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VIRULENCE OF HINDUTVA

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There is now a truism, almost universally acknowledged, that the global COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated existing inequities, fissures, and prejudices. The communities that have suffered the most—with higher hospitalization and mortality rates, higher economic devastation, and starker marginalization—are communities with existing comorbidities, to displace a clinical term from the physical body to the body-politic. While one can study the ways in which a virus, invisible to the naked eye and suspended in droplets of breath, is able to hover, pass, and transform our world with remarkable alacrity through its own epidemiological will, such an examination would only tell us about the virus and nothing about us. We, the reluctant hosts, can only be known by the world we have built long before this particular virus came into existence.

Early in April 2020, a WhatsApp forward arrived on my phone (Figure 1 on next page).¹ It was a cartoon image showing two personified viral bodies, one in red (and with a Chinese flag imprinted on it) and one in green (with a *topi*). The bodies were shaking hands. Clasped in their grip was a small person carrying a placard—“India.” The caption, “Coronavirus Deal,” marked the “Chinese virus” as the “Producer” and the “Jamaati virus” as the “Distributor.”² The latter had an airline tag affixed to his bag—“Tablighi Jamaat.”

Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced a lockdown in India on March 24, 2020. That same evening, the Uttar Pradesh chief minister, Yogi Adityanath, attended a Ram Navami event in Ayodhya defying the ban on gatherings.³ Yet by March 31, viral videos began to circulate, online and on WhatsApp, of members

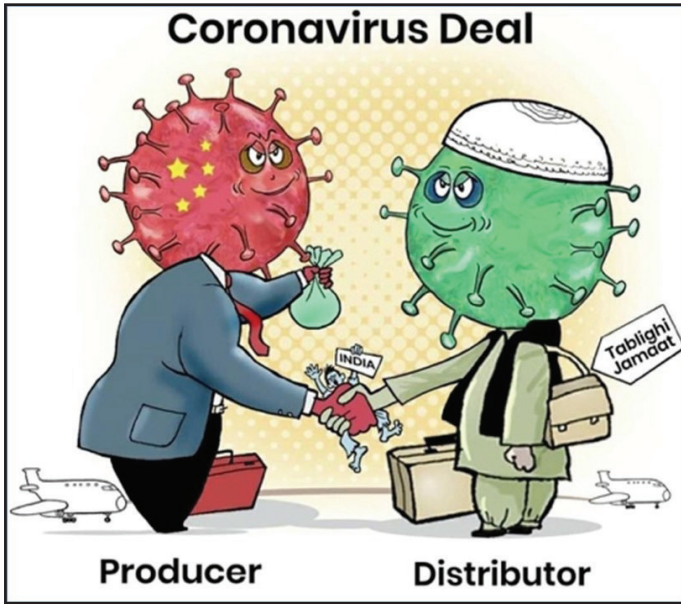


Figure 1

of Tablighi Jamaat—a global proselytization social network that preaches to communities of Muslims—who had held a big gathering in Nizamuddin, New Delhi, in early March. The Tablighi Jamaat were accused of having flown in from around the world and brought with them the novel coronavirus.⁴ Within a week, scores of Muslims were beaten up on suspicions of being Tablighi.⁵ On social media, a viral hashtag, “#CoronaJihad,” circulated videos of beatdowns, burnings, and lynchings targeting Muslims.⁶ The tag was inspired by, and reminiscent of, the previous campaign of “#loveJihad,” which was meant to promote Hindu men to marry Muslim women and convert them out of Islam and to prevent Hindu women from marrying Muslim men and converting to Islam.⁷

The Indian media carried breathless news about the “Tablighi” Muslims being everywhere—breaking quarantine in the deep south (Tamil Nadu), in Bengal, in Karnataka. There were news items about the traveling and living standards of Tablighi men and how their idea of communal travel was naturally and necessarily prone to the spread of diseases. These unmoderated rumors and video shares on WhatsApp had officially “gone viral.” By August 2020, the *Indian Journalism Review* would conclude that the media’s coverage of Tablighi Jamaat was “one of the more egregious examples of a majoritarian media that has lost its moral, social and professional moorings.”⁸ The damage, however, was long done.

