi. When Hammīra informed Mahimāsāhi about the impending battle and advised him to seek refuge in a safe quarter of the fort (or perhaps to leave the fort entirely), Mahimāsāhi slew his own family. Mahimāsāhi’s act had multiple meanings. As described above, the act of slaying his family resulted in Hammīra allowing Mahimāsāhi to fight in the upcoming battle. Previously excluded from a battle that did not concern him, Mahimāsāhi now fought with Hammīra and the other soldiers. The slaying of the family, moreover, was equated to the Rajput act of *jauhar* and Mahimāsāhi became Rajput. On another level, Hammīra also recognized Mahimāsāhi’s devotion and subsequently praised Mahimāsāhi’s virtues. Like Vīrama, who proved his fidelity to his brother and was permitted to die in the upcoming battle, Mahimāsāhi proved his fidelity and was similarly rewarded.

In a chapter filled with betrayal, Mahimāsāhi remained loyal to Hammīra and was rewarded with certain death on the battlefield. Yet, Mahimāsāhi did not die in battle. A close reading of the text quoted toward the beginning of the chapter reveals that he literally fell in battle. In the epilogue, ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Khaljī sought out and discovered Mahimāsāhi still alive, although greatly wounded, on the battlefield. He offered to heal Mahimāsāhi’s wound if he would swear loyalty to the sultan.

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<sup>412</sup> Translated by the author from Nayacandra Sūri, *Hammīramahākāvya*, ed. Muni Jinavijaya.

Mahimāsāhi replied that if ‘Alā’ al-Dīn healed him, he would personally kill the sultan in Hammīra’s name. ‘Alā’ al-Dīn personally killed him, but impressed with his martial prowess and loyalty, the sultan commanded his soldiers to construct a tomb and to bury Mahimāsāhi. Nayacandra Sūri’s portrayal of Mahimāsāhi’s death stood in stark contrast to that of Ratipāla, quoted above and also included in the epilogue (the fourteenth *sarga*) of the *Hammīra Mahākāvya*. If Mahimāsāhi’s status as Rajput was in doubt after he slew his wife, his fealty to Hammīra not to mention his survival beyond the *mahākāvya*’s protagonist (*nāyaka*) cemented his status as Rajput. Mahimāsāhi did not simply attain Rajput status; he embodied the Rajput ethos to become the paragon of the Rajputs.

Stating that Mahimāsāhi embodied the Rajput identity more than the poem’s *nāyaka*, Hammīra, may seem like an overstatement; once again, a comparison of the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* and *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* reveals some startling similarities. Neither text ended with the death of the protagonist (*nāyaka*) commemorated in the title of the text. Although Mahimāsāhi fell in final battle and appeared to have died, he actually survived to meet his final death after Hammīra Cāhamāna. Vīram De similarly continued to repel the Sultanate siege for three days after the death of Kāṇhaḍ De.<sup>413</sup> Facing his final defeat, Vīram De’s wives performed *jauhar* and Vīram De wounded himself to guarantee his death in the upcoming battle. After the Delhi Sultanate soldiers killed Vīram De, Fīrūza’s servant brought his head to Delhi. Placed on a golden tray, Vīram De’s head miraculously fulfilled a previous vow to never gaze upon Fīrūza again by repeatedly turning away from her. Fīrūza, in spite of this sleight or rather because of Vīram De’s fidelity to keep his vow even in death, took Vīram De’s head and

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<sup>413</sup> It may be worth noting here that Jājadeva and Vīram De both ruled their respective forts for a period of three days after the death of Hammīra and Kāṇhaḍ De in battle. The three-day period may also turn out to be another trope.

fulfilled her duties as a Hindu wife (her true identity even though she is a Turkish princess) by becoming a *satī*. The story of Vīram De and Fīrūza eclipsed the death of Kāṇhaḍ De in the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* just as Mahimāsāhi dominated much of the *Hammīra Mahākāvya*. To say that Mahimāsāhi, Vīram De, or Fīrūza were the main characters in these texts would be a bit of an overstatement—the poets chose to name the texts the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* and *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh*—and so Hammīra and Kāṇhaḍ De are the heroic protagonists (*nāyaka*) of the text. Hammīra and Kāṇhaḍ De may have been the *nāyakas* in their respective works, but Mahimāsāhi, Vīram De, and Fīrūza embodied and defined the Rajput identity in these texts just as much as Hammīra and Kāṇhaḍ De.

Nayacandra Sūri provided some suggestion for such a reading in the *Hammīra Mahākāvya*. In the eighth *sarga*, immediately preceding the so-called historical cantos of the text (*sargas* 9–13), Jaitrasimha lectured his son, Hammīra, on proper conduct and good government. While Hammīra succeeded in the battles of the *digvijāya*, he failed miserably as a ruler. One of the central themes in the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* was the downfall of Hammīra and the Ranthambhor fort due to Hammīra’s hubris. Hammīra continually misjudged those intent on harming him and rebuked those loyal to him. Hammīra defended Dharmasimha and rebuked Bhojā, he dismissed Vīrama’s council about Ratipāla and refused to believe dissension could arise in the fort, he believed Jāhaḍa’s assessment of the fort’s provisions without verifying them on his own, and completely misjudged Mahimāsāhi’s fidelity toward the king and the extent to which he would prove it. Only at the end of the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* as the final battle looms, did Hammīra realize the loyalty of Mahimāsāhi, Vīrama, and the few Rajputs that remained with him. While Hammīra’s hubris may have served to instruct future rulers on proper kingly conduct, it is Hammīra’s death, the *jauhar* of the court and



Mahimāsāhi's family, and Mahimāsāhi's fight in battle and service to Hammīra even after the king's death that defined the Rajput ethos in this text.

A close look at the texture of the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* and *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh*, the literary traditions in which Nayacandra Sūri and Padmanābha chose to write their texts, and the audience's understanding of these traditions, reveals many similarities and differences on a textual level. The composition of poetry during the fifteenth century underwent a radical change as vernacular literature finally overcame Sanskrit as the poet's primary language of choice. Vernacular literatures certainly existed prior to the fifteenth century and poets still composed works in Sanskrit after the fifteenth century, but it was in the fifteenth and subsequent centuries that vernacular literatures became the primary form of poetic and personal expression.<sup>414</sup> In spite of this change in language and literary convention, the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* and *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* still have much in common. Both texts contained similar tropes, schemata, and didactic stories that defined the Rajput social identity. These similarities between two texts from different yet related literary traditions reflected other changes in fifteenth-century society.

#### **HAMMĪRA MAHĀKĀVYA, KĀṆHAḌADE PRABANDH, AND THE SOCIAL LOGIC OF THE TEXT**

As discussed earlier, Gabrielle Spiegel advanced a notion of the social logic of the text in which authors did not produce texts in isolation from the social events that surround them, rather they produced texts embedded in social events, languages, and conventions at the time of their composition. Nayacandra Sūri and Padmanābha composed the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* and *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* during the fifteenth century, but described events that occurred during the fourteenth century. The social

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<sup>414</sup> Sheldon Pollock, "The Cosmopolitan Vernacular," *Journal of Asian Studies* 57, no. 1 (1998): 6–37; "The Death of Sanskrit," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 43, no. 2 (2001): 392–496.

logic of the text dictates that the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* and *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* reflected fifteenth-century society more than the early fourteenth-century society the authors purported to describe. Contemporary readers didn't necessarily accept the descriptions in the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* and *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* as narratives that reflected the realities of Sultanate conquest and resistance, as Aziz Ahmad clearly did. One must place the text within the social and historical context in an attempt to decipher the author's reasoning and objective in composing the text. The *Hammīra Mahākāvya* and *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* reflected fifteenth-century society in the language of composition and in the themes of the text.

The reflection of fifteenth-century society may be clearly seen in the vernacular language of the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh*. In contrast to the Sanskritization or transliteration of Persian words in Sanskrit texts (both *kāvya* and inscriptions), Padmanābha included a variety of Persian words in the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh*. This list included a larger variety of Persianate names such as Ṣān̄jyāṃha (Khān Jahān), Malik Imādala (Imād ud-Allah), Malik Neb (Nā'ib), Malik Kamāladīn (Kamāl al-Dīn)<sup>415</sup> and an even larger list of Persian terms *mukardam* (*muqardam*), *patīśāh* (*padshāh*), *lasakar* (*lashkar*), *phurmāṇ* (*farmān*), *kamāṇī* (*kamānī*), just to name a few.<sup>416</sup> Readers familiar with South Asian languages may note that many of Padmanābha's transliterations are identical or nearly identical to modern Hindī transliterations of Persianate (Urdu) words. The use of Persian was so extensive in the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* that V. S. Bhatnagar boasted in the preface to his translation, "In sharp contrast [to Padmanābha's description and use of Persian terminology], the description of the

<sup>415</sup> Padmanābha, *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandha*, ed. Kantilal Baladevaram Vyas (Jodhpur: Rājasthān Prācyavidyā Pratiṣṭhān, 1997), 2.60.

<sup>416</sup> *Mukardam* (KP, 4 v.20), *phurmāṇ* for *farmān* (KP, 8 v.36), *patīśāh* (KP, 8 v. 38), *lasakar* (KP, 28 v. 135), *kamāṇī* (KP, 2 v.87). All references pertain to the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh*, ed. K. B. Vyas Vyas. The citation is (page, verse).

Deccan campaigns during Alāuddīn's time given by even that great master Amīr Khusrau in his *Khazāinul Futūh* appears childish and naïve from the point of view of the quality of narration and details."<sup>417</sup> Bhatnagar, unfortunately did not query why Padmanābha used such a vast array of Persian words (numbering over a hundred) or why he wrote these loanwords in a transliteration scheme that was far more accurate than his contemporary authors. Two answers are immediately apparent to this question.

The presence of Persian words in a vernacular Hindavī text may simply reflect the pluralistic society of fifteenth-century South Asia. Nationalist historiography, one of the dominant modes of historical interpretation for much of the twentieth century, postulated a regional dichotomy between Indic and Islamicate societies, languages, and cultures. Aziz Ahmad based his classification of medieval literature into epics of (Muslim) conquest and (Hindu) resistance on such a dichotomy. The feasibility of such a division in fifteenth-century Western India, however, seems quite unlikely. An overwhelming body of evidence indicates that Muslims lived throughout Western Hindūstān and around the region of Jālōr. To the north of Jālōr, the region of Nāgor was dominated by a Sufi and Muslim presence throughout the fifteenth-century. Muslim communities also existed south of Jālōr, in the large port town of Cambayat as well as the Gujarati Sultanate. The notion that Jālōr was somehow devoid of Islamicate influence from these two regions seems unlikely. The language of the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh*, therefore, simply reflected the heterogeneous society of the fifteenth century.

