



FACULTY OF JURIDICAL SCIENCES

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Lecture-32



MEDIEVAL INDIA

Kings and their Courts

Delhi Sultanat

Delhi sultanate, principal Muslim sultanate in north India from the 13th to the 16th century. Its creation owed much to the campaigns of Mu'izz al-Dīn Muhammad ibn Sām (Muḥammad of Ghūr; brother of Sultan Ghiyāth al-Dīn of Ghūr) and his lieutenant Qutb al-Dīn Aibak between 1175 and 1206 and particularly to victories at the battles of Taraōrī in 1192 and Chandawar in 1194.

The Ghūrid soldiers of fortune in India did not sever their political connection with Ghūr (now Ghowr, in present Afghanistan) until Sultan Iltutmish (reigned 1211–36) had made his permanent capital at Delhi, had repulsed rival attempts to take over the Ghūrid conquests in India, and had withdrawn his forces from contact with the Mongol armies, which by the 1220s had conquered Afghanistan. Iltutmish also gained firm control of the main urban strategic centres of the North Indian Plain, from which he could keep in check the refractory Rajput chiefs. After Iltutmish's death, a decade of factional struggle was followed by nearly 40 years of stability under Ghiyāth al-Dīn Balban, sultan in 1266–87. During this period Delhi remained on the defensive against the Mongols and undertook only precautionary measures against the Rajputs.

Under the sultans of the Khalījī dynasty (1290–1320), the Delhi sultanate became an imperial power. 'Alā' al-Dīn (reigned 1296–1316) conquered Gujarat (c. 1297) and the principal fortified places in Rajasthan (1301–12) and reduced to vassalage the principal Hindu kingdoms of southern India (1307–12). His forces also defeated serious Mongol onslaughts by the Chagatais of Transoxania (1297–1306).

Muhammad ibn Tughluq (reigned 1325–51) attempted to set up a Muslim military, administrative, and cultural elite in the Deccan, with a second capital at Daulatabad, but the Deccan Muslim aristocracy threw off the overlordship of Delhi and set up (1347)

the Bahmanī sultanate. Muḥammad's successor, Fīrūz Shah Tughluq (reigned 1351–88), made no attempt to reconquer the Deccan.

The power of the Delhi sultanate in north India was shattered by the invasion (1398–99) of Turkic conqueror Timur (Tamerlane), who sacked Delhi itself. Under the Sayyid dynasty (c. 1414–51) the sultanate was reduced to a country power continually contending on an equal footing with other petty Muslim and Hindu principalities. Under the Lodī (Afghan) dynasty (1451–1526), however, with large-scale immigration from Afghanistan, the Delhi sultanate partly recovered its hegemony, until the Mughal leader Bābur destroyed it at the First Battle of Panipat on April 21, 1526. After 15 years of Mughal rule, the Afghan Shēr Shah of Sūr reestablished the sultanate in Delhi, which fell again in 1555 to Bābur's son and successor, Humāyūn, who died in January 1556. At the Second Battle of Panipat (November 5, 1556), Humāyūn's son Akbar definitively defeated the Hindu general Hemu, and the sultanate became submerged in the Mughal Empire.

The Delhi sultanate made no break with the political traditions of the later Hindu period—namely, that rulers sought paramountcy rather than sovereignty. It never reduced Hindu chiefs to unarmed impotence or established an exclusive claim to allegiance. The sultan was served by a heterogeneous elite of Turks, Afghans, Khaljīs, and Hindu converts; he readily accepted Hindu officials and Hindu vassals. Threatened for long periods with Mongol invasion from the northwest and hampered by indifferent communications, the Delhi sultans perforce left a large discretion to their local governors and officials.

MCQ

1. What does the term Mameluq signifies?

- A. Slave born to the free parents
- B. Slavery mode of production
- C. Slave born from the slave parents
- D. All of the above

2. Who among the following ruler from the Ilbary dynasty died of injuries while playing Chaugan (Polo) at Lahore?

- A. Shams-ud-Din Iltutmish
- B. Qutub-ud-Din Aibak
- C. Razia Begum
- D. Rukunuddin Firoz

3. Which of the following literary work primarily dealing with Aibak?

- A. Khazain-ul-Futuh
- B. Tahkik-i-hind
- C. Tazul Masir of Hasan Nizami
- D. Turkan-i-Chahalgani

4. Which ruler from the Delhi Sultanate saved Sultante from Changez Khan's attack by refusing to give any shelter to Jalal-ud-din?

- A. Rukunuddin Firoz
- B. Qutub-ud-Din Aibak
- C. Nasir-ud-din Mahmud
- D. Shams-ud-Din Iltutmish

5. What do you mean by Turkan-i-Chahalgani?

- A. Group of forty ruling elite
- B. Group of forty ministers
- C. Group of forty Islamic representatives
- D. None of the above