The Indian media did not invent what was broadly labeled as the “Mussalmani virus” in April 2020.⁹ There was a pandemic in India long before. Evidence, from

news reports, viral videos, and testimonials, abounds for documenting pure random violence against Muslims and corresponding legal and political shifts in the standing of the Muslim citizen in contemporary India. In Gokalpuri, northeast Delhi, for example, Musharraf was one Muslim who was dragged from his bedroom and lynched in early March 2020.¹⁰ Forty-three Muslims were killed in Delhi just in early March 2020. Musharraf's lynching was a result of widespread protests in Delhi against the Indian Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), which was passed in December 2019.

But before that, on November 9, 2019, the Indian Supreme Court gave a unanimous (and unsigned) verdict granting the right to build a Ram Temple at the site of the violent demolition of the Babri mosque in Ayodhya in 1992. And even before November came August 2019, when Pehlu Khan was killed by a Hindu mob. And before that, June 2019, when Tabriz Ansari, another Muslim, died at the hands of Hindu lynchers.¹¹ The list is tragically endless. While I do not do so here, the names of those whose lives and humanity have been violently wrenched from them at the hands of Hindus chanting "*Jai Shri Ram*" must someday be read as testimony into the record.

To be a Muslim in India today is to be a problem. The Muslim is a theological problem, a social problem, a cultural problem, and critically, a geopolitical problem. The geopolitical name of the Indian Muslim's problem is Kashmir in the northwest, Pakistan in the west, and Bangladesh in the northeast. On August 5, 2019, India began a military siege of Kashmir, the only majority-Muslim state in the nation. Hundreds of Muslims have been blinded by pellet blasts to the face, disappeared, imprisoned without due process, and kept without access to the Internet or hospitalization by the Indian troops.¹² The Kashmiris who have dared to ask for their right to speech, to free assembly, or to peaceful protest are labeled as terrorists or Pakistani terrorists.

The December 2019 Citizenship Amendment Act goes along with a National Register of Citizens (NRC), which requires Indian citizens in Assam to produce documents of ancestry to be enlisted as Indian citizens. The NRC began at the Indian border with Bangladesh, where thousands of displaced Rohingya refugees have sought asylum and shelter since 2016. India wishes to expel them as "Bangladeshi."¹³ It is meant to be rolled out to the rest of the country and expel "all illegal infiltrators from India." Muslims in India are imagined to possess a foreignness that is innate to their religion. Hindutva depicts Islam, with its holy city in Mecca and its holy language of Arabic and its holy text, the Quran, as always-already outside of the domain of India, despite deep and long histories of Muslim presence in the subcontinent documented by communities and scholars alike. In the rhetoric of Hindu majoritarianism, the Muslim faith make Muslims foreigners to India, and that fact organizes their language, their affiliation, their loyalty. This

foreignness has clung to the Muslim body in India since it was first put into words by Vinayak Damodar Savarkar (who coined the concept of “Hindutva”) in 1923:

In the case of some of our Mohammeden or Christian countrymen who had originally been forcibly converted to a non-Hindu religion who consequently have inherited along with Hindus a common Fatherland and a greater part of the wealth of common culture are not and cannot be recognized as Hindus. For though Hindusthan to them is Fatherland as to any other Hindu yet it is not to them a Holyland too. Their Holyland is far off in Arabia or Palestine. Their mythology and Godmen, ideas and heroes are not the children of this soil. Consequently their names and their outlook smack of a foreign origin. *Their love is divided.*¹⁴

Savarkar is widely understood to be the leading ideologue of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), the Hindutva militant organization behind Prime Minister Narendra Modi (a member since his adolescence). In Savarkar’s vision, Muslims in India are not of the place, nor could they ever be. Understood as always outside, Muslims are an invasion, an infiltration to be managed, a “deep-seated disease” as Savarkar expressed in 1937.¹⁵

Such a potted history as the one I briefly tell here represents only a fraction of the known acts of violence in the last year. A year is brief in the chronicles of the lynching of Muslims in India since its independence. Just between 2015 and 2018, forty-four Muslims were murdered because of accusations of eating beef or other transgressions. In today’s India, the Mussalman is a virus, the intruder into the body-politic of India. Nowhere is the language of virulence more insidious than in Hindutva ideologies of the dangers of Muslim consumption and sexuality, of what Muslims do with their bodies. Men were lynched on suspicions that they had sought to “capture” Hindu women in acts of sexual violence and “love jihad,” an idea of the disease of sexual danger spread by Muslim men who brainwash Hindu girls and women. Muslim men were lynched for having “786” tattooed on their wrist.¹⁶ For both the Hindu right-wing lynching mob and the complicit middle-class Hindus who look away, the danger and foreignness of Muslims justifies their exclusion and death.