A second and more intriguing possibility was that Padmanābha read or understood Persian. A number of Muslim authors read or understood Sanskrit and

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<sup>417</sup> V. S. Bhatnagar, introduction to Padmanābha, *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh*, xx-xxi.

vernacular Hindavī texts and tales. Some even translated these works into Arabic and Persian or even composed original works in these languages. If a native speaker of Arabic or Persian could learn and compose works in vernacular Hindavī, it seems plausible that the converse may have also occurred and that individuals whose native language was the vernacular Hindavī may have read or even composed texts in Arabic or Persian. Bilingual or multilingual fluency remains common in many segments of South Asian society today. If Padmanābha understood Persian at either the written or spoken level, this may explain his correct use of Persian vocabulary, written and transliterated according to the rules of Hindavī. Padmanābha's conscious decision to use Persian words in the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* reflected an open society and textual tradition that could incorporate and circulate Persian language within texts.

Padmanābha also used a number of ethnic terms derived from Perso–Arabic and Indic languages. The word *mūṃgala*, from the Persian word *mughal*, was one of the oddest and most interesting of these words. The word *mughal* is best known in reference to the Mughals, who ruled South Asia from AD 1526 to 1707 (or 1857). Later authors and texts equated *mughal* and *turk* as synonyms for the same ethnic identity. Fourteenth-century Persian texts would have certainly distinguished a Mughal (Mongol) from a Turk, since the Mughals frequently raided the Delhi Sultanate and the borderlands of Western Hindūstān. When the word *mughal* occurred in Persianate sources of the fourteenth century, it invariably referred to someone of Mongolian ethnicity. Nayacandra Sūri in composing the Sanskrit *Hammīra Mahākāvya* also reserved the word *mūgala* (*mughal*) to refer to only to the four Mongols at the Ranthambhor fort.

The use of the word *mūṃgala* in the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* suggests a few possibilities. First, the Delhi Sultanate army may have enlisted far more *mughals* than

typically believed. *Mūṃgala* only occurred seven times in the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* and always in reference to Sultanate armies and battle.<sup>418</sup> Alternately, Padmanābha may have simply refused to distinguish between Mongol and Turk. Such an argument fails, however, when one considers the numerous references to *turaka* (Turks) within the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* and the use of *mūṃgala* and *turaka* in the same or subsequent verses. Third, the presence of *mūṃgala* in the text may indicate a revision to the text by a later author. Although a tempting idea, *mūṃgala* occurred in some of the earliest of the dated *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* manuscripts. It seems, therefore, that Padmanābha correctly used *mūṃgala* (*mughal*, Mongol) as an ethnic marker that differentiated Mongol from Turkish soldiers in the Sultanate army.

The use of *mūṃgala* as an ethnic marker may also explain Padmanābha's use of another Arab-Persianate word: *hindu*. The word *hīṃdū* (Hindu) occurred a surprising twenty-nine times in the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh*.<sup>419</sup> The word *hīṃdū* occurred *every time* in a verse or in proximity to a verse that mentioned another ethnic group such as the *mūṃgala* or *turaka*. This suggests an attempt to clarify which warriors, *hīṃdū* or other ethnic groups, were present when Padmanābha described battle scenes. Padmanābha only used *hīṃdū* as an ethnic designation (i.e., South Asian) in the description of battles and did not use the word *hīṃdū* adjectivally (or religiously) as in *hīṃdū* rituals, *hīṃdū* gods, or *hīṃdū* ceremonies.

Padmanābha also used a number of Persian and Indic language titles. The word *rāja* and the more prestigious *mahārāja* never appeared in the text. Instead, Padmanābha used the Persian and vernacular Hindavī terms *rāi* (31 occurrences), which

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<sup>418</sup> *Mūṃgala*: 2.15, 2.68, 3.78, 3.161, 4.116, 4.118, 4.155. All citations in this footnote and in footnotes 55–57 are to canto and verse in the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh*, ed. K. B. Vyas.

<sup>419</sup> *Hīṃdū*: 1.201, 1.205, 1.207, 1.208, 1.215, 2.18, 2.32, 2.42, 2.53, 2.110, 2.112, 2.164, 2.166, 3.78, 3.162, 3.163, 3.190, 4.108, 4.109, 4.111, 4.115, 4.117, 4.138, 4.155, 4.156, 4.169, 4.281, 4.309. All references are to canto and verse in the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh*, ed. K. B. Vyas.

meant king, when he referred to Kāṇhaḍ De and later in the text in reference to Vīram De.<sup>420</sup> In addition to *rāi* (king), Padmanābha frequently referred to Kāṇhaḍ De as *Rāula* (*Rāval*) Kāṇhaḍ De. Again, it seems that Padmanābha reflected fifteenth-century society in which *rāula/rāval* occurred in reemerging socio-political orders during the collapse of the Delhi Sultanate. This was a transition, however, since Padmanābha also used the term *rāula* to refer to warriors fighting in the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh*.

Padmanābha generally referred to Hindu warriors as either *rāu/rāuta* (52 occurrences) or *rāula (rāval)* (43 occurrences).<sup>421</sup> *Rāuta* and *rāval* both appeared as titles and positions of social rank. With the approach of the Sultanate army and the impending siege, one would have expected Kāṇhaḍ De to summon warriors and local administrators to Jālōr. It should also be noted that Padmanābha's use of Hindavī words did not negate the above suggestion that he may have understood Persian. Amīr Khuṣrau and numerous Persianate authors in the fourteenth-century Delhi Sultanate also referred to Indic rulers and soldiers as *rāi* and *rāval/rāul* (the word can be read either way in Persian script). Thus, Padmanābha followed the conventional social ranks and positions of the previous centuries as understood in the fifteenth century.

The one possible exception and the most interesting word in the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* was the actual word *rājput* (not *rājaputra*) that occurred twice in the text (2.18, 4.120). On both occasions, the word *rājput* occurred in passages heavy with ethnic identities that often included all three ethnic terms discussed above: *turaka*, *mūṃgala*,

<sup>420</sup> *Rāi*: 1.25, 1.32, 1.195, 1.241, 1.242, 1.255, 2.56, 3.5, 3.144, 3.174, 3.217, 3.228, 3.228, 3.236, 3.239, 3.244, 4.211, 4.53, 4.121, 4.126, 4.131, 4.133, 4.139, 4.150, 4.195, 4.200, 4.221, 4.224, 4.289, 4.310. All references are to canto and verse in the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh*, ed. K. B. Vyas.

<sup>421</sup> *Rāuta*: 1.22, 1.63, 1.88, 1.136, 1.150, 1.211, Atha Bhadauli (after 1.191), 2.48, 2.111, 2.167, 1.22, 1.81, 1.84, 1.135, 1.183, 1.208, 1.220, 2.122, 2.165, 3.9, 3.21, 3.36, 3.110, 3.187, 4.31, 4.43, 4.44, 4.95, 4.102, 4.117, 4.118, 4.119, 4.147, 4.175, 4.210, 4.232, 4.252, 4.253, 4.253, 4.256, 4.257, 4.280, 4.282, 4.282, 4.290, 4.285, 4.308, 4.311. *Rāula*: 1.128, 1.130, 1.141, 1.144, 1.182, 1.190, 1.194, 1.200, 1.222, 1.223, 1.224, 1.241, 2.50, 2.51, 3.149, 3.177, 3.183, 3.241, 4.43, 4.51, 4.143, 4.144, 4.145, 4.148, 4.175, 4.178, 4.179, 4.205, 4.205, 4.214, 4.227, 4.231, 4.252, 4.260, 4.281, 4.286, 4.292, 4.307, 4.327, 4.290. All references are to canto and verse in the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh*, ed. K. B. Vyas.

and *hīṃdū*. Although the word *rājput* was etymologically linked to the word *rājaputra*, the meaning in these passages remains unclear. *Rājaputra* literally means the sons of a king; yet, both uses of *rājput* in the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* referred to warriors in general and not the sons of kings. As argued in the previous chapter, inscriptions from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries used the term *rājaputra* as both a royal title and as a term of social and military rank: a general in charge of troops, a member of high rank within the royal court, and possibly an administrator over one or several regions of a kingdom. In both passages where the word *rājput* occurred, it generally referred to a vast body of men, a sum far greater than the inscriptional rank of *rājaputra* and including other ranks of warriors such as *rāula* (*rāval*) and *rāuta*. For example,

For twenty days, the fighting went on in this manner, ten thousand Rāuts and twenty thousand Mughals losing their lives. Yet the Muslims maintained their advance as they moved forward making and dismantling the wooden enclose (*Kāṭhgarh*). The Habshīs (Abyssinians) were also killed in large numbers by the brave Rājput̄s [Note: this word is not in the text]. The news spread all around that raiding (and dismantling) their *Kāṭhgarh*, the Muslim army had arrived as far as Pādūlai.

When Kāṇhaḍade came to know that both the Rājput̄ armies had virtually perished, he recalled both Māladeo and Vīramadeo, and sent Vyāsa to them for this purpose.<sup>422</sup>

It seems, therefore, that the occurrence of *rājput* in the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* has a figurative meaning. Any attempt to identify the possible figurative meaning of *rājput* within the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* would rely on examining the social logic of the two fifteenth-century texts discussed above: *Hammīra Mahākāvya* and *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh*.

At the time Nayacandra Sūri composed the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* and Padmanābha composed the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh*, the fall of Ranthambhor and Jālōr were a century to a century and a half in the past. The medieval audience knew the outcome

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<sup>422</sup> Translated by Bhatnagar from Padmanābha, *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh*, 82 and K. B. Vyas's edition of the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh*, 186–187.

of these battles as well as the death of Hammīra and Kāṇhaḍ De. It seems reasonable to believe other oral versions—that are now lost—recounted the life and death of Hammīra and Kāṇhaḍ De in the century before the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* and *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* appeared. The war was over; the outcome was well known. Why did Nayacandra Sūri and Padmanābha compose these texts at this time? Aside from a good story and entertainment on a cold Rajasthani night, did these texts have some role within fifteenth-century society?