The institutionalization of Muslim exclusion was made into national policy in December 2019, when India asked its Muslims to legally prove their status of belonging with a fantastical system of documentation that would be impossible for virtually any citizen to obtain, let alone preserve. Yet, Muslims of India have been presumed to be Pakistani since, well, before Pakistan itself existed. The new law created a structure for the systematic denial of citizenship to people and communities who had been promised rights at the dawn of the postcolonial nation. This denial of belonging was nothing new. The pogroms of 2002 in Gujarat were

aimed at wiping out Muslims, deemed aggressors and foreign to the place. Before 2002, there were the 1992 riots, when thousands tore down the sixteenth-century Babri mosque in Ayodhya as a claim for the birthplace of the god Ram. Before that were the wars of 1971, 1965, and 1948 with Pakistan. And before that, the gaping wound of Partition of 1947, upon which a broken idea of India was built.

On August 5, 2020, as the COVID-19 pandemic in India exploded after months of lockdown, Prime Minister Modi landed in Ayodhya to lay the foundation stone for the new temple of Ram to be constructed at the demolished site of the Babri mosque. The building of Ram's temple was made possible by the unanimous Supreme Court decision that granted a material historicity to a god's supposed birthplace. In this vision, Ram Mandir will become a great site for pilgrims, students, tourists, and proud Indians. "The wait of centuries has ended and India is creating a golden chapter in Ayodhya," Modi proclaimed just as he laid the founding brick of the new temple with the legend "Jai Shri Ram" on it.¹⁷ The centuries may be an allusion to an imagined time when a temple stood at this site in Ayodhya before being demolished. Or it could be a time before the so-called iconoclastic Muslims arrived in the subcontinent. In the language of the RSS, the BJP, and Modi himself, the time of Ram was one that was free, golden, and unencumbered by Muslim foreign invaders. As thousands of Indians died due to pandemic mismanagement and the forced displacement of migrants, Modi triumphantly declared the start of a new golden era.

Modi's invocation of the coming golden age deserves attention, for it is also linked to the idea of the Mussalmani virus and to a long history of the invocation of a golden age to imagine Indian pasts free of Muslims. Perhaps the most powerful invention of a "golden age" happened through the modern remaking of Ashoka and his golden age of rule. Through the invocation of Ashoka, colonial historiography divided the subcontinental past into Ancient India, Hindustan, and British India. Hindustan, which was for hundreds of years a name for all of the subcontinent, became, was under colonial rule, simply a label for Muslim despotism, depravity, and conquest. For the colonial state, it was important that the British in India be seen as redressing the violence of Muslim rulers of Hindustan. Thus, Lord Edward Law Ellenborough, in 1842, would bring back the "gates of Somnath" from Kabul to "avenge the insult of 800 years," such that they, "so long the memorial of your humiliation, are become the proudest record of your national glory."¹⁸ The gates were understood by Ellenborough to have been ripped from the temple of Somnath in Gujarat by Mahmud Ghazni and taken to Kabul in the early eleventh century. The gates, wrenched from Mahmud's tomb, ended up being shown to have no relationship whatsoever to Somnath, but the intent of restoring the dignity of Hindus has remained a potent call till today.

In the colonial imagination, destruction of Somnath was the one act that defined the end of the golden age of India. Hence, it was Somnath that was the center of Savarkar's vision for a Hindu nation's rehabilitation. It was Somnath that was rebuilt at the impetus of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, the first Deputy Prime Minister of independent India, and by the efforts of Kanaiyalal Maneklal Munshi. As Munshi described, in 1951, "We would never genuinely feel that freedom had come, nor develop faith in our future, unless Somanatha was restored."¹⁹ It was Somnath that would be the starting point for the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) led procession (Ram Rath Yatra) that would end with the destruction of Babri mosque in 1992.²⁰

The Ram Mandir, like Somnath before it, represents a vision of a future. It is a homogenizing vision that argues for a singularly devoted India, one that finally rids itself of the dark period, and people, who came to inhabit it after its golden age. A vision straight out of the founding moment of India, it hopes to give a Ka'aba inside India for Indian Hindus. The Mussalman can be imprisoned in open air, like in Kashmir. The Mussalman can be cordoned off in borderland camps, like in Assam. The Mussalman can be asked to proclaim "Jai Shree Ram," hide his faith, or be erased by violence. What the Mussalman cannot do is be a Mussalman in India. The Mussalman of India, long considered an outsider, now imagined as a dangerous and deadly virus from afar, has no rhetorical or literal place.

In early 2017, a YouTube video went viral. It was a recording of a performance of the poem "*Hindustani Musalman*" ("Indian Muslim") by its author, Hussain Haidry:

What type of Muslim am I? / I am a Hindustani Muslim / from Deccan,
from U.P / Bhopal and Delhi / from Kashmir, from Gujarat / of every
high and low caste / a surgeon, a cobbler, a weaver, a tailor / I contain
the shlokas of Gita / I have Urdu newspapers / I have a holy month of
Ramadan / I have dipped myself in the holy Ganga.

Haidry's verses—unapologetic, funny, and moving—would propel him to wide social attention. He was signed up to script a Bollywood film. Yet, by July 2020, Haidry would become a target of BJP and Hindutva trolls as an "Islamist" and "Hinduphobic." Haidry would suspend his social media accounts under a barrage of public abuse and harassment. The fate of his movie, and his own fate, remains to be seen. Haidry, a middle-class Muslim born and raised in Maharashtra, who had proclaimed his claim to the shlokas of Gita and the holy water of the Ganga, is now nothing but a violent terrorist, an anti-nationalist, and an outsider to India.

Haidry became a public figure protesting the Citizenship Amendment Act. The anti-CAA protests led to an "occupation" in Shaheen Bagh, Delhi, led by Muslim women. The women demanded protection from the state's claim to question

their birthright to India. Haidry and his poem were critical for those protesting. The women of Delhi became the target of Hindu violence. Yet, remarkably, over weeks in December, January, and February, in bitter cold, they held their ground.²¹ They cared for each other, sat together, fed children, sang songs, created a library for public use. Dalits and Muslims aligned themselves to protest the caste and sectarian violence that they too faced on a daily basis. Their signs, their songs, and their chants proclaimed over and over: “We are Indian.” In Shaheen Bagh, in the innovations and defiance of women’s organizing, we see the most direct and vivid critique of what is now centuries of rhetoric that cast the Muslim as always outside of India.

The declaration, and condition, of the Muslim women in Delhi that they did belong, of “*Hum Hindustani*” (“We, the Indians”), echoes the plight of the Black intellectual during the Jim Crow era in the United States. It reminds one of Paul Robeson. Robeson was a lawyer, athlete, singer, and scholar of decolonization and third-world solidarity. Robeson’s father, William Drew Robeson, was a minister and a previously enslaved human being who had escaped his enslavement in North Carolina. Robeson studied, worked, performed, and gained national acclaim during the era of Jim Crow segregation, but the sin for which his passport was taken, and the crime for which he was denied an income for nearly a decade, was his contamination with Communism. To white Americans, Robeson was no longer “American.”

On June 1956, Paul Robeson was interrogated in the US Congress by the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC). Since late July 1950, on the orders of J. Edgar Hoover, FBI agents had confiscated Robeson’s passport. “I am an American. From my window I gaze out upon a scene that reminds me how deep-going are the roots of my people in this land,” Paul Robeson wrote in 1957.²² In 1958, the US Supreme Court ruled against such seizures, and Robeson was finally able to travel outside of the United States. He had standing invitations to India, Uganda, and Britain. It was in London that he would reiterate that he was an American.

The logic of exclusion that placed Black Americans as outside of citizenship, as outside of the nation itself, took decades of struggle to dismantle in claims to legal and civil rights in the United States. Yet, their claim of belonging is certainly an incomplete project, and it remains a key imaginary in the political present of Black Lives Matter. There is little hope that the declaration of “I am Indian” can portend a better future for Muslims in India. In its stead, the dominance of political platforms built on Muslim hate, anti-Muslim grievance politics, revenge fantasies, misogyny, and violence will continue unabated and unchecked by legal and media forums. There is no widespread will in India to stand in solidarity with its Mussalmans, who are simply told to “leave” for Pakistan.

It is thus necessary to quarantine India's COVID-19 problem as one of epidemiology and public health alone, and to instead focus on the comorbidity that allows for Hindu majoritarian ideologies and institutions to cast the Mussalmani as a virus for now well over a hundred years. Anti-Muslim violence is the pandemic we refuse to bear witness to, despite evidence and visual documents that attest to its extraordinary virulence. The accusation can easily be turned as a symptomatic description with one difference. Where the virus pits human breath against human breath, it could be imagined as a leveler or an equalizer. Everyone can get COVID-19. Even in a dark way, the novel coronavirus could be a demonstration of our innate sameness as a species.