As argued above, the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* and *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* both acted as didactic texts, instructing the audience to remain loyal to the ruler and to die in battle rather than betray one's ruler (and people) by acting as a traitor or fleeing from an ensuing battle. The texture of these texts and literary traditions indicate that a medieval audience would have recognized certain tropes, schemata, and motifs within the texts and interpreted them according to literary conventions. In particular, the audience would have recognized the poetic imagery, historical narrative, and didactic tales within these texts. This recognition, however, would have been situated in the social and historical context of the fifteenth century. The fifteenth century in these regions was radically different from the fourteenth century. The Khaljī conquests and subsequent rule broke the traditional political structures that existed in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. A new network of local ruling dynasties emerged following Khaljī conquest that systematically expanded and deepened as the next Delhi Sultanate dynasty (the Tughluqs) became increasingly unstable. Tīmūr's sack of Delhi in A.D. 1398 signaled the Delhi Sultanate's decline as a dominant military and political power. The fifteenth century brought a series of regional sultanates that based their military and political organization on the Delhi Sultanate model. These included sultanates such as the Gujarati Sultanate, Malwa Sultanate, Bahmani Sultanate as well as other



kingdoms that were ideologically sultanate such as Vijayanagara and the emerging Rajput kingdoms.

The kingdoms of southern and eastern Rajasthan that emerged during the fifteenth century faced numerous military threats: the Gujarati Sultanate to the south, Malwa Sultanate to the southeast and east, a smaller Delhi Sultanate to the east and northeast, and other re-emerging Indic (Rajput) kingdoms to the north and west. The number of regional sultanates (with a small letter *s* to include Rajput kingdoms) checked the expansion and emergence of any single regional realm into a transregional power. Any one sultanate had to face the possibility of attack from numerous competing sultanates on numerous frontiers, draining military resources to defend the frontier zones from the formation of an invading force. The reconstitution of these regional sultanates created a military market where warriors had ample opportunity to serve various regional sultanates. These opportunities eventually led to a military entrepreneurship of mercenary soldiers that developed into the *naukar* and Rajput systems of sixteenth- to eighteenth-century Mughal South Asia.<sup>423</sup>

When Nayacandra Sūri and Padmanābha lauded those warriors who remained loyal to the ruler and died fighting in a hopeless battle, they not only engaged in a texture of fealty to the king, but instructed the audience on the virtue of fidelity to both the king and one's people. Learning of Jāhaḍa's lie about the state of provisions, Hammīra rebuked Jāhaḍa, saying Jāhaḍa had caused the end of his race.<sup>424</sup> Sieges succeeded by seducing a guard to betray his besieged citizens and open a gate (as in the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh*), sow dissent (*Hammīra Mahākāvya*), leave a section of the outer wall unpatrolled, or other derelictions of duty. Ensuring loyalty within the ranks during the

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<sup>423</sup> Kolff, *Naukar, Rajput, and Sepoy*.

<sup>424</sup> *Hammīra Mahākāvya*, canto 13, verse 170.

fifteenth century, given the threat of military action from numerous sources and the rise in siege warfare, probably became an essential aspect in withstanding military assaults from rival sultanates or kingdoms. The *Hammīra Mahākāvya* and *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh*, however, went beyond teaching loyalty and forged a new identity centered on social fidelity and martial ethos.

Nayacandra Sūri and Padmanābha advanced the performance of *jauhar* and *satī* as exemplary acts of fidelity. ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Khaljī’s siege of Ranthambhor was the first recorded instance of *jauhar*, the immolation of women in the fire *before* their husbands departed for battle. Nayacandra Sūri gave the performance of *jauhar* a prominent place in the text, moving from his description of *jauhar* directly into a narration of climatic battle without any intervening verses to serve as a transition. Nayacandra Sūri, moreover, included two *jauhars* with the Mahimāsāhi’s slaying of his family as the first *jauhar*. Mahimāsāhi’s *jauhar* foreshadowed and emphasized the subsequent *jauhar* by the queens and princess. Hammīra, Mahimāsāhi, and the other warriors entered battle only after the *jauhar* was performed. The act of *jauhar* was repeated in a subsequent siege at the nearby Chittaur fort and in the two *jauhar* ceremonies Padmanābha described at the Jālōr fort. Padmanābha followed a formulaic pattern in describing the two *jauhar* ceremonies of Kāṇhaḍ De’s queens and the majority of the Jālōr warriors’ wives and the second, shorter *jauhar* of Vīrama De’s queens. Again, both instances preceded the climatic battle against overwhelming odds in which the death of the warriors was certain if not guaranteed (as in the case of Vīrama De). The act of *jauhar* occurred and reoccurred from the fourteenth century and became one of the identifiable traits of the Rajput social identity.<sup>425</sup> Nayacandra Sūri and Padmanābha

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<sup>425</sup> The British distributed a series of handbooks to their recruitment officers so that they could distinguish the so-called High Rajputs from the Low Rajputs and, more importantly, those who were impersonating a Rajput lineage to enter the Indian Army. The relevant book for Rajasthan is Captain A. H. Bingley, *Handbook on Rajputs* (1899; reprint, New Delhi: Asian Educational Services, 1986).

promote *jauhar* as a praiseworthy act of fidelity to one's family or people (*kulakṣaya*) regardless of how contemporary audiences may view these acts.

The act of *jauhar* actually committed the warrior to die in battle. A warrior generally fought in battles to survive and be reunited with his wife and family. In situations of siege, and particularly in a siege against an overwhelming force, the possibility a warrior might leave a battle by deserting, claiming a severe injury, or feigning death increased. In these situations a warrior's primary goal could be to emerge from the battle alive and reunite with his family, with a secondary goal of emerging victorious over opposing forces. The act of *jauhar* changed all of this. After *jauhar* was performed, the only means by which the warrior could reunite with his wife and family was through death on the battlefield and reunion in *svarga* (heaven). When Hammīra set out for the final battle in the *Hammīra Mahākāvya*, he simultaneously set out to behold his wives and daughter in heaven (*Hammīra Mahākāvya*, XIII.196). The performance of *jauhar* changed the warrior's objective: the warrior no longer fought to live; he fought to die in battle in order to live in the afterlife.

Yet Indic warriors still betrayed their ruler, their family and their people, and still acted disloyally. Nayacandra Sūri and Padmanābha scorned those who fled from battle or betrayed their ruler. Both authors contrasted the heavenly rewards received by the warrior with the abuse and even death received by those who betrayed their ruler and people. Nayacandra Sūri and Padmanābha, once again, attempted to forge a social and warrior identity that acknowledged and praised those who died in battle. At this moment, one may see a radical transformation emerging in the fifteenth-century *Hammīra Mahākāvya* and *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* that shifted the warrior's personal code of combat into a mass social identity in which everyone embodied the warrior ethos.

The term *rājput*, which occurred in only two verses of the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh*, provided the first textual evidence of this emerging social and warrior identity. As noted above, both uses of *rājput* (*Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh*, 2.18 and 4.120) occurred in passages heavy with ethnic identity. It therefore seems unlikely that the term referred to some ethnic group. Nor did *rājput* refer to the “sons of princes” or military generals (the two meanings of *rājaputra*) since both passages refer to entire armies as *rājput*. Rather, the term *rājput* in both passages referred to the emerging social and warrior identity that stressed fidelity to the ruler, the performance of *jauhar*, and the fight until death on the battlefield. The deaths of the *rājput*s in verse 4.120 in the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* (quoted on page 249), in which armies of *rājput*s died at various forts as the Delhi Sultanate army moved toward Jālōr, promoted an image in which the battles at these smaller forts mimicked the previous battle at the Siwāna fort (the subject of the second canto of the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh*) and the forthcoming Jālōr battle.

This reading of Rajput in the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* is derived from the social logic of the text as an artifact of the fifteenth century that anachronistically discussed the Delhi Sultanate’s conquest of fourteenth-century Jālōr, while actually addressing events and concerns of the fifteenth century. One may find the same social logic in another fifteenth-century text, the *Hammīra Mahākāvya*, that also anachronistically discussed the Delhi Sultanate’s conquest of another fourteenth-century fort. Nayacandra Sūri’s *Hammīra Mahākāvya* followed the same social logic as Padmanābha’s *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh*, but never used the word *rājput*. The most reasonable explanation for this difference lies in the different literary traditions of the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* and *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh*. Nayacandra Sūri chose to compose the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* in Sanskrit and would therefore have avoided a vernacular vocabulary; Padmanābha, in contrast, composed the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* in a vernacular form of Hindavī and could

introduce a vernacular word such as *rājṣū*. The linking of texture and social logic in these textual traditions, not to mention the final piece of the argument in understanding on how the concept of *rājṣū* began to emerge in these two fifteenth-century texts, reflects a radical change in social and warrior identity and requires a shift in focus to the metahistory within the text.

#### THE TRAGIC-HEROIC AS METAHISTORICAL EMPLOTMENT

The radical transformation of the social and warrior identity in the fifteenth century into an emerging Rajput identity found in later texts and historical records can be traced through an examination of the changing literary and historical conventions. Such an examination relies on an understanding of the similarities and differences in the texture between the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* and *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* as well as the awareness that these two texts reflected the social reality of the fifteenth century while describing battles of the fourteenth century. Literary traditions and history intersect in the fifteenth century and transform the metahistory of the text through an introduction of a new historical emplotment: the Tragic-Heroic.<sup>426</sup> The Tragic-Heroic emplotment became the dominant emplotment of these and subsequent Rajput tales. In the Rajput tale of the fifteenth century and continuing into modern day, the audience knew that the Rajput men and women would meet with a tragic end—the women would commit *jauhar* and the men would die in the final battle—yet this tragedy

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<sup>426</sup> The term Tragic-Comedic might be more in line with Hayden White's categories, based on the work of Northrop Frye, for metahistorical emplotment. I depart from White's categories for two reasons. First, while Hayden White notes that Comedy and Tragedy are related forms, their ability to complement each other in a way similar to the combined emplotments of the Comic Satire or the Satirical Comedy (*Metahistory*, 10) remains questionable. Second, the emplotment of the Rajput tale is clearly Tragedy while the reconciliation of this tale is Comedy. The audience expects and anticipates the tragic ending, yet leaves with the (Comedic) sense that a victory has been attained and the world is better. In order to reconcile the emplotment with the reconciliation in Rajput tales, I have chosen the term Tragic-Heroic to describe both the structure and the effect of the Rajput tale. See Hayden White, *Metahistory*, and Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957).

becomes glorified by the audience and society to create a heroic interpretation that glorified the sacrifices these Rajput men and women made.