Yet, the Mussalmani virus shows that the bodies of two Indians are not the same. They do not live or die the same way. Just as we can see from the case of the United States, all human beings cannot breathe in the same way, with the same freedom. Some people have no authority over their own breathing. We know from the cry of "I Can't Breathe," from the time Eric Garner uttered it eleven times in July 2014 before his death to George Floyd desperately saying it again and again. In the now countless videos of the lynching of Muslims, we know they cannot breathe—surrounded by mob violence, beaten, dragged—because in the end, they are dead. The Mussalmani virus is a virus that excels at showcasing alterity, difference, and foreignness. It marks certain bodies for elimination and destruction and makes their deaths seem natural, normal, necessary for the health of a nation.

A virus forces us to look to the *future*, to build models that extrapolate outcomes from behavior and rates of transmission. Epidemiology has little interest in the past, and if so, it is only to create a way to anticipate and quantify what is to come. Yet, what if we were to keep our gaze—the historian's gaze—on the past of the subcontinent to ask anew about our political present? Historians have, in the face of rising Hindu majoritarianism, traced the construction of this otherness between Muslims and Hindus to the colonial period or to the wars and conflicts of the medieval world. Some have even traced it back to the originary moments of Islam. All of these deep studies of the past are important, and they tell us that the present is not the only way to live and die, that there were once other ways of being and other projects of world-making that were not built on the violent exclusion and erasure of minorities. Yet, as we see today, too often the past is not how anyone studies viruses that ravage the present.

To fully document the novelty of the novel coronavirus, we need to build a model of the past that accounts for comorbidities, the coexisting deaths, the wearing away of the body, that has made our present. In the time of coronavirus, some historians are quick to remark on the similarities between the global pandemic of 2020 and the Great Influenza Epidemic of 1918.²³ The popular press has certainly found it a useful comparison, as both events sit at the opening of a yawning century

and concern a respiratory disease that has afflicted the world over.

However, if we step away from looking at the past solely through the lens of COVID-19 and instead look for analogues to the Mussalmani virus, a different history becomes significant for the purpose of modeling out possible futures.

A future for India would be the deep past of the “Black Death” plague of fourteenth-century Europe. Nestled between the traffic of crusading armies, the Black Death arrived in Europe between 1348 and 1350. As the plague spread, rumors of Jews being carriers of the plague, of poisoning wells, spread across small towns and communities. Understanding the Jews to be the carriers and the cause, across Spain, France, Germany, the Netherlands, and Italy, between 1348 and 1351, hundreds of Jews were burned, drowned, and driven out.²⁴ A century later, the Jews of Europe were still living under the terror of blood libel—depicted by Christians as having eaten the flesh of Christian children and of Christ, of poisoning wells, and of forcibly converting Christians.²⁵ In Germany, the memory of such horrendously imagined crimes by Jews was literally etched into the frescoes of churches and retold in chronicles and stories. These violent imaginaries persisted for 600 years, such that the very same localities where anti-Jewish pogroms had taken place in the fourteenth century gave rise to the Nationalist Socialist party in the early twentieth century.²⁶

The blood libel against Jews—neighbors born and raised alongside Christians, people who spoke the same language, who ate, dressed, lived, and worked in the same communities—made them into demons to be hunted and killed. They were expelled as a matter of state politics.²⁷ The cultural products of Europe, the sacral works, the topologies of the cities, the arrangement of music, all worked seamlessly to make Jews a target for hate, marking their existence for elimination. This was done by the learned and the political, the lay and the noble. Where the figure of the enslaved African gave to Europe the central logic of domination and dehumanization, the Jew was the foundation of a politics of state-sponsored elimination.

That anti-Semitism would shape the history of Europe has been clear and significantly understood since the Holocaust carried out by the Nationalist Socialists in the late 1930s and early 1940s. However, the effects of Islamophobia, specifically leading up to and since 1992, on the body politic of India, have not been recognized. Starting with the destruction of the Babri mosque as a globally organized, media-savvy program for political mobilization, Hindu-Muslim relations in India are framed as “communal affairs.” Yet, there is no such parity as the intervening hyphen would suggest. Muslims are a mere 13 percent of India’s population of 1.3 billion. The Sachar Committee Report in 2006 found them to have far lower literacy rates and economic status than the “Hindu” population, including the Scheduled and Restricted Castes.²⁸

Let us be clear that Muslims in India are a marginalized community, largely poor, without access to political or social mobility, and a group that is demonized across the cultural and political spheres. The short history of seventy-plus years in the Republic of India may only have a few pogroms and riots, but the long future ahead for the subcontinent appears to aspire toward a politics of complete elimination and expulsion. The Muslims of India do not have an ally in the vaunted Constitution, which is the prime vehicle of their dispossession in Assam and in Kashmir. The Muslims of India cannot find safety in the courts, for the Supreme Court is the instrument of their marginalization. The Muslims of India cannot claim any solace from an idea of a “secular India,” for the one may never have existed, and it certainly does not exist in the current democracy. If “there is little doubt that,” as Partha Chatterjee writes, “irrespective of election results, the pedagogy of Hindutva will continue to claim that a strong and unified nation-state must rest on the support of a unitary and homogenous people-nation,” then the Mussalman will forever be labeled as a foreign virus in the degenerating body-politic of India.²⁹ Leave aside 600 years, this increasingly dangerous Hindutva virulence works constantly and consistently to erase Muslim identity and Muslim pasts at an alarming rate. Without a collective reckoning with majoritarian pasts and the present rise in anti-Muslim violence, it will reduce Muslim futures in India to nothing in mere decades. This virulence ravages mosques and courts to leave the rubble of tolerant India behind, it makes the promise of the Constitution little more than a joke for those subject to the nonsovereignty of borderlands, and it spreads in the form of WhatsApp rumors and seemingly endless videos of innocent men, lynched. This virulence has no vaccine.

Notes

¹ The image is archived here: <https://web.archive.org/web/20200913150213/https://www.picuki.com/media/2280425702832929647>. Also see Mehdi Hasan, “The Coronavirus Is Empowering Islamophobes—But Exposing the Idiocy of Islamophobia,” *The Intercept*, April 14 2020, <https://web.archive.org/web/20200913150323/https://theintercept.com/2020/04/14/coronavirus-muslims-islamophobia/>.

² The president of the United States has insisted on referring to COVID-19 as “Chinese Virus.” See Katie Rogers, Lara Jakes, and Ana Swanson, “Trump Defends Using ‘Chinese Virus’ Label, Ignoring Growing Criticism,” *The New York Times*, 18 March 2020, <https://web.archive.org/web/20200913150441/https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/18/us/politics/china-virus.html>. On social media, “Jamaati virus” remains prevalent. Also see Amina Sharif, “Muslims Are Being Treated Like a Virus,” *Byline Times*, August 6, 2020, <https://web.archive.org/web/20200913150537/https://bylinetimes.com/2020/08/06/muslims-are-being-treated-like-a-virus/>.

³“On First Day of Nationwide Lockdown, Adityanath Attends Ram Navami Event in Ayodhya,” *The Wire*, 25 March 2020, <https://web.archive.org/web/20200915153920/https://thewire.in/politics/coronavirus-yogi-adityanath-lockdown-ram-navami-ayodhya>.

⁴“Questions Remain about How Delhi’s Nizamuddin Became a Coronavirus Hotspot,” *The Wire*, March 31, 2020, <https://web.archive.org/web/20200913150747/https://thewire.in/government/delhis-nizamuddin-hotspot-coronavirus>.

⁵Prabjit Singh, “Punjab: Muslim Gujjar Families ‘Beaten and Boycotted’ in Hoshiarpur Villages,” *The Wire*, 07 April 2020, <https://web.archive.org/web/20200913150914/https://thewire.in/rights/punjab-muslims-gujjar-families-beaten-and-boycotted-in-hoshiarpur-villages>; and Aditya Menon, “Attacks on Muslims in the Name of COVID-19 Surge across India,” *The Quint*, April 8, 2020, <https://web.archive.org/web/20200913151009/https://www.thequint.com/news/india/coronavirus-muslims-attacked-covid19-karnataka-haryana>.

⁶Such extrajudicial violence is rarely tagged as “lynching.” See M Mohsin Alam Bhat, Vidisha Bajaj, and Sanjana Arvind Kumar, “The Crime Vanishes: Mob Lynching, Hate Crime, and Police Discretion in India,” *Jindal Global Law Review* (July, 2020), <https://doi.org/10.1007/s41020-020-00115-4>.