The role or even existence of tragedy in Sanskrit texts remains contentious at best. Bhāmaha, one of the earliest Sanskrit literary critics and a founder of the *alaṅkāra* school of Sanskrit literary wrote the following description of *mahākāvya* in the sixth (?) century.

*Mahākāvya* is that which is made up of (parts called) *Sargas*; which treats of the Big and is big; is devoid of vulgarity of expression; has (profound) significance; contains Figures of Speech and treats of the good. It also consists of (the description of) state-councils, messengers, travel, war and the good fortunes of the Hero. It contains also the five *Sandhis*. It does not require much commentary and has a prosperous ending. While describing the four-fold objects of human existence it relates chiefly to the acquisition of wealth, conforms to the ways of the world, and contains separately the various *Rasas*. After having first placed the *Nāyaka* (hero) by extolling his ancestry, prowess, knowledge, etc. do not narrate his destruction with the object of enhancing the glory of another. If he (the person first described) is not intended to dominate the whole poem and (further) is not to participate in the (final) success, it is useless to describe him at the beginning.<sup>427</sup>

Bhāmaha's description of *mahākāvya* largely conformed to Daṇḍin's description (quoted above) written a century later. Nayacandra Sūri followed these requirements of the *mahākāvya* in his composition of the *Hammīra Mahākāvya*. The difference between the two descriptions and the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* is found in Bhāmaha's statement that the *kavi* (poet) may not kill the *nāyaka* (hero, protagonist) at the end of the poem. P. V. Naganatha Sastry, the translator of the above passage, wrote that the word *nāyaka* should read *pratināyaka* (anti-hero, antagonist). According to Naganatha Sastry's reading, the *kavi* should not create an antagonist with whom the audience begins to identify only to kill him in an attempt to increase the *nāyaka*'s glory, since this may

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<sup>427</sup> Bhāmaha, *Kāvyaṅkāra of Bhāmaha*, 2d ed., trans. P. V. Naganatha Sastry (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1970), 7-9.

alienate the audience who has begun to identify with the *pratināyaka* (antagonist).<sup>428</sup> P. V. Naganatha Sastry's argument for reading *pratināyaka* instead of *nāyaka*, although logical, has two flaws. First, it is hard to imagine that Bhāmaha, one of the leading Sanskrit literary critics, made such a blatant error in confusing the *nāyaka* with the *pratināyaka* and that a subsequent Sanskrit literary critic such as Daṇḍin failed to comment or correct this error. Second, the death of the *pratināyaka* did occur in Sanskrit literature and occurred in a text as popular and pervasive as the Rāmayaṇa in which Rāvaṇa (the *pratināyaka*) died (and died arguably to increase the fame of Rāma). The correct reading, therefore, seems to be *nāyaka* and that the author should not kill the *nāyaka* (protagonist) to enhance the glory of another.

Sigfried Lienhard followed this line of Sanskrit literary criticism in his book, *A History of Classical Poetry: Sanskrit –Pali–Prakrit*. In his discussion of the *sargabandha mahākāvya* (lit., the *mahākāvya* of many chapters), Lienhard wrote:

Like drama, *mahākāvya* could not finish in tragedy. An unhappy ending was unthinkable as the hero, an ideal type, often divine or semidivine, could never go wrong. Poetry was also to teach the lesson that, thanks to divine providence, the good will always triumph in the end in spite of all the vagaries of fortune.<sup>429</sup>

Lienhard agreed with Bhāmaha's statement that the *kavi* (poet) may not and indeed did not kill the *nāyaka* (hero, protagonist) of the *mahākāvya*. Lienhard also echoed Bhāmaha and Daṇḍin's admonition that through *kāvya* the poet endeavored to show the *nāyaka* obtained the four goals of life: *kāma* (immaterial pleasure), *artha* (material pleasure), *dharma* (right living), and *mokṣa* (spiritual liberation).

A general survey of Sanskrit *mahākāvya*s supports the absence of tragedy in Sanskrit *mahākāvya* literature. The *Navasāhasāṅkacarita* ended with the King

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<sup>428</sup> Ibid.

<sup>429</sup> Siegfried Lienhard, *History of Classical Poetry: Sanskrit, Pali, Prakrit* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1984), 161.

Navasāhasānka slaying Vajrānkuśa and wedding Śaśiprabhā. Excluding the final canto of the *Vikramānka devacarita* that described the poet's life and his patronage in the court, the poem ended with Vikramānka Deva's successful defeat of the Cola kingdom. Jayānaka's *Prthvīrāja Vijaya* (*Conquests of Prthvīrāja*), although missing the final canto, probably narrated the victory of Prthvīrāja Cāhamāna over regional armies and perhaps even his first victory over the Ghūrid army. The *Prthvīrāja Vijaya* is particularly relevant since Prthvīrāja Cāhamāna was an ancestor of Hammīra Cāhamāna and was mentioned in the opening chapters of the *Hammīra Mahākāvya*. Although the text is incomplete with only a part of the final *sarga* remaining, the title (*Conquests of Prthvīrāja*) suggests a date of composition and termination of the story before Prthvīrāja Cāhamāna's death while fighting the Ghūrid army at the second battle of Tarain in A.D. 1192. The *Madhurāvijaya* (*Conquest of Madhura*), composed by Gaṅgādevī, also ended with the victory of Kampaṇa over the Madurai sultan. The *Hammīra Mahākāvya*, therefore, was an exception to this literature in its description of the *nāyaka* Hammīra's death in the penultimate *sarga*. Lienhard noted in his analysis of the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* that "It is true that the poem ends in tragedy, with the death of the royal family and the suicide of the king himself, who rides straight into the enemy army," but did not comment on this anomaly.<sup>430</sup> Nayacandra Sūri has thus become a paradox among the Sanskrit poets, following the texture and literary traditions of Sanskrit and yet apparently violating a basic premise of the *mahākāvya* by killing the story's *nāyaka*.

A. K. Warder reconciled this contradiction through an argument that tragedy did not truly exist in Sanskrit literature since the *nāyaka* obtained liberation.<sup>431</sup> Any

<sup>430</sup> Lienhard, *History of Classical Poetry*, 211.

<sup>431</sup> A. K. Warder, *Literary Criticism*, vol. 1 of *Indian Kāvya Literature*, 7 vols. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1971). Warder writes, "It is clear from the *Nāṭyaśāstra* (though almost taken for granted) that the ending of a play should be auspicious. A famous hero ought not to be killed in a *nāṭaka* (the main kind of play)" (1: 26). Only two pages later he writes, "In atheist orthodox Brahmanism (Mīmāṃsā tradition) the meticulous observance of the duties of one's station and the due performance of rituals leads to rebirth



Western-educated individual with even a rudimentary knowledge of tragedy in Western literature will recognize Warder's argument as the same argument made for the decline of tragedy in Christian Rome. Tragedy, in its truest form, could not exist in Christian Rome since the martyred protagonist would end the play residing in Heaven—the very antithesis of tragedy. The same argument, according to Warder, may be applied to the death of the *nāyaka* in so-called Sanskrit Tragedies. Hammīra died but resided in *svarga* (heaven) with his wives, an outcome that is not lamented but desired. The *Hammīra Mahākāvya* and other examples of Tragedy in Sanskrit literature, therefore, were not tragic.

Bhāmaha and Daṇḍin prohibited the death of the protagonist, Jayānaka and Gaṅgādevi refused to acknowledge the death of the protagonists (even when the Ghūrīds had no such qualms), yet Nayacandra Sūri and Padmanābha celebrated the death of the protagonist. Something seems to have changed in the fifteenth century that enabled poets to introduce a tragic-heroic emplotment that killed the protagonist and praised his death. Once the tragic-heroic plot was introduced, the audience that heard the recitation of this literature would have expected the *nāyaka* (protagonist) of the story to meet with a tragic ending. They would have identified with the *nāyaka*, hoping for his victory while subconsciously realizing that it could only end in defeat. The poets transformed this defeat into a heroic success by glorifying the *nāyaka*'s death and his prowess on the battlefield, by lauding the means of his death as the epitome of human action, and by highlighting his attainment of liberation and happiness in

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in heaven. The intermediate moralist variations need no further comment. Thus death is not tragic but a phase in the grand development of the universe. It leads to a just reincarnation or to divine happiness. Moreover, since a play deals with some episode and should be auspicious, the (main) hero is finally triumphant and his death cannot take place unless as an apotheosis (which in fact is a rare ending). It is a rule that the death of any character should not be represented on stage. It must be reported to a character on the stage, or may be observed and described by those on the stage (e.g. watching a battle from a point of vantage)..." (1: 28).

heaven with wives and *apsaras* (nymphs). The tragic–heroic emplotment retained the tragic expectation while transforming the tragic demise of the protagonist into the triumphalistic and heroic ending. This tragic–heroic emplotment entered the metahistory of fifteenth–century texts to become the dominant emplotment of the Rajput tale.

The core of the Rajput historical tale, whether completely historical or bordering between history and legend, was emplotted as a tragic–heroic account. In the fifteenth century, metahistory and didactic tale combined to produce accounts that were simultaneously tragic–heroic and didactic. The audience entered these tales expecting to hear about the demise of the Rajputs, the women performing *jauhar* and *satī*, and the men entering battle against overwhelming odds and certain death, and then to leave the tale exalting the Rajputs’ fidelity to their principles. The didactic side of these Rajput tales utilized historical figures to instruct the fifteenth–century audience and transformed a latent warrior identity, found in the inscriptions of the previous century, into a new Rajput social and warrior identity. This identity that emerged in the fifteenth century, developed in the sixteenth and subsequent centuries into the modern Rajput social identity. The *Hammīra Mahākāvya* and *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* contained many themes that later became identifiably Rajput such as the performance of *jauhar*, the fidelity of the warrior, and the warrior’s extraordinary feats in an unwinnable battle against overwhelming odds.

This tragic–heroic emplotment in the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* changed the texture of the text. Sanskrit literary critics such as Bhāmaha and Daṇḍin as well as modern literary critics of Sanskrit poetics such as Lienhard and Warder have rejected the role of tragedy in Sanskrit *mahākāvya*; yet, Nayacandra Sūri’s Sanskrit *Hammīra Mahākāvya* contained a definable element of tragedy, even if in a modified tragic–heroic form. This

suggests that the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* was actually a proto-vernacular text, transitioning from the previously dominant tradition of composition in Sanskrit to an increasingly prominent tradition of composition in vernacular language. A study of vernacular literary traditions and the presence or absence of tragedy in these literary works before the fifteenth century should reveal whether the introduction of the tragic-heroic emerged in the fifteenth century due to certain social circumstances or whether such an emplotment previously existed in these literatures. In the end, it seems more prudent to categorize the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* as a Sanskrit *mahākāvya* in the fifteenth-century vernacular tradition.