⁷For “Love Jihad” see Charu Gupta, “Hindu Women, Muslim Men: Love Jihad and Conversions,” *Economic & Political Weekly* 44(51): 13–15. For #LoveJihad, see Sonia Faleiro, “An Attack on Love,” *The New York Times*, 02 November 2014, <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/11/02/opinion/sunday/its-not-jihad-its-just-love.html>.

⁸See “A ‘Big Propaganda’ Campaign of ‘Slander and Vilification’ Driven by ‘Malice and Prejudice’ Which Was ‘Wrong and Motivated’: ‘Deccan Herald’ Holds the Mirror to the Media on Tablighi Jamaat,” *Indian Journalism Review*, August 26, 2020, <https://web.archive.org/web/20200913145951/https://indianjournalismreview.com/2020/08/26/a-big-propaganda-campaign-of-slander-and-vilification-driven-by-malice-and-prejudice-which-was-wrong-and-motivated-deccan-herald-holds-the-mirror-to-the-media-on-tabl>.

⁹My coining of “Mussalmani Virus” in this essay is meant to highlight the demonization of a community and should not be seen in any way as an endorsement of the racist usage of this derogatory term for the Muslim community.

¹⁰Hannah Ellis-Petersen, “Inside Delhi: Beaten, Lynched and Burnt Alive,” *The Guardian*, March 1, 2020, <https://web.archive.org/web/20200913151505/https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/mar/01/india-delhi-after-hindu-mob-riot-religious-hatred-nationalists>.

¹¹Zeba Siddiqui, “Protests in Indian Cities after Muslim Man is Lynched, Modi Says He Is ‘Pained,’” *Reuters*, June 26, 2019, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-india-protests-lynching/protests-in-indian-cities-after-muslim-man-is-lynched-modi-says-he-is-pained-idUSKCN1TR2AG>.

¹²International Crisis Group, *Raising the Stakes in Jammu and Kashmir*, August 5, 2020, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/asia/south-asia/kashmir/310-raising-stakes-jammu-and-kashmir>; and Kashmir Reading Room, *DisIntegration at Gunpoint: Yearly Report (August 2019–August 2020)*, August 5, 2020, <https://jklpp.org/kashmir-reading-room-report-aug-2019-aug-2020>.

¹³ See Shaswati Das, “NRC Will Be Rolled Out across the Country before 2024 Polls: Amit Shah,” *The Mint*, December 3, 2019, <https://web.archive.org/web/20200913152043/https://www.livemint.com/news/india/nationwide-nrc-to-be-implemented-before-2024-lok-sabha-polls-amit-shah-11575290024624.html>.

¹⁴ V. D. Savarkar. *Hindutva: Who Is a Hindu?* (Bombay: Veer Savarkar Prakashan, 1969), 113.

¹⁵ V. D. Savarkar. *Hindu Rashtra Darshan: A Collection of the Presidential Speeches Delivered from the Hindu Mahasbha Platform* (Bombay: V. V. Bambardekar, 1949), 26.

¹⁶ For reports of lynching, see C. J. Werleman, “Database: Hate Crimes Against Muslims in India,” <https://web.archive.org/web/20200913152950/https://medium.com/@cjwerleman/database-hate-crimes-against-muslims-in-india-fdddc5acbf9b>. See also “They Cut Off His Hand with a Chain Saw Seeing 786 Tattooed on It,” TwoCircles.net, September 10, 2020, <https://web.archive.org/web/20200913152618/http://twocircles.net/2020sep10/438959.html>.

¹⁷ Saurabh Sharma, “Wait of Centuries Is Over, India PM says, as Hindu Temple Construction Begins,” *Reuters*, August 5, 2020, <https://web.archive.org/web/20200818000455/https://www.reuters.com/article/us-india-religion-temple/wait-of-centuries-is-over-india-pm-says-as-hindu-temple-construction-begins-idUSKCN2510NQQ>.

¹⁸ Edward Law Ellenborough, “Proclamation from the Governor-General to All the Princes and Chiefs and People of India,” *The Annual Register, or a View of the History and Politics of the Year 1842*, ed. Edmund Burke (London: J. G. F. and J. Rivington, 1843), 252–256.

¹⁹ K. M. Munshi, *Somanatha: The Shrine Eternal* (Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1965), 85.

²⁰ Christophe Jaffrelot. *The Hindu Nationalist Movement in India*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 80–109.

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