## CONCLUSION

After translating a large part of the thirteenth *sarga* of the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* and comparing this to select passages from the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh*, the thrust of this chapter turned to an analysis of the texture, social logic, and metahistory of the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* and *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh*. An examination of texture within the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* and *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* as well as between the texts revealed differences in style and composition that reflected the different literary traditions of Sanskrit and the vernacular Hindavī literary traditions. Yet, the textures of these texts also contained a number of similarities. The transformation in the metahistory of these texts with the introduction of a tragic-heroic emplotment, in particular, linked the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* and *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh*. The tragic-heroic emplotment in these two texts also wove a didactic story that defined the emerging social and warrior identity in the fifteenth century that fully developed in the subsequent centuries as the Rajput social and warrior identity. This tragic-heroic emplotment combined with a didactic tale on idealized social behaviors developed in response to societal changes in the fifteenth century.

The *Hammīra Mahākāvya* and *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* were composed in the fifteenth century and reflect fifteenth-century Western Hindūstān. Society at that time underwent numerous changes as the Delhi Sultanate fractured from a pan-Indic power and into a series of kingdoms based on the sultanate model (including the Rajput kingdoms). These regional sultanates, which were quite numerous, checked the expansion of any one kingdom as military forces had to be distributed along multiple borders along the kingdom. It seems likely that the military entrepreneurship emerged during this period, as discussed by Dirk Kolff, and that Hindus, Muslim, and even some Mongols from Central Asia passed in and out of military service in various kingdoms.<sup>432</sup> Padmanābha's *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh*, in particular, reflected a society composed of Indic, Turkic, and Mongol ethnicities. Padmanābha's use of Persian words, in both variety and in correct transliteration, suggests the author's familiarity and perhaps ability to speak and read Persian. It certainly challenges modern conceptions of the audience, suggesting an audience that was pluralistic, bilingual, or at least familiar with the Persian vocabulary that Padmanābha employed.

The Delhi Sultanate invasions of the fourteenth century, the subsequent Delhi Sultanate rule, and the rise of new ruling elites distinct from the pre-Sultanate invasions provided the necessary catalyst for these changes to occur. The Delhi Sultanate invasions united the various Indic segments of society in a way that was largely impossible before. Prior to the Sultanate conquests, a battle between two Indic dynasties, armies, or tribes could not produce a Rajput notion of the Indic warrior because the other side was similarly Indic in customs and identity. Nor could such an identity have developed from Hindu battles against non-Hindu groups such as the Bhils, since these non-Hindu communities were becoming the Hinduized as seen in

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<sup>432</sup> This is what Kolff terms as the military labour market in *Naukar, Rajput & Sepoy*.

folk-tales such as the epic of Pābūjī. The ethnic, religious, and social differences of the Delhi Sultanate provided the necessary contrast to promote a new Rajput social identity. This identity rapidly expanded across marital and regional alliances that existed prior to and after the Delhi Sultanate invasions of the fourteenth century while simultaneously developing latent social and warrior concepts present in the socio-political networks discussed in the previous chapter.<sup>433</sup>

This brings the discussion back to the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* and *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* and the surprising role that two Muslims play throughout these two texts. The actions of Mahimāsāhi and Fīrūza embodied many of the Rajput attributes the texts promoted: Mahimāsāhi's performance of a *jauhar*-like act, Fīrūza's performance of *satī*; Mahimāsāhi's loyalty to Hammīra, and Fīrūza's loyalty to Vīram De even when continually rebuffed; and finally Mahimāsāhi and Fīrūza's choice to follow Hammīra and Vīram De in death, which displayed their fidelity to their vows. Although Hammīra and Kāṇhaḍ De were the *nāyaka* of these texts, Mahimāsāhi and Fīrūza displayed the Rajput ethos more than their *nāyaka* counterparts. Mahimāsāhi and Fīrūza enabled Nayacandra Sūri and Padmanābha to engage in a process of symbiosis by introducing a type of warrior and social identity that was overlaid on the Muslims who became Rajput. In this process of symbiosis, the audience could attribute any foreign or alien action performed by Mahimāsāhi or Fīrūza to their foreign status. Yet, as Mahimāsāhi and Fīrūza increasingly exemplified the Rajput ethos they brought these foreign actions into the Rajput social identity. Nayacandra Sūri and Padmanābha introduced a new warrior identity superimposed on a people outside of the traditional *kṣatriya* fold, yet one that operated as Indic (Rajput) warriors. Aziz Ahmad's classification of distinct

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<sup>433</sup> For a discussion of Rajput family, social, and political networks see Brajdulal Chattopadhyaya, "Origin of the Rajputs," and Nandini Sinha Kapur, *State Formation in Mewar*.

and separate literary and social traditions reflected in distinct and separate literary epics—epics of conquest and epics of resistance—thus fails to capture the nuances or even accurately reflect the complex processes that occurred in medieval literature.

## Chapter 6

### Conquest, Resistance, and Trajectories

It is amazing what the Hindu man does for fidelity.  
On account of this, he feels the oppression of sword and fire.

The woman, with longing, burns herself at the man's feet.  
While the man dies for their idol or for their lord.

Although this is not permissible in Islam,  
You see, nevertheless, how great an act it is.

Amīr Khuṣrau, *Nuh Sipīhr* <sup>434</sup>

#### AZIZ AHMAD'S EPICS OF CONQUEST AND RESISTANCE

In his article, "Epic and Counter-Epic in Medieval India," Ahmad divided medieval South Asian literature into two categories: epics of conquest and counter-epics of resistance. Ahmad wrote that Amīr Khuṣrau established the epic of conquest with the *Miftah al-Futūḥ*, "the first war epic (*razmīya*) written in Muslim India."<sup>435</sup> In addition to the *Miftah al-Futūḥ*, Ahmad labeled the *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ* (examined in chapter two), the 'Āshiq also known as *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān* (chapter three), the *Nuh Sipīhr* (chapter three), and the *Tughluq Nāma* as additional epics of conquest. The Hindu epic of resistance included works such as the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* (chapter five) and the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* (chapter five).<sup>436</sup> Ahmad stipulated that each of these epics developed within their own literary tradition and conformed to the literary conventions of that tradition.<sup>437</sup> These texts indicate that the exact opposite occurred:

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<sup>434</sup> Translated by the author from Amīr Khuṣrau, *Nuh Sipīhr*, ed. Mohammad Wahid Mirza (London: Oxford University Press, 1950), 194–195. For an alternate English translation, see R. Nath and Faiyaz Gwaliari, *India as Seen by Amir Khuṣrau*, 99–100.

<sup>435</sup> Aziz Ahmad, "Epic and Counter-Epic in Medieval India," 470.

<sup>436</sup> The *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* escaped Aziz Ahmad's attention, perhaps because it was not translated into English in 1963. The text, however, clearly adhered to Ahmad's category as an epic of resistance.

<sup>437</sup> Ahmad had some difficulty, however, when he attempted to justify his division and separation of Hindus and Muslims in Muḥammad Jāisi's *Padmāvat* written in A.D. 1540 and Vidyāpati Ṭhakura, *Puruṣa*

the history, literary traditions, and cultural traditions not only interacted, they formed a single society and civilization.

Aziz Ahmad opened his article with an important paragraph that placed his argument in context and also made several important—albeit vague—qualifications to his argument.

Muslim impact and rule in India generated two literary growths: a Muslim epic of conquest and a Hindu epic of resistance and of psychological rejection. The two literary growths were planted in two different cultures; in two different languages, Persian and Hindi; in two mutually exclusive religious, cultural and historical attitudes, each confronting the other in aggressive hostility. Each of these two literary growths developed in mutual ignorance of the other... The Muslim and the Hindu epics of Medieval India can therefore hardly be described as ‘epic’ and ‘counter-epic’ in the context of a direct relationship of challenge and response. Yet one of them was rooted in the challenge asserting the glory of Muslim presence, and the other in the response repudiating it. In this sense one may perhaps use the term ‘counter-epic’ for the Hindi heroic poetry of Medieval India as I have done....<sup>438</sup>

Ahmad began by noting that medieval poets composed epics of conquest and resistance that reflected “two mutually exclusive religious, cultural, and historical attitudes each confronting each other in aggressive hostility.”<sup>439</sup> Aziz Ahmad never claimed that this confrontation of conquest and resistance occurred. The epics of conquest and

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*Parīkṣā*, translated as *The Test of Man: Being the Puruṣa-Paīkṣhā of Vidyāpati Thakkura*, trans. George Grierson, Oriental Translation Fund (New Series), no. 33 (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1935). Ahmad classified the *Padmāvat* as an epic of conquest even though “...‘Alā’ al-Dīn Khaljī, the counter-hero is not exactly the villain of the piece... the allegory is loose and the epic strain second-handed and subordinated to the didactic. Jāisī’s real intention seems to be to tell a good story which would appeal to his fellow-villagers, the large majority of whom were Hindus” (“Epic and Counter-Epic,” 476). He similarly classified the *Puruṣa Parīkṣā* as an epic of resistance even though it “tells of Hindu rājas coming to the aid of Muḥammad bin Tughluq against a fellow-Hindu rāja and Kāfūr.” (ibid, 476). Grierson and Dviveda translated Jāisī’s *Padmāvat* as part of the Bibliotheca Indica series. Grierson also translated the *Puruṣa Parīkṣā* as *The Test of a Man* in the Oriental Translation Fund series.

<sup>438</sup> Ahmad, “Epic and Counter-Epic,” 470.

<sup>439</sup> Aziz Ahmad essentially infused his analysis with the Two Nation Theory, which stated that India and Pakistan constituted two separate and distinct nations in both the present and the past. Thus, Muslim (Pakistan) and Hindu (India) civilization contained two separate languages, religions, cultures, and so forth that “aggressively confronted each other,” but never interacted in the medieval past.



resistance existed as a historical attitude, in the realm of literature's imagined past rather than the historical past. Yet, Ahmad proceeded in his analysis to examine the texts as reflections of a historical past rather than an imaginative, literary construct.

It seems to me that Ahmad's thesis required Hindus and Muslims to know about the other's opposing viewpoint, which in turn means that Hindus and Muslims interacted and did not form separate and distinct communities. Indic authors most likely knew the content of the Persianate epics of conquest so that they could fashion a counter-epic of resistance in response. Authors would not have produced effective counter-epics without this knowledge, which in turn implied that Indic and Persianate authors read or heard about the contents of each other's works. Such acquaintance probably increased in the fifteenth century as vernacular literatures increasingly supplanted the classical literatures of Sanskrit and Persian. Vernacular literatures probably exposed their readers or audience to a larger array of Indic and Persianate themes. The vernacular texts from the thirteenth to fifteenth century that exist today refer to vernacular authors and compositions that are now lost, which suggests a much more extensive body of literature existed in the past.

Aziz Ahmad argued that he focused on epics of conquest and resistance produced by two separate and distinct civilizations. My interpretation of these texts indicates the opposite: that a single Hindūstānī civilization, albeit one composed of increasingly different cultural traditions, existed in Delhi and Western Hindūstān.<sup>440</sup> These Indic and Persianate literatures react and interact with each other to produce

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<sup>440</sup> I view this as a single civilization, rather than multiple civilizations, since Indo-Muslims incorporated aspects of Indic festivals and fairs, marriage ceremonies, folklore, art and literature, and so forth. I view Hindu and Muslim societies and cultures as existing in symbiosis with each other similar to the model of symbiosis advanced by Steven Wasserstrom in *Between Muslim and Jew*. I will return to the concept of symbiosis at the end of this chapter.

competing claims of conquest and resistance.<sup>441</sup> This reaction and interaction occurred beyond the battle narratives or the production of literary texts. Hindus and Muslims both suffered conquests and engaged in conquests. Conquest and reconquest (probably the ultimate form of resistance) had a strangely complimentary role, as conquests broke down social structures and leading to a reconstitution of Delhi and Rajput society that ultimately led to new social orders. These new social orders developed in the sixteenth and seventeenth century into the Indo–Muslim and the Rajput identities found in Mughal and modern texts.

#### INVASION AND ITS IMPACT ON IDENTITY

Aziz Ahmad followed a commonly held view when he portrayed South Asia's medieval historiography as one of Muslim conquest and then countered this interpretation with a thesis of Hindu resistance. Ghaznavid invasions and then the Ghūrid conquest of the Gangetic Dōāb led to the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate in the opening years of the thirteenth century. The Delhi Sultanate annexed Western Hindūstān and conquered the Deccan peninsula in the beginning of the fourteenth century before it declined at the end of this century. The standard history of the thirteenth and fourteenth century has portrayed the triumph of the Delhi Sultanate over Hindu and Mongol adversaries. This triumph, however, was tempered by the Mongol conquest of Persia, the influx of Persian émigrés who fled Mongol destruction, the Mongols' sacking of Baghdad and their execution of the 'Abbāsīd caliph in A.H. 656/A.D. 1258. The destruction of the 'Abbāsīd caliphate strongly resonated within the

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<sup>441</sup> Thus, I have not refuted Aziz Ahmad's thesis that literatures of conquest and resistance existed; rather, I have challenged his correlation of conquest/resistance to a particular community. Medieval authors may have composed works according to the themes of conquest and resistance. I would argue that 'Iṣāmī wrote the *Futūḥ al-Salaṭīn* as an epic of resistance in which he narrated Muḥammad bin Tughluq's atrocities and justified the rebellion and establishment of the Bahmanid Sultanate. I would similarly argue that Gaṅgādevī wrote the *Madhurāvijaya* as an epic of conquest that culminated with the conquest of the Madurai Sultanate.

Hindūstānī Muslim community because the Ghaznavid, Ghūrid, and Ghulām sultans all sought the political legitimacy of the ‘Abbāsīd caliph and viewed themselves as the frontier of the Islamicate world. The fall of the ‘Abbāsīd caliphate and the Mongol occupation of Persia isolated the subcontinent and transformed it from an Islamicate frontier to a island of Islam. Aziz Ahmad was correct when he identified the prominence of conquest in Sultanate literature; however, this conquest revolved around a Muslim community that was conquered before it engaged in conquest.

Amīr Khuṣrau spent the bulk of the *Khazā’in al-Futūḥ* describing and praising ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Khaljī’s conquest of Hindūstān. Amīr Khuṣrau opened the *Khazā’in al-Futūḥ* with a chapter that praised ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Khaljī’s social reforms, economic reforms, and his construction of public works that included both the expansion of the Quwwāt al-Islām and Quṭb Minār as well as the fortification of Delhi Sultanate cities to withstand Mongol attacks. The next chapter narrated the Delhi Sultanate’s repeated successes in repelling the Mongol attacks launched by the Il-Khānids from Persia. At a time when the Islamicate world had succumbed to Mongol conquest and when the ‘Abbāsīd caliph and the city of Baghdad had fallen to the Mongol army, ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Khaljī overcame the Mongol invasions and expanded the Islamicate Delhi Sultanate through a decade of successful conquests. Aziz Ahmad wrote that Hindus often experienced the epic of resistance as a form of psychological resistance to Muslim conquest.<sup>442</sup> I believe that Hindūstānī Muslims displayed the same psychological resistance to the Mongol conquests and viewed Amīr Khuṣrau’s *Khazā’in al-Futūḥ* as an epic of resistance that celebrated the Delhi Sultanate’s power.

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<sup>442</sup> Ahmad, “Epic and Counter-Epic,” 472. Richard Davis examined psychological resistance in more depth in *Lives of Indian Images*, 89–91. Davis modified Ahmad’s classification of the *Madhurāvijaya* as an epic of resistance, when he claimed that it was an epic of reconquest in the fourth chapter, pages 115–22.

As an epic of resistance, the *Khazā'in al-Futūh* countered a psychological trauma caused by the Mongol conquest of Persia and the isolation of the Hindūstānī Muslims from the larger Muslim community. This isolation led to a search for authority later examined by Simon Digby and later Sunil Kumar. As the Muslim community turned from westward to inward, the Hindūstānī Muslims focused on the Sufi and the sultan as two sources of authority. The competition between Sufi and sultan, however, only appears as a product of historical hindsight. The Muslim community of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries probably sought for multiple sources of authority including the Sufi and sultan, but also the learned class (*'ulamā'*), the Muslim community itself (*'umma*), and the traditions of Indic society native to many of the Hindūstānī Muslims.<sup>443</sup>

Amīr Khuṣrau's *Khazā'in al-Futūh*, *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, and *Nuh Sipihr* reflect this search for authority. The *Khazā'in al-Futūh* contains unabashed panegyric for 'Alā' al-Dīn in a *fatḥnāma* style of prose composition with little mention of mystic themes (neither religion nor love). Four years after writing the *Khazā'in al-Futūh*, Khuṣrau composed the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr*. The text describes the courtship and marriage of Deval Rānī and Khizr Khān, the son of 'Alā' al-Dīn Khaljī and designated heir to the Delhi Sultanate throne. Khuṣrau and Khizr Khān belonged to the inner circle of the royal court of 'Alā' al-Dīn as well as the spiritual court of Niẓām al-Dīn. Given the affinity to Sufi and sultan shared by both men, it should come as not surprise that Khuṣrau praises both the Sufi and the sultan in the text, beginning with praises to Niẓām al-Dīn,

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<sup>443</sup> Akbar Hyder at the University of Texas raised the question of *'ulama* as a source of authority over a lunch on March 5, 2007. I have erroneously lumped the *'ulama* with the *'umma* in my analysis, an oversight that I hope to correct in the near future. As Akbar Hyder pointed out during lunch, the categories themselves lead to problems since one could be both *'ulamā'* and Sufi. An example of this would be Minhāj al-Dīn Sirāj al-Dīn Jūzjānī (b. A.H. 589/A.D. 1193, d. after A.H. 658/A.D. 1260), the author of the *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī*, who was a jurist (and hence part of the *'ulama*) as well as a respected Sufi in thirteenth-century Delhi.

followed by a long section of panegyric on ‘Alā’ al-Dīn’s conquests, and finally moving to the love-story interspersed with the Sufi-infused poetic interludes.

Khuṣrau repeated this format in the *Nuh Sipihr* three years later, when he praised Niẓām al-Dīn and then ‘Alā’ al-Dīn’s son and the reigning sultan, Quṭb al-Dīn Mubāarak Shāh. The *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān* and *Nuh Sipihr* when read together reveal a third dimension to the search for authority: the traditions of the Muslim community as its own source of authority. Turning his gaze inward to a tradition that is neither Turkish nor Persian, but Hindūstānī, Amīr Khuṣrau makes a concerted effort in these poems to introduce Hindūstānī imagery in place of the traditional Persian imagery. The *Nuh Sipihr*, in particular, utilized a Hindūstānī culture that acted as a source of authority.

The emergence of a Rajput social and warrior identity, I believe, followed the same pattern as the emergence of the Indo-Muslim identity. ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Khaljī’s conquest and annexation of Western Hindūstān disrupted the traditional social order in this region, which in turn led to the rise of the Rajput identity. I argue that the Rajput social and warrior identity, as identified in later Mughal and modern texts and traditions, existed in a latent state before the fifteenth century. None of the published inscriptions from the Caulukya, Paramāra, and Cāhamāna dynasties contain references to any of the traits identified as Rajput (fidelity, extraordinary feats, *satī/jauhar*, tragic-heroic plot). While these inscriptions often referred to *rāutas*, *ṭhakkuras*, and *rājaputras*, identified in later periods as being synonymous with Rajput, I believe that these were status titles one earned or received from the ruler rather than markers of a martial or social identity.

Only two inscriptions, the Chittaur inscription of V.S. 1339/A.D. 1283 and the Acaleśvara inscription of V.S. 1342/A.D. 1285, contain attributes later found in the

Rajput tales. These inscriptions commemorate the establishment of the Guhila kingdom as a regional power. A number of verses include the particularly vivid and somewhat grotesque imagery commonly found in bardic tales as well as medieval Sanskrit texts such as the fourteenth-century *Madhurāvijaya*. The Guhilas most likely used this martial imagery in royal Sanskrit inscriptions to signal their kingdom's ascension in the discourse of medieval state formation. The Guhila kings in these inscriptions had no equal on the field of battle and no hint of subordination to another king. The discourse of medieval state formation occurs in many ways, yet the Guhila inscriptions state their claim through a particular form of medieval martial imagery.<sup>444</sup> The Guhilas could have chosen to proclaim their ascension through the image of divine kingship used by the Caulukyās, Paramāras, and Cāhamānas. They chose, instead, to use a martial imagery rooted (I believe) in the popular imagery found in now lost vernacular tales and partially preserved in the bardic tale. This inscription, therefore, spoke not only to other dynasties, but also to people familiar with the Guhila's past on the margin of Indic imperial states.

The Delhi Sultanate's conquest of the Cāhamāna, Guhila, Paramāra, and Caulukya dynasties destroyed a power structure that existed in the region for centuries. Annexed into the Delhi Sultanate through the reign of Muḥammad bin Tughluq (d. A.H. 752/A.D. 1351), these regions of Western Hindūstān exerted an increasing independence as the Delhi Sultanate waned in the second half of the fifteenth century.<sup>445</sup> Gujarat and Malwa became rival sultanates, while Hindu rulers in

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<sup>444</sup> For the rise of smaller kingdoms, their challenge to existing dynasties, and the establishment of their own dynasty see Hermann Külke and Dietmar Rothermund, *History of India*, 127–38.

<sup>445</sup> Later Rajput tales claimed Kāṇhaḍ De's brother governed Chittaur soon after 'Alā' al-Dīn Khaljī's conquest. Inscriptions, however, indicate that it was annexed into the Delhi Sultanate. Peter Jackson briefly discussed this matter in *Delhi Sultanate*, 198. The inscription cited was published by Z. A. Desai, "Inscriptions from the Victoria Hall Museum, Udaipur," *Epigraphia Indica Persian and Arabic Supplement*, 1955–56: 67–70.

Mewar and Marwar reestablished dynastic lineages. With political and social structures either dismantled under Sultanate rule, these emerging Indic kingdoms reconstituted themselves by turning to political and military families on the frontier—the very region in which many of these bardic tales circulated. These reconstituted kingdoms were infused, I believe, with a warrior and social identity that came from the classical warrior traditions of the *kṣatriya* as well as the warrior traditions that existed along the frontier of Indic society.

The Sultanate conquests and the reconstitution of kingdoms at the end of the fourteenth century may explain why the term *rājput* first appeared in Western Hindūstān in two fifteenth-century texts. These texts reflect a negotiation between the greater and lesser warrior traditions occurring at the time of their composition. For the first time in Western Hindūstān, all of the attributes of the Rajput identity as reflected in the Rajput tale (fidelity, extraordinary feats in battle, extraordinary death of *satī/jauhar*, and tragic-heroic plot) occurred in a single text. Nayacandra Sūri and Padmanābha compose the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* and the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* according to the conventions of classical literature, while infusing this literature with aspects of the warrior identity found in the bardic tale. Like Amīr Khuṣrau, the Rajputs sought authority in the whole of Hindūstānī society and formed the Rajput identity from social practices common at the time.

#### THE INTERSECTION OF HINDŪSTĀNĪ HISTORIES

At the end of his article, “Epic and Counter-Epic in Medieval India,” Aziz Ahmad noted that Muḥammad Jāisī’s *Padmāvat* and Vidyāpati Ṭhakura’s *Puruṣa Parīkṣā* both engaged in practices contrary to their community’s production of epics of conquest or resistance. He then went on to argue that the *Padmāvat* and *Puruṣa Parīkṣā* ultimately conformed to the epic of conquest and resistance. He allowed, nevertheless, that the

textual styles from the separate and distinct Muslim and Hindu communities could influence each other. These instances in which authors apparently crossed literary boundaries appear because Aziz Ahmad erred in his thesis that epics of conquest and resistance reflected “two different languages, Persian and Hindi; in two mutually exclusive religious, cultural and historical attitudes, each confronting the other in aggressive hostility.”<sup>446</sup> Jāisī and Vidyāpati found inspiration in a Hindūstānī society from which the texts originated and in which they circulated.

Amīr Khuṣrau turned to Hindūstānī culture and society as a source of authority in the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān* and *Nuh Sipīhr*. He repeatedly identifies himself in these verses as a Hindūstānī rather than a Persian, Turk, or even a Muslim. He lauds the virtues of Hindūstān and repeatedly favored the superiority of Hindūstān above either Arabia or Persia. The Hindūstān that he praised, however, went beyond the achievements of the Indo–Muslims to include the Muslim and Hindu communities as a whole. The epigraph at the beginning of this chapter, written by Amīr Khuṣrau, certainly contradicts Aziz Ahmad’s dichotomy between Hindu and Muslim. Instead of praising the Muslim conqueror, Amīr Khuṣrau praised Hindu fidelity (*vafā*). One could argue that by elevating the Hindu warrior, Amīr Khuṣrau also elevated the Muslims’ conquest. Such an explanation, however, fails to account for another instance where Amīr Khuṣrau praises the Hindus.

The Vedas are written in the Sanskrit which is the language of the Brahmans. They have learnt all arts and sciences from its (Vedic) literature.

This language (Sanskrit) is a pearl among pearls. It may be inferior to Arabic but it is decidedly superior to the best of the Persian, viz. Darī.

Although Darī is also a sweet language, the literary excellence of the Sanskrit is in no way inferior to that of Darī.

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<sup>446</sup> Aziz Ahmad, “Epic and Counter-Epic,” 470.



One, who had gone to the depth of this language (Sanskrit) cannot make a mistake in that respect.

Had I been able to acquire sufficient command of this language, I would have praised my King [Quṭb al-Dīn Mubārak Shāh] even in this language.<sup>447</sup>

These verses and the verses quoted earlier question Aziz Ahmad's assertion that Hindu and Muslim society was separate and distinct from each other. They show, instead, that Amīr Khuṣrau lived in a society of Hindus and Muslims and enjoyed all aspects of Hindūstān.

Padmanābha displayed a similar familiarity with Hindūstānī society through his use of Persian names and terminology. His transliterated Muslim names such as Imādala for Imād ud-Allah and Malik Kamāladīn for Kamāl al-Dīn and military terms such as *lasakar* (*lashkar*), *phurmāṇ* (*farmān*), *kamāṇī* (*kamānī*) in a system that was more accurate than most of his contemporary authors.<sup>448</sup> His *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh*, written a century and a half after the Delhi Sultanate's conquest of Jālōr, reflects the fifteenth century more than the first decade of the fourteenth century when the conquests happened. Padmanābha's fairly accurate transliteration of Persian words and their anachronistic use in this text suggest a familiarity with either the Persian language or the Persianate world. His highly accurate portrayal of the Sultanate court in the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* may indicate that he attended a sultanate court in Delhi, Malwa, or Gujarat and understood the rituals and symbols of Sultanate rule.

Another explanation, of course, is that these words had entered the vernacular language of the fifteenth century. Padmanābha, who composed the *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh* during the fifteenth century, simply used Muslim terminology to convey a more accurate picture of the events he described. Yet if Padmanābha used these words in a

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<sup>447</sup> Translated by Nath and Gwaliari, *India as Seen by Amīr Khuṣrau*, 74–76.

<sup>448</sup> *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh*, ed. K. B. Vyas: *mādala*, *malik kamāladīn* (2.60), *lasakar* (1.135), *phurmāṇ* for *farmān* (1.36), *kamāṇī* (2.87). Citations refer to canto and verse.

text that circulated among Rajputs, it suggests that the the words were known not only to him but to his audience as well. The notion of separate and distinct Muslim and Hindu societies and literatures is refuted once again by the presence of Persian words in a Hindavī vernacular text.

## TRAJECTORIES

Aziz Ahmad wrote that the medieval literature of the Delhi Sultanate period consisted of epics of conquest and resistance that reflected the historical attitudes of two separate and distinct societies. This dissertation has challenged Aziz Ahmad's thesis by analyzing texts Ahmad mentioned in his article: Amīr Khuṣrau's *Khazā'in al-Futūḥ*, *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, and *Nuh Sipīhr*, Nayacandra Sūri's *Hammīra Mahākāvya*, Padmanābha's *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh*, and eleventh to fourteenth-century inscriptions from Western Hindūstān. I adopted Aziz Ahmad's categories, engaged in a close reading of the texts, and rejected his thesis as inaccurate. The astute reader may question whether I have simply shifted the discourse substituting communal labels with the more inclusive (yet inherently divisive) words such as Indic, Islamicate, Persianate, and so forth. The very organization of this dissertation, with two chapters on the Muslims and two chapters on the Hindus, would seem to support such a view.

I chose to organize this dissertation according to literary traditions and chronology. I discussed the Persian literary traditions and Amīr Khuṣrau's texts of the fourteenth century before the Sanskrit and Hindavī literary traditions followed by Nayacandra Sūri and Padmanābha in the fifteenth century. Medieval Sanskrit and Persian literary traditions were separate and poets *chose* to conform to the traditions of their particular language. Even Amīr Khuṣrau, who identified himself and his poetry as Hindūstānī rather than Persian, followed the Persian masters in his early composition—

most notably in his *Khamsa*, a recomposed version of Niẓāmī Ganjavī's *Khamsa* written a century earlier.

While I recognize the distinction of literary traditions, I also approach the author's relationship to these traditions liberally rather than literally. Classical Sanskrit poets of the first millennia were aware of Sanskrit, Prākṛt, and classical vernacular literature.<sup>449</sup> I have referred to Indic literary traditions to include Sanskrit, Prākṛt, and this "vernacular Sanskrit/Prākṛt," as well as the fifteenth-century vernacular languages of Old Gujarati/Old Western Rajasthani that looked back to the Sanskrit literary tradition yet also challenged this tradition. Persianate languages included Persian, Darī, and the later Indo-Persian or *sabk-i hindī*, all of which looked to Arabic or Old Persian literary traditions. Two separate literary traditions existed; yet, I also believe that a greater amount of transference occurred at the folk level than is generally acknowledged.

This transference occurred in Persian poetry with the incorporation of the *shahrāhshūb* (disturber of the city) from folk traditions as well as the *barāhmāsā* (twelve-month) cycle and folktales incorporated from Indic literature as part of the *Kalila wa Dimna* and 'ajā'ib literature.<sup>450</sup> These tales from Indic literature included Sanskrit texts such as the *Hitopadeśa*, *Pañcatantra*, *Kathāsāritsārga*, and *Jātaka* tales that incorporated popular folk stories. Moreover, this transference at the literary level probably paled in comparison to the exchange that occurred among bards and other traveling performers whose work unfortunately does not appear in historical studies due to their existence in oral rather than written traditions. Poets directly or indirectly toyed with

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<sup>449</sup> By vernacular, I mean the language that Bhāmaha and Daṇḍin mentioned in their tracts on literary criticism referenced in the previous chapter. The exact nature of this vernacular language, which was apparently different from Prākṛt, remains unknown.

<sup>450</sup> For a discussion on the *shahrāhshūb* and *barāhmāsā*, see Sunil Sharma, *Persian Poetry at the Indian Frontier*, 107–123. For the influence and transmission of stories from Indic literature into Persian and Arabic texts, see G. Macqueen, "Changing Master Narratives in Midstream."

stories, styles, and imagery outside of their literary tradition before they were incorporated or recast in their literary works.

Hindu and Muslim society, like the Indic and Persianate literary traditions, were both discrete and conjoined. I have used the words Hindu and Muslim throughout this dissertation at the risk of reinforcing Aziz Ahmad's thesis because the distinctions existed within medieval Hindūstānī society. Terms such as *mleccha* or *kafir* clearly marked individuals or groups as being outside of Brahminical or Muslim society. At the same time—and in contrast to the nationalist historiography and communalism that has dominated most of South Asia over the last century—Hindus and Muslims were two communities and two religions within a single society. Authors recognized and at times negotiated this division in texts such the *Deval Rānī wa Khizr Khān*, the *Nuh Sipīhr*, *Hammīra Mahākāvya*, and *Kāṇhaḍade Prabandh*. The Muslim Mongol Mahimāsāhi from the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* lived and fought with the Hindus of Ranthambhor until he was excluded him from participating in the final battle, since the battle was concerned Hindus and Muslims. Mahimāsāhi's sacrifice of his family reaffirmed his claim to fight with the Hindus; yet, he never converted to Hinduism and was buried as a Muslim. Mahimāsāhi, a Muslim, lived in a common society, became a Rajput warrior, and died a Muslim. Nayacandra Sūri never hinted at any inconsistency or clash between these categories. The problem is located in modern scholarship, rather than the premodern past.

This paradoxical situation, in which Indic and Persianate literatures as well as Hindu and Muslim communities simultaneously existed in conjunction with a single Indic–Persian vernacular literary tradition and a Hindu–Muslim society, may be explained through the model of symbiosis. The model of symbiosis recognizes individual elements as well as their constitution as a single whole. Steven Wasserstrom

applied this model to his analysis of Muslim and Jewish interaction in tenth-century Iran.<sup>451</sup> In contrast to acculturation (the assimilation of one culture into another) or cultural synthesis (the combination of two different cultures into one), I propose that a literary and cultural symbiosis operated as a dialectical process during the Delhi Sultanate in which Indic and Persianate languages as well as Hindu and Muslim society actively interacted without losing their distinctiveness. Multiple streams exist in the study of this literary and cultural symbiosis, and I intend to focus on two of these streams in my future work.

The literary symbiosis of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries occurred in two ways: between Indic and Persianate literature and between bardic tale and Sanskrit poetry. An opportunity exists to study how a single bardic tale was adopted and adapted to the Sanskrit and vernacular literary traditions. The story of Hammīra and the fall of Ranthambhor almost certainly entered the bard's repertoire, where it circulated for at least a century. Nayacandra Sūri took the bard's version of the tale sometime during the fifteenth century and reworked it according to the rules of *mahākāvya* poetry to an extent that would have met Daṇḍin's approval. Bāṇḍau Vyāsa composed the Hindavī *Hammīrāyaṇa* in V.S. 1538/A.D. 1481. The composition of the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* in Sanskrit and the *Hammīrāyaṇa* in vernacular Hindavī in the same century presents an unusual chance to examine how the same historical event was recorded in two different literary traditions and how these traditions related to each other.

Studying martyrdom in Rajput and Persian battle narratives might provide an avenue toward understanding how Indic and Indo-Muslim societies existed in a state of cultural symbiosis during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. R. B. Singh also

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<sup>451</sup> Steven Wasserstrom, *Between Muslim and Jew*.

identified four attributes of the Rajput identity, the first of which included worship of the *devakula* (family god).<sup>452</sup> A god or goddess appeared in almost every Rajput tale, and the Rajput hero often worshipped this god or goddess just prior to his final battle and death. Muslims apparently knew about this custom as suggested by Amīr Khuṣrau's epigraph at the beginning of this chapter. The Rajput's death on the battlefield made him into a misguided martyr (*shahīd*), misguided due to his worship of an idol rather than Allah, but nevertheless deserving of respect. The Rajput tale's tragic-heroic plots in text such as the *Hammīra Mahākāvya* celebrated both the Rajput's martyrdom as well as Mahimāsāhi's martyrdom. An approach to death on the battlefield cast in mutual understanding rather than overt opposition might shed more light on the how the Rajput and Turkish warrior identities developed in tandem.

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<sup>452</sup> Singh noted that the *devakula* was originally a form of ancestor worship that had transformed into the worship of the family god by the time of the Rajputs. See his book, *Origin of the Rajputs*, 60–61 for a discussion of *devakula* worship.

## Glossary

<i>agnikula</i>	fire sacrifice from which the Paramāra, Caulukya, Cāhamāna, Pratīhāra lineages emerged
<i>adab</i>	“belles letters,” an education based on multiple sources of learning such as exegesis, geography, science, ‘ <i>ajā’ib</i> , <i>akhbār</i>
‘ <i>ajā’ib</i>	fabulous, wondrous, marvelous
<i>akhbār</i>	reports, historical accounts
<i>amīr</i>	nobleman
<i>apsaras</i>	celestial nymph who tends on deceased (Hindu) warriors
‘ <i>āriz-i mamālik</i>	master of the realm
‘ <i>āriz-i rāwat</i>	master of the soldiers/cavalry
<i>artha</i>	material pleasure
<i>bhūt</i>	spirits, demons
<i>brāhmaṇa</i>	Hindu ritualists, ministers, learned men; one of the four <i>varṇa</i>
<i>dargāh</i>	(lit.) threshold; a Sufi center (usually where the Sufi is buried)
<i>Darī</i>	Persianate language of Afghanistan
<i>Deccan</i>	south–central plaeau in the Indian subcontinent
<i>dharma</i>	right conduct
<i>dūtaka</i>	messenger from the royal court
<i>fathnāma</i>	letter of victory
<i>farmān</i>	written decree
<i>fitna</i>	civil war

<i>futūh</i>	conquest; (pl.) <i>fath</i>
<i>ghārāt</i>	raids
<i>ghazal</i>	a short poem with a rhyme scheme of AA/BA/CA/DA
<i>ghulām</i>	slave; particularly one involved in the military system.
<i>ḥamd</i>	Praise of Allah
<i>hijra</i>	emigration of the Prophet Muḥammad from Mecca to Medina
<i>ḥikāyat</i>	stories
<i>isnād</i>	chain of transmission
<i>‘iqṭā’</i>	impermanent grant of a village and surrounding lands from which the holder received income for himself as well as his position
<i>‘iqṭādār</i>	one who holds an <i>‘iqṭā’</i>
<i>jalāl</i>	majesty
<i>jamāl</i>	beauty
<i>jami’ masjid</i>	congregation mosque
<i>jāti</i>	subsection of <i>varṇa</i>
<i>jauhar</i>	immolation of Hindu women in a pyre before their husbands face certain death in a hopeless battle
<i>jizya</i>	tax levied upon non-Muslims
<i>kāma</i>	immaterial pleasure
<i>kamāl</i>	perfection
<i>khānqāh</i>	monastic residence of a Sufi
<i>khilāfa</i>	caliph
<i>Khizr</i>	roaming, immortal Sufi who initiated others into the Sufi order



<i>Ka'ba</i>	alter upon which Ibrāhīm was to sacrifice his son, Ismā'īl, in Mecca; the Prophet Muḥammad cleared the Ka'ba of idolatrous images and reconsecrated it to Allah
<i>kos</i>	distance of about two miles
<i>kotwāl</i>	deputy
<i>kṣatriya</i>	warriors, kings; one of the four <i>varṇa</i>
<i>mahākāvya</i>	long (epic) Sanskrit poem with multiple cantos
<i>mahārāja</i>	great king, high-ranking general
<i>mahārājādhirāja</i>	paramount king
<i>mahout</i>	elephant handler
<i>malfūzat</i>	sayings of a Sufi master
<i>manqabat</i>	Praise of the Contemporaries of the Prophet Muḥammad
<i>masjid</i>	mosque
<i>maṣnavī</i>	long (epic) poem in which every hemistich rhymes
<i>mihrāb</i>	prayer niche
<i>minār</i>	tower
<i>mi'rāj</i>	ascent of the Prophet Muḥammad to Heaven
<i>miṣr</i>	garrison town
<i>mokṣa</i>	spiritual liberation
<i>mughal</i>	Mongol
<i>murīd</i>	disciple of a Sufi
<i>na'at</i>	Praise of the Prophet Muḥammad
<i>naqqālī</i>	performer of Persian oral traditions
<i>nāyaka</i>	hero, protagonist

<i>pañcāyat</i>	governing council
<i>pīr</i>	Sufi master
<i>Prākṛt</i>	“broken Sanskrit,” a Sanskrit based language
<i>pratināyaka</i>	antagonist
<i>qaṣīda</i>	(panegyric) poem
<i>qāzī</i>	Muslim jurist
<i>qawwālī</i>	a singer, minstrel
<i>quṭb</i>	pillar, axis
<i>rāja, rājan</i>	king
<i>rājaputra</i>	(lit.) son of a king; royalty; nobility
<i>rāṇa</i>	king
<i>rāuta</i>	administrator/warrior of a territory
<i>ridda</i>	apostasy, with an evocation of the Ridda Wars after the Prophet Muḥammad’s death
<i>sādhānika</i>	general in an army
<i>sāmanta</i>	high level governors or regional kings who ruled large territories for an overlord
<i>sarga</i>	canto (in a Sanskrit text)
<i>sāth</i>	retinue of brothers, sons, trusted men who swore allegiance to their leader
<i>satī</i>	immolation of a Hindu woman in her husband’s funeral pyre
<i>shaikh</i>	an elder, a respected man
<i>svarga</i>	heaven (in Hinduism)
<i>taṣawwuf</i>	doctrine of Sufism
<i>ṭhakkura</i>	administrator of a town or territory

<i>‘umma</i>	Muslim community of believers
<i>vair</i>	revenge killing
<i>varṇa</i>	ideological division of Hindu society into four categories: <i>brāhmaṇa</i> , <i>kṣatriya</i> , <i>vaiśya</i> , <i>śūdra</i>
<i>vetāl</i>	demons, ghosts, goblins

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## Vita

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